

the strong commitment, compassion, and care nurses display in the practice of their profession.

Registered Nurses, or RNs, are the largest segment of the health care workforce, with 3.1 million RNs, and that number is growing. RNs meet Americans' health care needs on every level. They provide preventive care, such as screenings and immunizations; they diagnose, treat, and help to manage chronic illnesses; and they help patients make critical health decisions every day. But most importantly, nurses take the time to care for each patient during a difficult time in their or their family's lives.

□ 1215

We have plenty of evidence that hiring more nurses leads directly to improved quality care and patient outcomes.

We have seen study after study showing this connection, including a recent analysis showing that one out of every four unanticipated events that leads to death or injury are related to nurse understaffing; yet we continue to see nurses understaffed at medical facilities.

Nurses around the country have identified understaffing as the single most important barrier they face in providing quality care to their patients. It is also a barrier to quality improvement and efforts to reduce preventable readmissions.

I have introduced legislation called the Safe Nurse Staffing for Patient Safety and Quality Care Act, which would help solve this serious problem by establishing a Federal minimum standard in all hospitals for direct care registered nurse to patient staffing ratios.

This problem is not confined to hospitals. Nursing homes are currently required to only have a direct care nurse on staff 8 hours a day. This simply makes no sense. Patients are in these facilities 24 hours a day and need access to round-the-clock nursing care. That is why I have introduced the Put a Registered Nurse in the Nursing Home Act.

We should be thanking nurses, who are considered the most ethical of our healthcare system, and I applaud them.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 16 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 (Mr. WALKER) at 2 p.m.

#### PRAYER

Reverend Andrew Walton, Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

As the gavel sounds and a new day of business begins, we pause to acknowledge the eternal, creative, redemptive spirit of life that unites all people, transcending political persuasion, personal bias, or cultural creed.

We come seeking the wisdom of the ages that points us away from easy choices of rigid certitude that divide and separate but, rather, guides us toward challenging compromises of flexible possibility that connect and unite.

May we seek a common good where all people know freedom, equality, justice, and mercy; a common good grounded in compassion, gratitude, and generosity. May we remember we are one human family in which the pain of one is the pain of all and the joy of one is the joy of all.

May we find this common good in the conversations, deliberations, and achievements of this day and in the countless opportunities that come our way each and every day.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. KILDEE 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.

#### EASTERN EUROPE PROMOTES PEACE THROUGH STRENGTH

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week, I was grateful to participate in a congressional delegation with congressional colleagues MADELEINE BORDALLO and REID RIBBLE, coordinated ably by Army Majors Bobby Cox and Jimmy Crook, to visit dynamic Eastern European allies.

In the Czech Republic, it was heartwarming to see the affection for America at Pilsen upon the 70th anniversary of their liberation by the U.S. Army.

M.K. Air Base in Romania is a symbol of growing Romanian-U.S. defense cooperation. The heroic and courageous leaders at Kiev, Ukraine, were unified in facing Putin's aggression where 7,000 civilians have been killed.

Georgia's proven partnership with NATO is confirmed with extraordinary service by their military for freedom and democracy. The Novo Selo training base in Bulgaria is world class, with young Bulgarians and Americans working side by side to promote peace through strength.

In each country, we were welcomed by dedicated U.S. Ambassadors, with talented Embassy personnel, promoting warm relationships with the new emerging democracies for the mutual benefit of all citizens.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and the President by his actions should never forget September the 11th in the global war on terror.

#### LET'S PASS THE HIGHWAY AND TRANSIT TRUST FUND BILL

(Mr. KILDEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, once again, House Republican leadership's culture of governing crisis to crisis is endangering hundreds of thousands of American jobs and thousands of critical construction projects across the country.

There are only 7 legislative days left until the highway and transit trust fund expires on May 31, but there is no plan yet to act. According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, 660,000 good-paying construction jobs are hanging in the balance; 6,000 critical construction projects across the country are also being threatened.

For too long, we have been stuck in these short-term patches that fail to meet the challenges of our Nation's crumbling roads and bridges as other nations, our competitors, advance their infrastructure and pass us by leaps and bounds.

We have got to get to work to fixing America's crumbling roads and bridges. It is the job of the Congress to do this. We need to do our job.

We continue to wait, as Democrats, for a plan that we can work together on to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure. It is up to the Republican leadership to act, and I am calling upon them to do just that.

#### NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

(Mr. EMMER of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of National Police Week, when we remember the sacrifice of our Nation's law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty.

This year's commemoration falls during a time of heightened tension between our officers and the civilians they have sworn to protect, and it serves as a solemn reminder to all of us the importance of communication, duty, and mutual respect.