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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. Send Your spirit of peace and calm, that all might have confidence in Your faithfulness to us, and that no matter what lies ahead, Your grace is abundantly available.

Now we approach a week during which all Americans will gather to remember who we are: a nation generously blessed not only by You, our God, but by courageous ancestors, faithful allies, and the best good wishes of people everywhere who long for freedom, who would glory in the difficult work of participative government, and who do not enjoy the bounty we are privileged to possess.

Bless the Members of this assembly, and us all, that we would be worthy of the call we have been given as Americans. Help us all to be truly thankful and appropriately generous in our response.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. BRINDISI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BRINDISI led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HOUSE DEMOCRATS WORK FOR THE PEOPLE

(Mr. CICILLINE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight the tremendous progress House Democrats have made to get government working for the people.

In less than a year, we have passed nearly 400 pieces of legislation, including more than 275 bipartisan bills that are currently sitting on MITCH MCCONNELL's desk.

We passed legislation to protect coverage for preexisting conditions, to build on the progress of the ACA, and to drive down the cost of prescription drugs.

We fought to get hardworking folks the good-paying jobs they need to put food on the table by passing legislation to raise the minimum wage; to ensure equal pay for equal work; and to invest more than \$70 billion in green, job-creating infrastructure projects.

We fought to clean up corruption in Washington by passing the most comprehensive anticorruption bill since Watergate.

Yet MITCH MCCONNELL would rather tout himself as the grim reaper than vote on these bills that will help his constituents and the American people.

I have a message for you, Senator MCCONNELL: Do your job, or your constituents will pick someone who will.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE). Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY HAS NO FACTS

(Mr. KELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KELLER. Madam Speaker, we are now in week 2 of the "public phase" of Speaker PELOSI's and Chairman SCHIFF's impeachment inquiry.

What comes to mind is a song from 1980 by REO Speedwagon. I am not going to do this any justice, but here it is: "I heard it from a friend who heard it from a friend who heard it from another . . ."

That is the evidence that has been presented in private and in public: no substance. In fact, Mr. Morrison and Ambassador Volker, both of whom claimed to have firsthand knowledge, testified they witnessed no bribery, no quid pro quos, and no illegal actions by President Trump.

Yesterday, Ambassador Sondland said: "I never heard from President Trump that aid was conditioned on an announcement" of investigations.

Here is what it is: We are talking about innuendos, thoughts, and feelings, but no facts. That is what is happening. That is what has happened in the SCIF when it was rehearsed, and that is what is happening in the public performance this past couple of weeks.

DELAY MEDICAL DEVICE TAX

(Mr. BRINDISI asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BRINDISI. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the advanced manufacturing that is happening in New York's medical device industry.

Medical device companies across New York employ nearly 20,000 people, paying good wages, helping patients live healthier lives, and making products here in the United States.

Companies like Welch Allyn and ConMed are expanding manufacturing

□ 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.



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in upstate New York and creating hundreds of new jobs. But this growth could be hurt if we see the return of the medical device tax.

The current suspension of the device tax expires on December 31. Allowing this tax to return could erode gains in employment in the med-tech sector from the last 4 years, ultimately hurting innovation and patient access to new technology.

Madam Speaker, I hope we can work together this year as Democrats and Republicans to delay this tax and keep supporting American manufacturing.

SUPPORT SERVICE ORGANIZATION CAUCUS

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, service plays an important role in communities across the Nation. From small acts of kindness to grand gestures, we can all do our part to make a difference. It is something I am personally passionate about, having served as a volunteer firefighter for many years and being involved in scouting my entire life.

Nobody embodies this mission better than the countless volunteers and service organizations that can be found nationwide. That is why I am honored to co-chair the Congressional Service Organization Caucus with my colleague, Congressman PANETTA from California.

The Congressional Service Organization Caucus is a group of Members who not only support their local volunteer service organizations but share a mutual admiration for community service and humanitarian assistance.

