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## House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. TLAIB).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
March 16, 2021.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RASHIDA TLAIB 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 4, 2021, 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 1:50 p.m.

### FACING CATASTROPHE ON SOUTHERN BORDER

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

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, despite what the Biden administration would like the American people to believe, our Nation is facing a catastrophe on the southern border.

Last month alone, U.S. Border Protection officers encountered more than 100,000 migrants attempting to cross the border illegally. This is a 173 percent increase from last February.

Right now, the Office of Refugee Resettlement shelters that house unaccompanied migrant children are reaching capacity. Our border agents are being diverted from their posts to care for record numbers of teenagers and children who are illegally crossing our border.

This escalating crisis is rooted right here in Washington, D.C., more than 1,700 miles away from that border. As we witness unprecedented groups of migrants reaching the United States, there is no question that the President's weak border security stance has heightened this so-called challenge.

By reversing the Trump administration's actions to bolster security on the southern border and halting construction of the border wall, the current administration is sending a clear message to the world that America's border, unfortunately, is wide open.

Innocent people, and cartels and human traffickers who prey upon them, pay attention to what we say here in Washington. Words have consequences. Rhetoric has ramifications.

What is happening on the southern border is both a humanitarian and security crisis. It is simply inhumane for politicians to incentivize the dangerous trek across Central America to the southern border.

Those who attempt the journey face treacherous conditions, gang violence, and unthinkable danger. As my friend, Republican leader KEVIN MCCARTHY, said at the border just yesterday, "This is human heartbreak."

As the situation worsens, the limited resources on the border are being pulled away from protecting the American people. The Biden administration is prioritizing illegal immigrants over the American people. As U.S. Customs and Border Protection leadership shifts to caring for migrants, there are fewer officers focusing on apprehending threats.

This is not only a human trafficking crisis; it is also a drug trafficking crisis.

The illicit drugs, including deadly methamphetamine, cocaine, and fentanyl, that come across the porous southern border are killing Pennsylvanians in the streets of Altoona, Johnstown, Bedford, Chambersburg, Gettysburg, and Somerset, and throughout my district.

Just this weekend, Border Patrol agents apprehended two individuals attempting to smuggle nearly 8 pounds of methamphetamine across the border. By preventing these drugs from reaching American communities, we likely saved lives. What would have happened if these suspects hadn't been caught?

Clearly, we need more, and not less, security on our southern border.

As our Nation continues to combat the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress cannot afford to stand back and allow the border crisis to get even worse. We need safer, stronger, and more secure communities in Pennsylvania and across the country.

Here is the truth: The border crisis has consequences beyond the border. Inaction is not the correct action. Border security is national security.

### FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. HAALAND) for 5 minutes.

Ms. HAALAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to deliver my final remarks on the floor of the people's House.

I am humbled to have spent the last 2 years in this Chamber, where I proudly served New Mexico, alongside my colleagues past and present in the New Mexico delegation. I am thankful to Senators MARTIN HEINRICH and BEN RAY LUJÁN, in particular, for helping to build support for my confirmation, and to former Senator Tom Udall for his years of friendship and mentorship.

I love New Mexico. Not only is it my home, where I raised my child, went to

□ 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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college, started a small business, and started organizing, it is my ancestral homeland.

As a 35th-generation New Mexican, and not unlike the other families with roots in our State, I have a deep connection to the land, air, and water that sustains our communities. My ancestors settled there because they were drawn to the once-mighty Rio Grande and the sacred places that dot the sandstone mesas and granite mountains.

That is why I made the most of my time in Congress. I spent every opportunity meeting with families, listening to small business owners, learning about our tech industry, connecting with brave servicemembers and veterans, and working to deliver for the people.

When I was a little girl, none of this crossed my mind as a possibility for me. I wasn't one of the students picked out to apply to college. In fact, I didn't apply to college until I was 28. I was constantly struggling to make ends meet, and I raised my child as a single mom.

Growing up, Native women rarely held Federal leadership positions, and now little girls everywhere will know that they can run for Congress and win and that this country holds promise for everyone.

In fact, it is the unique experiences and struggles that make good leaders and why I became an organizer in the first place. I believe that it is the fact that I relied on food stamps to feed my family that makes me qualified to advocate for families like mine. It is the fact that I overcame addiction that makes me qualified to help people who are in their own struggles. It is the fact that I know what it is like to be indigenous that makes me qualified to advocate for our country to meet its trust responsibility.

