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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: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

During these cold, early darkening days, we ask Your special blessing upon those who labor in the Nation's Capitol.

Help the Members of the House, and those of the Senate, to act wisely and carefully in the important work they do. In the waning days of the session, may they continue to heed the voices of all their constituents, both those who voted for them and those who did not.

May all that is done within the people's House 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 North Carolina (Mr. BUDD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BUDD 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.

12 DAYS OF SALT

(Ms. SHERRILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SHERRILL. Madam Speaker, on the seventh day of SALT, my constituents have said to me that we cannot fix the SALT deduction cap by simply slashing our State and local taxes because these taxes fund critical community priorities like our public school system.

I am incredibly proud that New Jersey's public school system was just ranked number one in the entire country. A number of factors go into that achievement, including student achievement, the success of students once they leave school, and school funding.

Madam Speaker, New Jersey ranks third in the country in the percentage of our tax dollars allocated to education. That is because our residents know that investment in our schools is a downpayment on a bright future. It is why so many families make New Jersey their home.

This investment benefits not only New Jersey. Our students grow up to work, serve, and lead in organizations across the Nation and around the globe.

That includes four—yes, four—NASA astronauts produced by the public schools in my congressional district alone.

We need to restore the SALT deduction cap and stop penalizing States like New Jersey that prioritize investment in our children and the professionals who educate the next generation, investments that benefit the entire country.

REMEMBERING THE LIFE OF CAMERON WALTERS

(Mr. CARTER of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of Mr. Cameron Walters, who passed away at the age of 21 on Friday, December 6, during the barbaric attack on Naval Air Station Pensacola.

Originally from Richmond Hill in the First Congressional District of Georgia, Mr. Walters was a pilot in training at the naval air station.

He had recently passed an exam in order to stand watch over the entrances to the station, and when the shots rang out, it was his first time on guard duty.

Before the tragic attack, Mr. Walters joined the Navy to follow in his father's footsteps and build a better sense of purpose in life.

His father remembers that when he graduated boot camp, the grin on his face said it all. He was so proud to have the opportunity to earn his wings as a Navy airman.

For his friends and classmates, his bright personality and sense of humor could light up any room he walked into.

It is truly devastating that Mr. Walters' life was cut so short by this tragic event, a life which had so much enthusiasm to serve his country and make this world a better place to live.

Mr. Walters' family and friends will be in my thoughts and prayers during this most difficult time.

HOUR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. FLETCHER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

□ 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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H10127

URGING SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS LOWER DRUG COSTS NOW ACT

(Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Madam Speaker, I am proud to be voting today for the passage of the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act, a bill to lower healthcare costs by allowing Medicare to negotiate lower drug prices for certain high-cost drugs.

I am even prouder that H.R. 3 will reinvest the savings from these drug negotiations into a transformational expansion of Medicare benefits, which includes routine vision, hearing, and dental care.

I have fought for years to include these critical services in my Seniors Have Eyes, Ears, and Teeth Act because they will prevent healthcare costs and suffering due to senior accidents, falls, cognitive impairment, oral cancer, and increased chronic conditions.

Most importantly, giving our older adults the gift of hearing, vision, and oral health would go a long way to helping them enjoy their golden years free from depression and social isolation.

It is time to recognize total healthcare for our seniors must include adequate access to vision, hearing, and dental services.

I urge my colleagues to vote “yes” on H.R. 3.

CELEBRATING NATIONAL GUARD ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. SPANO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to wish a happy birthday to the National Guard and all servicemembers, past and present.

Established in 1636, our Nation’s first militia units organized in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and were referred to as Minutemen during the Revolutionary War.

Today, the Army and Air National Guard are made up of 184,000 heroes who bravely stepped up to defend our freedom.

They made history by forming one of the first all-African American units during the Civil War. They contributed 50,000 personnel following the 9/11 attacks. As I speak, they help secure our southern borders.

More importantly, the National Guard sets itself apart as each member is sworn to uphold two constitutions, both Federal and State.

Most of us are familiar with Guard units helping communities deal with floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, snowstorms, and other emergencies. But in times of civil unrest, the citizens of a State can rest assured that the Guard will be ready, if needed.

These incredible Americans deserve to be recognized and celebrated for their long and continued service to our Nation. So on behalf of a grateful Nation, I thank them for their sacrifice and commitment.

ANTI-SEMITISM THREATENS OUR COUNTRY

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

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Madam Speaker, I rise today because violent anti-Semitism continues to threaten our country, including in my home State of New Jersey.

Investigations are still underway, but I was devastated to learn that the victims in a kosher market in Jersey City, New Jersey, were likely targeted because they were Jewish.

All Americans should be outraged when fellow citizens are targeted simply because of their religion. The Anti-Defamation League has reported that anti-Semitism remains at near historic levels, with New Jersey ranked third in the Nation last year.

We must stand together now to denounce hate targeted at anyone and prevent more violence.

New Jersey stands together to honor the police officers harmed in the attack, who were doing what they do every single day, getting our backs, especially Detective Joseph Seals, a wonderful father of five beautiful children and a 15-year police veteran who gave his own life protecting his community.

We mourn with his loved ones, and our prayers are with the officers and community members still recovering.

Together, as one New Jersey, and as Americans, I know we can combat this hate, which has no place in our community, in the State of New Jersey, or in our country.

May God continue to bless the people of Jersey City, the State of New Jersey, and the United States of America.

HONORING THE LIFE OF COLONEL JOHN EDWARD GRAY

(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 honor the life of retired Colonel John Edward Gray of Mount Ulla, North Carolina, who passed away earlier this month at age 94.

Colonel Gray was born in Cleveland, North Carolina, on August 24, 1925, and went on to serve in five campaigns against the Japanese in the Pacific theater in World War II.

Following the war, he returned home and resumed his education at Davidson College. After he graduated in 1949, he served again in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Selfless, legendary, valiant are all the words that come to mind when

thinking about all that this man accomplished in his life.

Colonel Gray is survived by his wife of 72 years, Sue, and his 5 children, 12 grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild.

Madam Speaker, please join me in honoring the life of Colonel John Edward Gray.

TOWNHALLS ESSENTIAL TO CONGRESSIONAL WORK

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

Mr. DELGADO. Madam Speaker, I rise today because tomorrow I will be holding my 33rd townhall since being sworn in, with three in each of the 11 counties making up my district.

I promised my constituents that I would be transparent, accountable, and accessible. New York Congressional District 19 is nearly 8,000 square miles, larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined. In the past year, we spent hours in the car, driving in the rain, snow, and sleet to meet folks where they are.

We have held townhalls in fire departments, schools, small businesses, and theaters, and even had crowds spilling into the hallway. When the broadband signal was strong enough, the entire conversation was streamed on Facebook Live.

These open forums are essential to my work to represent our district. That is how democracy is supposed to work: civil conversations with my constituents, finding common ground, and concluding with legislation reflecting the needs of the community.

Townhalls are a true highlight of my first year in office, and we are just getting started. I look forward to meeting more folks tomorrow at the Highland Middle School in Ulster.

COMMEMORATING 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF GARDEN CITY

(Miss RICE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Miss RICE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the founding of my hometown, Garden City, New York.

As the first planned suburban community in the United States, the village of Garden City is steeped in history.

Home to Mitchel Air Force Base, Garden City has played a critical role in our Nation’s aviation industry. It was here where our Nation’s first fighter pilots trained during World War I. During World War II, the airbase played a pivotal role in defending our Nation’s Eastern seaboard and later served as a staging ground for the European air campaign against Nazi Germany.

Garden City is also at the epicenter of countless cultural and tourist attractions on Long Island, including the