



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 165

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2019

No. 208

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BROWN of Maryland).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 26, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANTHONY G. BROWN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff, Chaplain, U.S. Navy, Retired, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we pray, reflect, meditate in different ways. And during these holy days—Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, more—some sing different songs, reflecting beauty, diversity of communities, cultures, faiths that make our Nation rich.

Yet we Americans, we the people, share songs of unity beyond diversity. When we embrace our Nation's highest dreams, our lives become its songs.

Of America, we sing: "O beautiful for patriot dream that sees beyond the years."

Of America, we sing: "O beautiful for heroes proved, in liberating strife who more than self, their country love, and mercy more than life."

God bless our lives, our leaders, with a patriot dream of love of country, love of mercy, freedom, justice—over party,

over self; to cooperate, sacrifice, even compromise for the "art of the possible," for the greater good.

God bless America, we sing. Help us, we pray, forever make this Nation worthy of that blessing and that song.

And let us say, Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 7(a) of House Resolution 758, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The SPEAKER pro tempore 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.

ADJOURNMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 7(b) of House Resolution 758, the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Monday, December 30, 2019.

Thereupon (at 9 o'clock and 2 minutes a.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, December 30, 2019, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3376. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Atka Mackerel in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 180713633-9174-02] (RTID: 0648-XY016) received December 18, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3377. A letter from the Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's temporary rule — Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone Off Alaska; Several Groundfish Species in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands Management Area [Docket No.: 180713633-9174-02; RTID 0648-XY055] received December 18, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

3378. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, NMFS, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule — Pacific Halibut Fisheries; Revisions To Catch Sharing Plan and Domestic Management Measures in Alaska [Docket No.: 191114-0081] (RIN: 0648-BH94) received December 18, 2019, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); Public Law 104-121, Sec. 251; (110 Stat. 868); to the Committee on Natural Resources.

ADDITIONAL SPONSORS

Under clause 7 of rule XII, sponsors were added to public bills and resolutions, as follows:

H.R. 1042: Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia and Ms. FINKENAUER.

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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WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 2019

No. 208

Senate

The Senate met at 3:15 and 5 seconds p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable JOHN KENNEDY, a Senator from the State of Louisiana.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

The legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 26, 2019.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN KENNEDY, a Senator from the State of Louisiana, to perform the duties of the Chair.

CHUCK GRASSLEY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KENNEDY thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL MONDAY,
DECEMBER 30, 2019, AT 2 P.M.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday, December 30, 2019.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:15 and 43 seconds p.m., adjourned until Monday, December 30, 2019, at 2 p.m.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IMPEACHING DONALD JOHN
TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE
UNITED STATES, FOR HIGH
CRIMES AND MISDEMEANORS

SPEECH OF

HON. JUAN VARGAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 18, 2019

Mr. VARGAS. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak on the impeachment articles introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives to impeach Donald John Trump. Earlier this week over 750 historians published a statement condemning Donald Trump for his flagrant abuses of power and urged the House to impeach him. In just a couple of days that number has quickly doubled, with a total of 1,507 signatures.

These historians highlighted that one of our Founding Fathers, Alexander Hamilton, wrote impeachment was created to deal with the “misconduct of public men” which involves “the abuse or violation of some public trust”. This exactly what Donald Trump has done, time and time again.

Our Constitution was written to ensure there are checks on our power as elected officials. It ensures that we cannot become kings; that we remain public men and women. That is the foundation upon which our country was built. In a democracy, our rulers are the people, the citizens, our constituents, and we were chosen to stand in public office to serve them.

The Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution, but it is our actions in high office that give those great words meaning and power. As public servants we are trusted to abide by the law and to only use our positions in office to protect and support our country.

Donald Trump has used the power of the presidential office for his own personal gain, violating the trust of the American people.

He has withheld from our ally, Ukraine, \$391 million in military and security assistance. That \$391 million was approved for Ukrainian assistance by Republican and Democratic members in legislation that passed the House and the Senate. Congress, finding common ground in our American values that compel us to support our ally, provided this money. But Donald Trump put it on hold.