The spirit of service is something that both Republicans and Democrats can come together to champion. That is why Congressman PANETTA and I are asking for the support of our colleagues in joining this caucus and upholding our support for these organizations and the communities that they serve.

GIVE VETERANS HEALTH COVERAGE FOR AGENT ORANGE CONDITIONS

(Mr. HARDER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HARDER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to speak directly to White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney.

Recent reports suggest you personally intervened to stop Vietnam vets from getting healthcare, all just to save a buck.

It sounds crazy, and it is. Thousands of veterans were affected by exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam war and deserve to have healthcare.

The VA Secretary tried to add four medical conditions caused by Agent Orange to the list VA would cover, but Mick Mulvaney intervened to stop it.

This issue is personal for me. My grandfather served in Vietnam, was exposed to Agent Orange, and died from lung cancer. Sadly, his story is not uncommon.

I refuse to stand by and let other veterans die because they didn't get the healthcare they need. That is not who we are.

Our veterans fought to keep us safe, and many sacrificed life and limb. The last thing they should have to do is come home to fight another battle for the healthcare they earned.

There is still time to turn this around, Mick, and I beg you to reconsider.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

PRIORITIZE TREATMENT FOR ALS

(Mr. CURTIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CURTIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my concerns with patient access to groundbreaking and lifesaving ALS treatments. This is a very personal issue to me as some of my close friends and neighbors have been affected by this difficult disease.

I applaud the enactment of the Right to Try Act, allowing some people another option to receive the treatments they need. However, this should not be the end of the conversation.

It is important to acknowledge that the passage of this act has not opened all the doors we expected, and many are still denied access to treatments.

The FDA's lengthy approval process continues to limit patient access, at times forcing my constituents to spend large sums of money traveling overseas for treatment or, more commonly, forfeiting treatment altogether.

The use of stem cells to treat ALS, widely used and deemed safe in other countries, has been studied in the U.S. for over 12 years but has yet to be approved, despite its fast-tracked status.

Delaying approval of this treatment, commonly known as NurOwn, is putting lives at risk. I urge the FDA to prioritize its approval and give access to thousands of ALS patients.

INCREASE FEDERAL USE OF GREEN ENERGY

(Ms. BROWNLEY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Madam Speaker, the Federal Government is the Nation's largest purchaser of electricity, yet it buys renewable energy at a rate that is far less than the rest of the country.

With a climate crisis threatening our planet and our way of life, this is not acceptable. We can and must leverage the resources of the Federal Government to accelerate the technological innovation needed to transition to a green and clean economy.

That is why, earlier this week, I introduced the Green Energy for Federal Buildings Act. My legislation would require the Federal Government to increase the share of electricity it gets from renewable sources.

Under current law, the Federal Government is required to utilize only 7.5 percent renewable energy for its electricity needs. My bill would up the ante, raising the requirement to 35 percent by 2030, 75 percent by 2040, and 100 percent by 2050.

This crisis is upon us. We must have the strength and the foresight to act decisively, creatively, and boldly. There is no time to waste.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL BIBLE WEEK

(Mr. BUDD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BUDD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 78th anniversary of National Bible Week.

In this very Bible, the Apostle Paul tells us in 2 Timothy, Chapter 4:

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but have itching ears, they will accumulate themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and will wander off into myths.

Even as I look behind me at the words "In God We Trust," I wonder if we as a nation are succumbing to what the Apostle Paul warned about 2,000 years ago.

There is a solution to this problem, and it is found in the very same chapter. Paul writes:

Preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

He writes in the prior chapter, 2 Timothy, Chapter 3, that all Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, and that a person of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

So we see the people of His creation are intended for purposeful good works, and we are guided into that purpose by God through the very Scriptures that we celebrate this week.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL RURAL HEALTH DAY

(Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Madam Speaker, I rise today on National Rural Health Day to bring attention to the importance of healthcare in rural communities across this country and in New Hampshire.

Far too often, there are substantial health disparities for those living in rural America. Our rural communities face growing and unique healthcare challenges exacerbated by distance and the time it takes to see a provider.