



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, MAY 7, 2019

No. 75

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. GOMEZ).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

May 7, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JIMMY GOMEZ to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2019, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

RECOGNIZING STUDENT ATHLETES FOR GENEROSITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise to bring attention to the outstanding community service demonstrated by the student athletes from North Central Sports Club in Nebraska.

Harsh weather and devastating flooding has hit much of Nebraska this spring, causing destruction to many homes and communities and agri-

culture-producing facilities throughout our State. The recovery has not been easy, but the hard work, dedication, and generosity of Nebraskans has been on full display since the disaster struck. I want to highlight one group, the North Central Sports Club, which is made up of student athletes from Rock County and Keya Paha County, Nebraska.

These student athletes were excited for their upcoming trip, an annual tradition, after completing the hard work of not only their competitive sports seasons and academic requirements, but also the fundraising which keeps the program running. However, instead of taking their annual trip, the students decided to donate the funds to help with the recovery of their neighboring community, which suffered much more of the storm's damage.

Mr. Speaker, Nebraskans don't scare from a challenge, nor do they stand by as their friends and neighbors suffer. I am honored to recognize these student athletes from Rock County and Keya Paha County, Nebraska, for their generosity and community service.

PROTECTING AMERICANS WITH PREEXISTING CONDITIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon to spotlight that, a couple days from now, the House of Representatives will be voting on H.R. 986, which is an act protecting Americans with preexisting conditions.

Again, this is a measure to reverse a decision that was made last October by the Trump administration. It was an administrative guidance in the Department of Health and Human Services which basically opened the doors for States to submit waivers from the Affordable Care Act's protections for pa-

tients, which, almost universally, are supported by the American people.

For example, in the law, it banned the use of preexisting condition exclusions by insurance companies both for individuals applying for insurance and for those who actually got insurance but then had their bills denied because of preexisting conditions.

With the stroke of a pen, in March 2010, the Affordable Care Act abolished that practice by insurance companies, which basically was a discriminatory practice for people, again, who, through no fault of their own, had medical conditions which they could not control.

It also eliminated lifetime limits. In other words, insurance companies capped the amount of medical bills that they would pay, so somebody with a cancer or a serious chronic condition would run into those caps and basically be in bankruptcy land.

And lastly, it established essential health benefits, which were defined by the Institute of Medicine, not a political organization, based on what, in fact, health insurance should cover, for example, behavioral health, maternal and child benefits, et cetera.

This decision by the Trump administration last October basically knocked out the guardrails in the ACA waiver process, which, again, every observer and commentator said would open the door again to insurance companies using the practice of preexisting condition exclusions.

For those who maybe have forgotten what that looked like, I have beside me here a chart which includes a brochure, which Humana insurance was using back in 2009 when it was selling health insurance. Again, it is touting great news for people who buy their own health insurance, new, flexible health coverage.

However, if you read the fine print, it went on to say that there is important information about preexisting conditions for these conditions which would

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper.

H3451