

declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. GARCIA of Texas) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

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

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

We ask Your special blessing upon the Members of this people's House. They face difficult decisions in difficult times, with many forces and interests demanding their attention.

In these days give wisdom to all the Members, that they might execute their responsibilities to the benefit of all Americans.

Bless them, O God, and be with them and with us all this day and every day to come. May all that is done be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

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

Mr. ROSE of New York 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.

#### HONORING MS. MIMI CUSICK

(Mr. ROSE of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSE of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today in solemn memory of Ms. Mimi Cusick, a public servant, devoted mother, and larger-than-life figure in Staten Island politics for the past five decades.

Ms. Cusick passed away on January 5, but she leaves behind a powerful legacy in my community.

Ms. Cusick encouraged women to get involved in politics. A lifelong Staten Islander, she expressed a passion for politics at a young age and worked her way up as a behind-the-scenes force in the Staten Island Democratic Party.

And even though she was a legend among Democrats on Staten Island,

Ms. Cusick never hesitated to invite friends and neighbors of all political stripes into her home after great events like the island's St. Patrick's Day Parade.

After her children left for college, she just couldn't give up serving her community. No, Ms. Cusick worked as a school safety officer at P.S. 30 and P.S. 22 for 20 years.

Staten Island and all of New York City are going to miss Ms. Cusick's generosity of spirit, her devotion to public service, and her passion for civic engagement.

Madam Speaker, may Ms. Cusick rest in peace. She will be incredibly, incredibly missed, but we will honor her legacy for all time to come.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

(Mrs. HARTZLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, Americans from all walks of life suffer because of rising healthcare costs. It is a problem that impacts everyone. H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act starts addressing this.

This bill fosters competition, lowers the cost of medication, and spurs innovation, allowing more generic drugs to come into the market. One way it does this is by preventing drug companies from unfairly keeping generic equivalents from people who need them.

H.R. 19 also caps prescription drug costs for Medicare beneficiaries and includes a smoothing out mechanism allowing seniors to distribute their out-of-pocket expenses throughout the year. That is why I cosponsored H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act, to take the first step towards making healthcare affordable. It includes nearly 50 reforms supported by both parties, and it provides real healthcare solutions.

Madam Speaker, I urge Speaker PELOSI to bring this bill to a vote, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

#### JULIA TYLER AND DANCE HAPPY

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

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share the success of a young constituent from my district whose story should make us all proud.

Julia Tyler is a 24-year-old young woman with Down syndrome. Several years ago with the support of her parents, her school district, and a job coach, Julia was able to land a job at a local boutique in preparation for her transition to the working world after graduation from high school. With the help of her job coach, she began designing totes, pillows, and table runners. She learned how to silkscreen geometric designs onto this merchandise so she could then sell them at the boutique where she worked and at local craft fairs. The boutique owner took

notice of Julia's creativity and determination, and together they cofounded a new company, Dance Happy, to market Julia's creations.

In 2019, a subsidiary of American Eagle began selling Julia's totes online for the holiday season. They quickly sold out, and a bigger order has been placed for 2020.

I am so pleased to celebrate the success of Julia, Dance Happy, her job coach, and her business partner at Compendium Boutique. Together they provide an important reminder of what can happen when we look beyond a person's disability and work together to provide opportunities for all. I am also pleased to have a successful new business in Pennsylvania's Fifth Congressional District, a business that started in Swarthmore and is now housed in Aston, Pennsylvania.

Their success is also a great example of how the IDEA and well-funded, effective special education can prepare students with disabilities for employment in our communities.

#### COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, January 13, 2020.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,  
*The Speaker, House of Representatives,*  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 13, 2020, at 12:28 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1982.  
That the Senate passed S. 2629.  
That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 65.  
That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 66.  
That the Senate agreed to S.J. Res. 67.  
That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 263.  
That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 925.

With best wishes, I am  
Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 4:30 today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 8 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1630

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. KELLY of Illinois) at 4 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair

will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

**APPROVING REQUEST OF SECRETARY OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR WAIVER UNDER SECTION 1703E(f) OF TITLE 38, UNITED STATES CODE**

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 80) approving the request of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a waiver under section 1703E(f) of title 38, United States Code.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

**H. J. RES. 80**

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,* That Congress approves the request for a waiver under section 1703E(f) of title 38, United States Code, as submitted by the Secretary on December 6, 2019.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVID P. ROE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

**GENERAL LEAVE**

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.J. Res. 80.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.J. Res. 80 introduced by Representative ROE of Tennessee, the ranking member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

This resolution would grant VA limited authority to conduct a dental health access pilot, which VA has proposed under section 152 of the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

Under section 152, VA can pilot healthcare payment and service delivery models through its Center for Innovation for Care and Payment.

