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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER. 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.

TRIBUTE TO FRONTLINE WORKERS DURING CORONAVIRUS

The SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the long-term care and nursing home workers of Missouri's Fourth District, who have witnessed the devastating effects of the coronavirus pandemic on a daily basis. These frontline healthcare workers cope with the deaths and illnesses brought on by this virus and are witnesses to the heartbreaking losses family members experience whose loved ones pass away without benefit of that final embrace before saying good-bye.

For these noble and selfless individuals, the impact of COVID-19 isn't restricted to emotional wounds opened through witnessing the suffering of others, but by the personal physical health risks posed by being on the front lines to conduct their day-to-day activities.

These frontline workers in our nursing homes and long-term care facilities are heroes who have chosen to possibly put themselves in peril by answering

the call. They have been a source of encouragement, hope, and help to our Nation's greatest generation, a lifeline amidst a challenging time.

On behalf of myself and the caring families of Missouri's Fourth District, thank you. We appreciate you, and we pray God blesses you in a very special way during this special season and throughout the year.

WHAT MESSAGE ARE WE SENDING?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAKANO). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, as the co-chair of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, as chairman of the Congressional-Executive Commission on China, as someone who cares deeply about human rights and democratic principles, and as a proud Member of this House, I rise to express my deep concern about the damage being done to America's moral authority by those who refuse to accept the legitimate outcome of November's election and who continue to deliberately spread lies and manufacture conspiracy theories that have no basis of fact in an attempt to overturn the will of the American people.

As Americans, we see ourselves as a beacon to the world, as that shining city upon the hill. We believe our political experiment, to create a country united by ideals, rather than blood and soil, is unique and exceptional.

We promote democracy as a pillar of our foreign policy, confident in our own example. We say we are a nation of laws, not men.

Yet, since November 3, a widespread effort to overturn the results of the presidential election have been openly endorsed by some high-ranking leaders and facilitated by the silence of many more.

For the record, Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won by more than 7 million votes. They received 81 million votes, 51.3 percent of the total cast. On Monday, President-elect Biden won 306 electoral college votes, two more than President Trump in 2016.

There is no question that Joe Biden and KAMALA HARRIS won the election resoundingly. Those who believe otherwise first alleged massive fraud, then claimed election procedures were unfair. But when granted the opportunity in courts of law to present evidence of fraud, they couldn't do it.

There simply is no proof of fraud at any significant scale. The attacks against voting by mail, signature matching, and the like, notably selective to begin with, had mostly already been litigated.

Mr. Speaker, it is critically important that Americans trust our elections. That is why credible claims of fraud or irregularities must be investigated and corrective action taken. That has happened.

There have been multiple recounts. Three in Georgia alone. Those seeking to overturn the election results have lost 59 times in courts across seven States and twice before this Supreme Court.

At least 86 judges, many appointed by Republicans, have rejected at least one post-election lawsuit. All three Supreme Court Justices nominated by President Trump ruled against him.

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that the November elections were free and fair. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency said that the election "was the most secure in American history" and "there is no evidence that any voting system deleted or lost votes, changed votes, or was in any way compromised."

Attorney General Barr, of all people, said that the Justice Department has uncovered no voting fraud "on a scale that could have affected a different

□ 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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outcome in the election.” I am using his words.

The election is over, yet President Trump still refuses to concede and his allies continue to look for ways to throw out the votes of millions of Americans.

Mr. Speaker, this is crazy. It is undemocratic and un-American, and it degrades democracy in every corner of the world. If this were happening in another country, our government would rightfully demand that the results of free and fair elections be respected.

Mr. Speaker, some may criticize my remarks today because I objected to certifying the electoral college results in 2017. So let me be clear. I do not oppose using established constitutional procedures. I object when those procedures are not used to further the truth or to undermine it.

In 2017, eight U.S. intelligence agencies—eight—said that Russia had engaged in an unprecedented attempt to interfere in our elections in favor of Donald Trump. I sought the kind of assurance about the security of the 2016 election that has already been provided for 2020. It was not forthcoming.

Mr. Speaker, America’s institutions will survive the test of the last few weeks. Due to the quiet courage and commitment of thousands of volunteer election workers, local and State election officials—some facing threats and intimidation—and the integrity of our courts, the clear choice of the people will be respected. But I worry that we are becoming what we condemn elsewhere.

Democracy is not guaranteed. Each of us has to choose democracy every day in the way we conduct our politics. Either we choose to enforce democratic rules of the game or we don’t. Either we choose to accept the losses alongside the wins or we don’t. Either we choose to tell the truth or we don’t.

