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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
July 8, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GEORGE HOLDING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, 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 each party limited to 1 hour 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.

DOES THE U.S. HAVE A PLAN TO DEFEAT ISIS?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the President “avoids the battle, complains, and misses opportunities.” Those were the words of Leon Panetta, President Obama’s former Secretary of Defense and CIA Director, in 2011.

At the time, Panetta, along with military commanders and the Joint Chiefs of Staff, recommended that the United States leave 24,000 troops in Iraq to prevent that country from fall-

ing apart and becoming chaotic. According to Panetta, the administration was “so eager to rid itself of Iraq that it was willing to withdraw rather than lock in arrangements that would preserve American influence and our interests.”

So the President ignored the advice of his own Secretary of Defense and top commanders and pulled troops out of Iraq in 2011. The timing, just before the 2012 Presidential election, to me, appeared to be based on the politics of political convenience, not our own national interests.

In any event, what is taking place today in 2015? Enter the Islamic State, ISIS. ISIS took advantage of the power vacuum left by America’s absence. So today ISIS is stronger than ever, spreading its reign of terror throughout the region.

ISIS practices religious genocide against people that don’t agree with it. They have redefined the term “barbarian” to an all new low. They rape, pillage, loot, behead, and burn those in this ISIS war against the world’s people.

ISIS not only controls a massive amount of territory in the Middle East, it also controls the minds of thousands of foreign fighters, many from the United States. It is a sophisticated criminal enterprise that uses any and all ways to recruit, fundraise, and spread terror. It even uses American social media companies to promote its cause. Through American companies like Twitter, ISIS is instantly and freely spreading its cancer of Islamic extremism to teenagers, recruiting them to join the jihad and then launch attacks on the streets of America.

Since the President announced his campaign against ISIS, we have seen embarrassing results. Even the President admitted that the United States did not have a complete strategy.

The ISIS terror has been going on for over a year and we don’t have a plan to

defeat them? This doesn’t make a whole lot of sense.

The United States must answer this question: Is ISIS a national security threat to us? If the answer is yes, then we must defeat them; and Congress needs to weigh in on this and make this decision.

If we decide that ISIS is a national security threat, then, of course, we need strategy, a complete strategy. The administration’s plan so far is to train mercenaries to fight ISIS. However, just this week, Secretary of Defense Carter admitted that the United States has trained, get this, 60 so-called moderate Syrian rebels to fight ISIS—just 60.

The \$500 million program that was supposed to fund 3,000 fighters before the end of 2015 has trained 60. So if I do my math correctly, Mr. Speaker, we are spending about \$8 million per fighter right now. That is abysmal. That is no way to fight and win a war against terror.

Also, there are more Americans fighting with ISIS rebels than we have trained fighters to fight against ISIS. Meanwhile in Iraq, just 8,800 fighters have been trained to fight ISIS compared to the goal of 24,000.

This administration’s strategy to defeat ISIS seems to be in chaos. Even the Kurds want to do their own fighting, and they have asked us for military support. Our allies want to send direct aid to the Kurds, but the administration won’t let them do that. They have to send it through Baghdad for some reason.

It is time for the administration to stop being indecisively weak and do the obvious. It needs to lead in this war against ISIS, and it needs to listen to the commanders.

The United States needs to act and have a plan to defeat this determined, well-financed enemy. It is a terrorist enterprise that is at war with us.

And that is just the way it is.

□ 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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TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, last month Congress dealt with a trade package that centered on trade promotion authority; and those actions, while important, were really just the beginning of a very long process.

Many important provisions of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the TPP, are still unresolved. There is a meeting at the end of this month in Hawaii where the finance ministers of 12 countries come together in an attempt to resolve these final questions.

As I pointed out in my last meeting with the President, while I think trade promotion authority is important and worthy of support, that support does not imply support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Indeed, because of the protections we built into the trade promotion authority, it sets an appropriately high standard for approval. Everybody in America will have several months to examine the proposal if an agreement is reached to see if it measures up before the treaty can even be voted on by Congress.

I am hopeful that we can use this time to clarify and refine areas, for example, the investor state dispute process. While the United States' investor state protections for public health and consumers are stronger than for most countries and are separate from the foreign investor state models that are being used by the United States Chamber of Commerce to promote the interests of Big Tobacco to undercut efforts to discourage smoking, there is still room for us to improve and clarify the American model, and we should do so.

Another important area deals with trade enforcement. Agreements that look good on paper, if they are not enforceable or enforced, are essentially meaningless. It is extremely important for the administration to demonstrate its commitment to enforcement.

