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No. 24

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 5, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable HENRY CUELLAR 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 7, 2020, 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, with time equally allocated between the parties and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

TELEHEALTH INCREASES ACCESS TO CARE FOR MONTANANS

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

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, many Montanans live in frontier and rural areas where access to doctors and specialists is a big challenge. They don't worry about when they can see a doctor; they worry if there is even a doctor to see.

For Montana seniors with mobility issues, getting out to see a doctor can

be difficult and can delay their care leading to worse health outcomes.

Montana, unfortunately, also has the highest suicide rate in the Nation. Thousands of Montanans lack adequate access to mental healthcare.

Telehealth can fix these problems. Telehealth increases access to care, brings down healthcare costs, and, in some cases, saves lives.

Unfortunately, Federal telehealth programs have been poorly managed. Currently, 10 different Federal agencies operate telehealth programs with little or no coordination between them.

That is why Chairwoman ESHOO and I have worked for months on ways to improve and increase telehealth services. I appreciate her leadership on this important issue.

Today, we introduce the National Telehealth Strategy and Data Advancement Act. Our bill reauthorizes telehealth grant programs, provides greater oversight of Federal agencies, and helps implement telehealth programs across the country.

Using modern technology to make healthcare more accessible is a commonsense solution. It will particularly help us with our rural doctor shortage in Montana.

This bill will ensure that patients can have access to doctors and specialists in a way that is convenient for them.

I look forward to working on this bipartisan bill. It is a critical step as we ensure all Americans, particularly those in our rural and frontier areas, have access to better, affordable healthcare.

GUN VIOLENCE SURVIVORS WEEK

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, last night in this Chamber, we heard a bloviating, self-congratulatory speech

full of exaggerations, half-truths, and outright falsehoods. The President pretended to have addressed, or was going to address, concerns of the American people.

He said he is taking care of prescription drugs. Yeah. Really. They haven't done a damn thing. We sent a bill to the Senate and it is sitting there.

Second, he said, oh, we are going to protect preexisting conditions. Funny thing, his Attorney General is in court arguing that those preexisting conditions should no longer be protected. But, hey, what the heck.

And then he did devote one sentence—one sentence—to infrastructure. What happened to the \$2 trillion plan he campaigned on and carries on about all the time? Well, so far, he has only proposed cuts.

But one issue of vital concern to the American people that is the focus this week—this is National Gun Violence Survivors Week—did not receive a single mention by the President, despite the fact that several commonsense bipartisan reforms and programs have passed this House and have received no action in the Senate in a year.

H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Comprehensive Background Checks Act, passed on February 27. No action in the Senate.

The Enhanced Background Checks Act passed February 28—bipartisan. Again, no action in the Senate.

Every year, guns are sold to people who aren't supposed to have them—including at that horrible church shooting a couple of years ago—because of a mandate that, if there is confusion over a background check, they have to get the gun within 3 days.

Over the last 10 years, 35,000 guns, because of that provision, were sold to people who were not qualified under Federal law to have the guns. And guess what. Then the Feds contact the FBI who screwed up the background check, contacts the local law enforcement and says, "Hey, go get the gun

☐ 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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