To leave our ally’s civilians and soldiers to struggle as they fight against our shared adversary and dangle this congressionally-approved aid in front of them, is alone bad leadership. It is the behavior that stains our country, tarnishing our name in the eyes of countries who look to us as leaders of the free world. But leaving our allies without support is an offense Trump tends to repeat, and it alone is not the impeachable offense.

Trump used his trusted power over congressionally-approved money, our constituents’ money, not to protect our ally or our constituents, but to bolster his chances in winning our next presidential election. The United States Ambassador to the European Union testified that Donald Trump would release this aid and meet with the Ukrainian president in person only if Ukraine publicly announced an investigation into Trump’s political rival, Former Vice President Joe Biden. He abused his trusted power. That is the first impeachable offense.

Congress moved to seek out the truth for the American people, but Donald Trump continued to block this co-equal branch of government. Following the orders of Donald Trump, nine witnesses from the White House have defied congressional subpoenas, included in twelve White House officials who have refused to testify. Despite congressional requests and legal subpoenas, no documents have been released from the White House for the congressional inquiry. The single transcript that was released prior to the inquiry has been defined as a “rough” transcript, its omissions flagged by a trusted national security official who lis-

tened in to the call that the transcript describes. Finally, Congress has invited Donald Trump to engage in the inquiry, yet he has rejected that invitation. Donald Trump is keeping the American public in the dark, knowing that if light were fully shed on his actions, he would hold much less influence and power over their judgement.

There has been no president before Donald Trump who has so completely defied congressional oversight or sought to impede it. When he wholly blocks the availability of information to a duly elected co-equal branch of government responsible for oversight and investigations into the executive branch, he holds an unprecedented amount of control.

That is the second impeachable offense.

Since the founding of our great nation we have celebrated public servants who put their country before themselves, and rejected kings and tyrants, who put themselves before their country. The great women and men in our past that stood on this floor upheld the words of the Constitution and shielded our democracy from those who attempted to exploit it.

Few times in history have we had such a historic vote.

We ask ourselves today, will we stand with the man that believes Article II of the Constitution allows him to, quote, “Do anything I want”?

Will we stand with the man who said nothing would happen to him if he shot someone of Fifth Avenue in New York City?

Will we stand with the man who abuses the same laws our constituents abide by, the laws we have pledged to protect, and the laws he swore under oath to faithfully execute?

Or will we stand up as protectors of our Constitution, and of our nation?

Our names will be tied to our votes.

I urge my colleagues to support both articles of impeachment and hold Donald Trump accountable for his flagrant abuses of power.

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Daily Digest

Senate

Chamber Action

The Senate met at 3:15:05 p.m. in pro forma session, and adjourned at 3:15:43 p.m. until 2 p.m., on Monday, December 30, 2019.

Committee Meetings

No committee meetings were held.

House of Representatives

Chamber Action

Public Bills and Resolutions Introduced: There were no public bills introduced today.

Additional Cosponsors: Page H12299

Reports Filed: There were no reports filed today.

Speaker: Read a letter from the Speaker wherein she appointed Representative Brown (MD) to act as Speaker pro tempore for today. Page H12299

Guest Chaplain: The prayer was offered by the Guest Chaplain, Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff, Chaplain, U.S. Navy, Retired, Washington, DC. Page H12299

Quorum Calls—Votes: There were no yea-and-nay votes, and there were no recorded votes. There were no quorum calls.

Adjournment: The House met at 9 a.m. and adjourned at 9:02 a.m.

Committee Meetings

No hearings were held.

Joint Meetings

No joint committee meetings were held.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS FOR MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2019

(Committee meetings are open unless otherwise indicated)

Senate

No meetings/hearings scheduled.

House

No hearings are scheduled.

Next Meeting of the SENATE
2 p.m., Monday, December 30

Next Meeting of the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
10 a.m., Monday, December 30

Senate Chamber

House Chamber

Program for Monday: Senate will meet in a pro forma session.

Program for Monday: House will meet in Pro Forma session at 10 a.m.

Extensions of Remarks, as inserted in this issue

HOUSE

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Congressional Record

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