We are trying to help with legislation that I have introduced in the House that we have been able to get in part of the Senate package that would create a trade enforcement fund dedicated to help make sure agreements are enforced.

Another step the administration could take immediately is to deal with disturbing actions in Peru that seem to undercut commitments that were made in the existing Peru free trade agreement dealing with illegal logging. It appears that Peru has backtracked on its commitments and that illegally harvested timber is finding its way into international markets and, indeed, into the United States. It would be a simple act for the administration to take that would demonstrate its commitment to strong enforcement by starting with Peru right now.

Another area that I am working on deals with access to medicines. It appears that the TPP draft falls short on

incentives for affordability and consumer protections and the trade promotion authority objective to "ensure that trade agreements foster innovation and promote access to medicines." We need some work here.

The May 10 agreement that was struck in 2007, which I was pleased to participate in, struck the right balance, creating incentives for innovation in pharmaceutical research and access to timely and affordable medicine for developing countries. This was achieved in part by requiring changes to provisions dealing with patent linkage where it looks like TPP is moving in the wrong direction.

The TPP includes new provisions which, while not addressed in the May 10 agreement, are inconsistent with its spirit and its intent of ensuring timely access to affordable medicines in developing countries. For example, with biologic medicines, it appears the United States is seeking both patent linkage and 12 years of data exclusivity for all countries. The former would require a change in U.S. law, and the latter would prevent America from changing our laws to lower the exclusivity period, as has been proposed in the President's own budget proposal. The combination of these two would have enormous cost implications both at home and abroad.

These are examples where I am working to make sure the final agreement measures up to the criteria we have established in the trade promotion authority.

I urge the administration and my colleagues to be clear about our intent and our expectations in order for any final agreement to be worthy of broad support.

BACKPACK BUDDIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, last week I had the pleasure of meeting with Doug Erwin. Doug is an extraordinary member of our West Virginia community who started the charitable organization called Backpack Buddies.

In the summer, Backpack Buddies gives meal supplements to children in elementary, middle, and high schools who received free or reduced lunches during the school year. Oftentimes, the meal that they receive at school is the only food that they eat all day.

Doug became concerned about what these children did for food during the summer. That is when Doug started Backpack Buddies.

For the last 3 years, communities in my district in the great State of West Virginia have come together to raise money to provide food to these children so they can get the extra help they need during the summer. Backpack Buddies is serving, now, over 1,600 children in Putnam, Boone, Cabell, and Kanawha Counties this summer.

I would like to thank Doug, the business leaders in our community, and the volunteers who help make Backpack Buddies possible.

WAR ON COAL

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. On a separate issue, Mr. Speaker, several weeks ago, President Obama sent two of his top cronies in his war on coal, Interior Secretary Sally Jewell and Office of Surface Mining Director Joseph Pizarchik, to my home State of West Virginia.

The apparent purpose of their visit was to seek input for a new Obama regulation that is estimated to kill 80,000 coal jobs, but their rule had already been submitted for final review. They are not interested in hearing from West Virginians about the impact of their policies. Instead, they are checking a box.

It is clear that nothing will stop this President from trying to implement his radical environmental agenda, and I will continue to do everything in my power to fight back on behalf of all West Virginians. That is why, this year, I introduced H.R. 1644, the STREAM Act, which will stop the President's antimining regulations. I also included a provision in the House budget resolution that calls for defunding that regulation, and I will work with the appropriators to make sure it is not funded.

I hope my colleagues in this Chamber will join me in this fight.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, since the Supreme Court decision in Citizens United, we have seen a massive wave of secret spending in our political system. There was over \$100 million in dark, unregulated, and anonymous money spent in the 2014 midterm election cycle; and with the Presidential race right around the corner, that number is expected to balloon to over \$600 million.

While the problem is easy to identify, the solution is far more difficult to achieve. Reluctantly, I have concluded that it is necessary to amend our Constitution to address a long line of case law that began before Citizens United and prevents the Congress from meaningfully regulating campaign expenditures. The constitutional amendment must not only overturn Citizens United, but the Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom Club PAC v. Bennett decision, which struck down an Arizona law that allowed public financing of a candidate if their opponent exceeded certain spending limits.

The amendment is simple. It would allow Congress to set reasonable limits on expenditures and allow States to set up public financing for candidates if they choose to do so.

□ 1015

I first ran for Congress in 2000, in a campaign that turned out to be the