The beauty of this Chamber is that each Member of Congress brings their unique experiences to the table and advocates for the causes we know best. With Speaker NANCY PELOSI's brilliant leadership, House Natural Resources Committee Chair RAÚL GRIJALVA's wisdom, and House Armed Services Committee Chair ADAM SMITH's guidance, and all the leadership here in the House, I had the opportunity to make a real difference for communities everywhere by addressing climate change; protecting voting rights; fighting for racial, environmental, and economic justice; and providing urgent COVID relief for millions of people.

I am also thankful for the collaboration and mentorship of my colleagues across the aisle, including Representative TOM COLE and the dean of the House, DON YOUNG, and my colleagues on the House Armed Services and Natural Resources Committees.

We worked in a bipartisan way to address issues, including missing and murdered indigenous women and ensuring that our servicemen and -women and military families have the resources that they need.

To my colleagues in the Tri-Caucus, thank you for embracing the issues facing Native Americans and working to address longstanding disparities in our communities.

I am proud that, with the support of my colleagues, several of my bills became law: the Not Invisible Act; Rent the Camo, a pilot program for pregnant servicemembers in the 2021 NDAA; the PROGRESS for Indian Tribes Act; provisions from my Military Housing Oversight and Servicemember Protection Act in the 2020 NDAA; the Native American Business Incubators Act; and the Veterans Affairs Tribal Advisory Committee Act.

I thought I would have more time here, but we are called to service in different ways.

Though I am excited to become the first Native American Cabinet Secretary in history, I am also sad to leave this Chamber. As a twice-elected Member of Congress, it has been both a pleasure and privilege to serve alongside you in our quest to improve the lives of the American people.

I want each of you to know that I am grateful for the knowledge you shared with me, the friendship, and the work we accomplished together, and I will miss all of you dearly.

I wouldn't be here today without my extraordinary staff in Albuquerque and here at the Capitol, the Natural Resources Committee staff, and the House Armed Services Committee staff. They all put in very long hours on behalf of our State and our country. My legislative accomplishments are also their accomplishments.

Additionally, thanks to all of the staff who work right here on the floor, whose dedication and experience keep our Congress running. I am so grateful to all of you.

To New Mexico, thank you. Thank you to the activists, supporters, families, and communities that make our State an incredible place to call home.

#### CONGRATULATING JIM SCHMITT

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

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Mr. Jim Schmitt for being named Teacher of the Year in Duval County.

Mr. Schmitt received this honor for his work teaching global perspectives and research at Mandarin High School.

Serving as a teacher for 28 years, Mr. Schmitt has dedicated his career to improving both student learning and the methods teachers use to educate their students.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Mr. Schmitt has demonstrated his leadership ability by creating a discussion forum for teachers to share strategies, ensuring that teachers and students are prepared to learn in an in-class or online environment.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Mr.

Schmitt for his dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for his commitment to the success of his students and peers alike.

#### CONGRATULATING ALI PRESSEL

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Ali Pressel for being named Teacher of the Year in St. Johns County.

Ms. Pressel received this honor for her work teaching biology and agriculture at Creekside High School.

As a teacher for more than 15 years, Ms. Pressel worked tirelessly to help bring exciting educational opportunities in STEM to her students and to encourage them to engage their curiosity.

The philosophy that guides Ms. Pressel's work is that all students should have limitless opportunities to make connections in their communities through exploration and discovery.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Ms. Pressel for her dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for her commitment to the success of her students and peers alike.

#### CONGRATULATING KRISTAN CRONIN

Mr. RUTHERFORD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Ms. Kristan Cronin for being named Teacher of the Year in Nassau County.

Ms. Cronin received this honor for her work teaching fourth grade math, science, and social studies at Wildlight Elementary School.

Ms. Cronin has been a teacher for 17 years and is committed to guiding her students as they recognize and develop their talents and abilities. Ms. Cronin creates a hands-on work environment for her students to succeed, develops a love for knowledge, and helps them apply what they have learned to everyday life.

On behalf of the Fourth Congressional District of Florida, I thank Ms. Cronin for her dedication to educating the students of northeast Florida and for her commitment to the success of her students and peers alike.

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#### COMMONSENSE SOLUTIONS TO GUN VIOLENCE CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. UNDERWOOD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, I rise to call on our colleagues in the Senate to swiftly pass H.R. 8, the Bipartisan Background Checks Act; and H.R. 1446, the Enhanced Background Checks Act.

These bills are bipartisan, common-sense solutions to our Nation's gun violence crisis. Together, they accomplish what the vast majority of Americans want, to keep guns out of the wrong hands. I was proud to cosponsor both bills and vote for them when they passed the House last week. Now it is time for the Senate to take action.