On December 6, 2019, VA submitted a section 152 report to Congress proposing the Care Coordination for Dental Benefits program.

Through this pilot, VA would refer veterans who are ineligible for dental benefits to private providers or community programs that offer pro bono or discounted dental services. VA will not pay private providers for the cost of these services under the pilot. To carry

out this dental referral service, the section 152 report contained a request that Congress narrowly exempt or "waive" VA's authorizing statute.

When a section 152 report contains a request from VA to "waive" its authorizing statute, Congress must pass a joint resolution to approve a waiver so VA can proceed with a pilot program. By passing this joint resolution, we are approving VA's waiver request so it can pilot the referral of veterans for free or low-cost dental care.

Madam Speaker, currently VA provides dental services for only about 8 percent of veterans who are enrolled in the VA healthcare system. Generally, to receive dental care at VA's expense, veterans must have a dental condition that is related to a service-connected disability, be a former prisoner of war, be rated as 100 percent permanently and totally disabled, or need dental services in preparation for a hospital admission.

Under this pilot, VA will be able to coordinate dental care for the remaining 92 percent of veterans ineligible for dental care. Specifically, VA will provide administrative support potentially through a call center and online self-service portal to educate and assist these veterans in accessing community programs and providers that offer pro bono or discounted dental services. According to VA, community dental programs are available through federally qualified health centers, community health centers, and the American Dental Association.

Through this pilot, VA staff will be able to assist veterans in scheduling appointments with dentists that participate in these programs. VA staff will be authorized to obtain records from the dental visits and provide them to veterans' VA primary care providers.

I support granting VA this limited waiver because it will not permit VA to outsource more healthcare to private providers beyond its current authority, and it will not drain precious resources from VA hospitals and clinics.

I support this pilot because it has the potential to improve veterans' access to dental care, and to improve the timeliness of that care. Neglecting oral health can have serious medical consequences. For example, clinical researchers have identified links between poor oral health and other medical conditions such as heart disease, bacterial pneumonia, and stroke.

VA estimates this pilot will be cost neutral, as there will be cost savings from reducing emergency department visits associated with delayed treatment or nontreatment of oral health issues.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting H.J. Res. 80.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DAVID P. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.J. Res. 80, approving the re-

quest of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for a waiver under the law established by the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

Specifically, this bill would approve VA's first request for a waiver under section 152, as the chairman mentioned, the authority for the Department of Veterans Affairs Center for Innovation for Care and Payment contained within the VA MISSION Act of 2018.

The MISSION Act is one of the most transformative pieces of legislation passed in recent history. Over the next several years, given the authorities provided in the MISSION Act, the VA healthcare system that we know today will evolve into one that is stronger, more efficient, and better able to meet the healthcare needs of veterans now and for generations of veterans to come.

In addition to streamlining numerous community care programs, establishing a process to review and modernize VA assets and infrastructure, expanding the caregiver program, and enhancing the internal capacity of the VA healthcare, the MISSION Act created a Center for Innovation for Care and Payment.

The Innovation Center is charged with establishing pilot programs designed to test potential payment and service delivery models, models currently not in VA's authority to pursue without a waiver, with the goal of reducing expenditures while preserving or enhancing the quality and access to care furnished by VA.

Under the terms of the MISSION Act, the joint resolution we are considering today meets the requirements set forth in law with regard to approving waivers. The substance of this waiver is very modest. It will allow VA to expand its role in assisting veterans who aren't eligible for VA-provided dental care by establishing a pilot program to connect veterans with community-based discounted or pro bono dentists.

The objective of the pilot is to improve the overall health of currently enrolled veterans who are ineligible for VA dental services. The waiver specifically allows VA administrative staff to coordinate community-provided care while also educating veterans on the dental care options available to them within the community.

This proposed pilot is a commonsense approach to improving the wellness of veterans. Research has shown that poor oral health can have a significant impact on overall health with numerous connections between gum disease and other illnesses. Poor oral health is also correlated with potentially avoidable and costly emergency department visits.

Additionally, the approval of this waiver holds open the opportunity for VA to pursue other ideas that can enhance the care and services provided to veterans while also respecting the resources provided by the American taxpayer.

I look forward to working with the VA through the Center of Innovation