Mr. Speaker, today I urge my colleagues to proceed with caution. If our politics belie our values, we will be lost at home and ignored abroad.

I believe we are an exceptional country. Let’s act like it.

HOLIDAYS FOR HEROES

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind us all of the great American Red Cross program, Holidays for Heroes, an opportunity to thank and support our military, veterans, and their families throughout this holiday season.

We all look forward to gathering with family and friends and loved ones this time of year. For our servicemembers, that is a luxury that all too often is not able to happen.

These men and women spend many months at a time—at times over a year and, in their service, years—away from their families. That is difficult no mat-

ter what time of year it is, but it is around the holidays their sacrifice is magnified.

I would like to encourage everyone to reach out to their local Red Cross chapters to find out how to send a card, how to volunteer or get involved however they see fit to spread some holiday cheer to our heroes. Even a small gesture can brighten the holiday season for those that are deployed; a reminder that they are remembered, that they are appreciated every day, especially during this holiday season.

So take a moment out of your day today to let a soldier know just how much you appreciate them.

RESTAURANTS NEED A LIFELINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, millions of America’s restaurants are on the edge of financial collapse. If we do not get them a lifeline now, we will lose these pillars of community and economic vitality that have long stood throughout our Nation. And we will pay an even steeper price as millions more Americans lose their jobs and families are left stranded with nowhere to turn.

More than 110,000 of America’s restaurants have already closed during this very difficult pandemic. Restaurateurs have adapted, have reinvented, have dug deep to hold on this long. But more than one-third say they won’t survive the next 6 months without Federal help. In my home State of New York, that figure is closer to more than one-half.

We can and we must act to save these cherished Main Street establishments before it is too late. The House already passed a bipartisan bill that gets the job done. With more than 200 bipartisan cosponsors, H.R. 7197, the RESTAURANTS Act, would create a \$120 billion revitalization fund that would rescue America’s independent restaurants.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the Senate to join us in this bipartisan effort and pass the RESTAURANTS Act. Our Main Street businesses have always delivered for us. Let us make sure that we deliver for them now, when they need it so desperately.

RECOGNIZING THE EXEMPLARY SERVICE OF MAIA HUNT ESTES

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

Mr. BROWN of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the exemplary service of my now former chief of staff, Maia Hunt Estes.

Maia has been an indispensable adviser and confidante to me for more than a decade, including my first days in Congress and during my tenure as Maryland’s Lieutenant Governor. It is fair to say that I wouldn’t be here today without her extraordinary counsel.

I could count on Maia day and night to get the job done. Maia brought an unmatched level of commitment to every issue, every challenge, every single fight, every constituent case, no matter how big or small.

Throughout our time together, Maia has provided strategic advice and clear-eyed leadership on national security and defense, transportation and infrastructure.

Maia served as my key liaison to the Congressional Black Caucus and Democratic leadership on core issues to me and the people of Maryland. Her deep understanding of the issues, candid advice, insightful opinions, and passionate drive for serving others has helped me deliver for my State, my constituents, our servicemembers, and our country.

Maia served as a mentor for my team, both in my district office and on Capitol Hill. She led my staff to always put the needs of our constituents first and work hard to enact real change.

I look forward to seeing the great work that Maia will do as she takes on new challenges and, no doubt, excels.

Maia, thank you very much for your years of service. You have made a difference in the lives of many, and I know you will continue to do so in the years ahead.

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SUPPORTING THE JOHN LEWIS TOD LOOP

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

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the Chamber’s attention to legislation I introduced yesterday. I was honored to introduce legislation which would initiate the process to bring innovative mass transit options to the south side.

It was an important first step to bringing the economic power of transit-oriented development to often neglected areas within the metro Atlanta region without displacement of longtime residents, the John Lewis TOD Loop. The report will be required to be produced to the Congress within 1 year.

In addition to the study, this legislation launches the first transformative transit project. This project will spark improvement and bring economic justice to established neighborhoods and businesses in the areas where Representative John Lewis lived for decades.

Innovative mass transit options in the corridor will link Oakland City and Fort McPherson to Greenbriar Mall and a future senior citizen-focused transit and mixed-use center named in honor of Representative John Lewis.

Such forward progress will improve the lives of residents while reducing our CO₂ emissions, helping to heal a warming planet.

This project is yet another step toward revitalizing parts of Atlanta yet