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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RASKIN).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 16, 2020.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JAMIE RASKIN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Dan C. Cummins, Capitol Worship, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Heavenly Father, creator of all things, throughout our history have plagues and diseases pillaged our human frailties. Still another leviathan plunders Your children—stealing, destroying, and killing without prejudice. We beseech You this morning without timidity, but in all reverence and humiliation, reminding You of Your promise to us, Your children, that if destruction should come in the guise of drought or by the hordes of locusts or the peril of pestilence, and whether it comes with the morning's sun, the noonday heat, or the darkness of night, or whether it comes by nature's chance, man's nefarious deed, or by Your outstretched hand, You promised that if Your people, who are called by Your name, shall humble themselves, pray, seek Your face, and turn from our wicked ways, You will hear us from heaven, forgive our sin, and heal our land.

For this we shall do and plead today, O Lord.

In Jesus' name, amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 7(a) of House Resolution 891, 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.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 2 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. RASKIN) at noon.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO BRITISH-AMERICAN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2761, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Members on the part of the House to the British-American Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. MEEKS, New York
Ms. DELBENE, Washington
Mr. KILMER, Washington
Mr. GOMEZ, California
Mr. CROW, Colorado

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO CANADA-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2762 and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Canada-United States Interparliamentary Group:

Mr. MEEKS, New York
Mr. PETERSON, Minnesota
Mr. DEFAZIO, Oregon
Mr. LARSEN, Washington
Ms. DELBENE, Washington
Mr. MORELLE, New York

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE PRESIDENT'S EXPORT COUNCIL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to Executive Order 12131, and the order of the House of January 3, 2019, of the following Members on the part of the House to the President's Export Council:

Mr. LARSON, Connecticut
Ms. DELBENE, Washington
Mr. GOMEZ, California

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 1 minute p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 2006

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. WEXTON) at 8 o'clock and 6 minutes p.m.

□ 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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H1697

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN THE ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 6201

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the Chair lays before the House the following resolution (H. Res. 904) directing the Clerk of the House of Representatives to make corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 6201.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the consideration of the resolution?

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, I reserve the right to object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized on his reservation.

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, we had rushed this bill to the floor—I would say rush. It had been an all-day thing Thursday and all-day event Friday, and most of us were not part of the negotiations. We kept getting different versions of the bill that was going to be coming to the floor, and about 9 o'clock I got the latest rendition and had read that. I made a lot of notes and tags and things I was concerned about, and then I thought that was what we were going to be voting on that night; but then there was a new version filed immediately before midnight, and we voted about 12:30.

So I had real concerns about some of the wordings, some of the problems. Of course, as President Obama said, elections have consequences; the majority is going to get a whole lot more of what they want in a bill than the minority. I totally understand that, but there were some concerns about matters.

I am very concerned about small businesses. It had been changed from other laws, exempting those with over 50 or more—like in ObamaCare—employees. Yet in this one, it changed exempting under 500 to under 50—I'm sorry—applying to everybody under 500. That included all those under 50.

A big concern is that it was going to overwhelm some of our smallest businesses. We know a majority of Americans work for small businesses. They create more job opportunities. So this was a big deal. But though I didn't support the bill, and I still have big concerns, I am very grateful for the efforts of the majority, the President, the Secretary of the Treasury, and staff members of our minority leader who have continued to negotiate and work to try to get some of these problems figured out.

So there is no question in my mind at this point that what are being called technical corrections make the bill better than it was when it got passed in the wee hours Saturday morning. So because of that, Madam Speaker, I withdraw my objection to the technical corrections so there may be unanimous consent now that I withdraw my objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation of the gentleman from Texas is withdrawn.

Is there objection to consideration of the resolution?

There was no objection.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 904

Resolved, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall, in the engrossment of bill H.R. 6201, make the following corrections:

(1) Amend division A to read as follows:

“DIVISION A—SECOND CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2020

“The following sums are hereby appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020, and for other purposes, namely:

“TITLE I

“DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

“FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE

“SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN (WIC)

“For an additional amount for the ‘Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children’, \$500,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2021: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

“COMMODITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

“For an additional amount for the ‘Commodity Assistance Program’ for the emergency food assistance program as authorized by section 27(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2036(a)) and section 204(a)(1) of the Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (7 U.S.C. 7508(a)(1)), \$400,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2021: *Provided*, That of the funds made available, the Secretary may use up to \$100,000,000 for costs associated with the distribution of commodities: *Provided further*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

“GENERAL PROVISIONS—THIS TITLE

“SEC. 1101. (a) PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCY.—During fiscal year 2020, in any case in which a school is closed for at least 5 consecutive days during a public health emergency designation during which the school would otherwise be in session, each household containing at least 1 member who is an eligible child attending the school shall be eligible to receive assistance pursuant to a state agency plan approved under subsection (b).

“(b) ASSISTANCE.—To carry out this section, the Secretary of Agriculture may approve State agency plans for temporary emergency standards of eligibility and levels of benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) for households with eligible children. Plans approved by the Secretary shall provide for supplemental allotments to households receiving benefits under such Act, and issuances to households not already receiving benefits. Such level of benefits shall be determined by the Secretary in an amount not less than the value of meals at the free rate over the course of 5 school days for each eligible child in the household.

“(c) MINIMUM CLOSURE REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of Agriculture shall not provide assistance under this section in the case of a school that is closed for less than 5 consecutive days.

“(d) USE OF EBT SYSTEM.—A State agency may provide assistance under this section through the EBT card system established under section 7 of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2016).

“(e) RELEASE OF INFORMATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the Secretary of Agriculture may authorize State educational agencies and school food authorities administering a school lunch program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) to release to appropriate officials administering the supplemental nutrition assistance program such information as may be necessary to carry out this section.

“(f) WAIVERS.—To facilitate implementation of this section, the Secretary of Agriculture may approve waivers of the limits on certification periods otherwise applicable under section 3(f) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2012(f)), reporting requirements otherwise applicable under section 6(c) of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2015(c)), and other administrative requirements otherwise applicable to State agencies under such Act.

“(g) AVAILABILITY OF COMMODITIES.—During fiscal year 2020, the Secretary of Agriculture may purchase commodities for emergency distribution in any area of the United States during a public health emergency designation.

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) The term ‘eligible child’ means a child (as defined in section 12(d) or served under section 11(a)(1) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(d), 1759(a)(1)) who, if not for the closure of the school attended by the child during a public health emergency designation and due to concerns about a COVID-19 outbreak, would receive free or reduced price school meals under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.) at the school.

“(2) The term ‘public health emergency designation’ means the declaration of a public health emergency, based on an outbreak of SARS-CoV-2 or another coronavirus with pandemic potential, by the Secretary of Health and Human Services under section 319 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 247d).

“(3) The term ‘school’ has the meaning given the term in section 12(d) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1760(d)).

“(i) FUNDING.—There are hereby appropriated to the Secretary of Agriculture such amounts as are necessary to carry out this section: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.

“SEC. 1102. In addition to amounts otherwise made available, \$100,000,000, to remain available through September 30, 2021, shall be available for the Secretary of Agriculture to provide grants to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa for nutrition assistance in response to a COVID-19 public health emergency: *Provided*, That such amount is designated by the Congress as being for an emergency requirement pursuant to section 251(b)(2)(A)(i) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985.