



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2015

No. 140

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 28, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM 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 1:50 p.m.

HONDURAS MUST PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS, VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, last week I joined a fact-finding delegation to Honduras led by WOLA, the Washington Office on Latin America. We looked at the problem of violence and the lack of opportunity in order to understand why families and young people continue to flee the country. We wanted to learn what the Honduran

Government and people were doing in response to the problems that confront their country and how the United States might help. We met with families, young people, and community leaders in several marginal and violent communities, including those who benefit from programs at Casa Alianza.

The delegation also visited an innovative USAID-sponsored violence prevention program. It not only offers programs for young people in a poor and dangerous neighborhood, but brings together community leaders and local institutions to tackle local problems. By strengthening local leaders and groups and working with trained and vetted local police, crime levels have dropped and new opportunities for youth have been created. These are hopeful results for a community that 1 year ago was under siege by violent criminal actors.

We also met with many NGOs, human rights defenders, and international organizations to understand the intertwined problems of human rights, Democratic governance, and corruption. We had substantial conversations with Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez and met with our Ambassador, James Nealon, and his team, and I am grateful for how generous they were with their time.

I would like to share with my colleagues a few thoughts and conclusions from this trip.

First, I have no doubt that violence or lack of opportunity are driving families and young people to flee Honduras. I saw the marginal communities and heard the stories from families about the problems young people face. The best thing we can do is support efforts that break the cycle of violence and help build opportunities for youth in Honduras and elsewhere in Central America. At Casa Alianza and the USAID project, we saw the kind of programs that actually make a difference. That is where we should be directing our assistance.

Additionally, I also heard how long-term drought is exacerbating hunger, malnutrition, and the loss of livelihoods in rural central Honduras and igniting a new wave of migration.

Second, I heard from returned migrants and the families of migrants, including those whose loved ones have disappeared and never been heard from again. Migrants face abuse as they travel. They are extorted by authorities in Mexico and sometimes Guatemala and robbed or kidnapped and held for ransom by criminal groups. Young women run the risk of being trafficked and forced into prostitution.

We heard from returned migrants, especially those who had been stopped in Mexico, about the return journey and the lack of services at the El Corinto border crossing. We met migrants who had fled gang violence only to be forced to return to the same dangers.

I was moved by many of these stories. Migrants, even those traveling without legal documents, have basic rights, and we should be working with the Governments of Mexico and Honduras to ensure that they get decent treatment, access to needed services, and the protection they deserve.

Third, human rights abuses continue to be a serious problem in Honduras. Longtime human rights defenders, journalists, and gay, lesbian, and transgender activists described ongoing threats, attacks, and even assassinations, and the response by the police and the attorney general has not improved. In fact, a U.S.-supported special investigative unit that was supposed to focus on attacks on the LGBT community, journalists, and others has investigated even fewer cases this year than last.

I am troubled by the government's focus on special military police units, whose human rights record isn't good. I support the U.S. decision not to provide aid to the military police. Instead, the Honduran Government needs 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H6263

clean up and strengthen civilian police and the Attorney General's Office.

My trip to Honduras was both challenging and inspiring. I saw troubling problems of poverty and violence, heard painful stories about migrant abuses and disappearances, and saw major problems in the area of human rights and the protection of human rights defenders and activists.

But I also saw hope. I met with young people who dream of bright futures for themselves in Honduras, with student and youth leaders who are campaigning selflessly and courageously to build mechanisms to tackle corruption, and with LGBT activists, human rights defenders, and journalists who are standing up to threats. I saw community-led projects to combat violence and poverty that are making a real difference.

Mr. Speaker, last week our Nation was graced by the presence of Pope Francis. I was deeply moved by his call for us to welcome the stranger, to help the most vulnerable among us, and to work together for the common good. I believe each of those calls to action apply to the case of Honduras, both in how we respond to Honduras fleeing to the United States to find safe haven and a new life and how we help Hondurans respond to their own problems inside their country.

I look forward, Mr. Speaker, to working with my colleagues to help the Honduran people deal successfully with these challenges.

DKI APCSS 20TH ANNIVERSARY VIDEO MESSAGE

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

Mr. TAKAI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, located in Waikiki, Hawaii. I want to extend my congratulations to the Center on reaching this important milestone.

For the last 20 years, the Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies has made significant strides in educating, connecting, and empowering security practitioners. I would like to thank the Center for their leadership. I am pleased to see the APCSS renamed as the Daniel K. Inouye Center, honoring the legacy of the late Senator who advocated strongly for peace and stability around the world.

As the United States shifts its focus to the Asia-Pacific region, the Daniel K. Inouye Center will be uniquely situated to play a critical role in driving our Nation's security policy.

The U.S. rebalance to Asia will rely heavily on Hawaii's location and relationship with our partner nations in the region.

I can think of no better venue than the Inouye Center for bringing together representatives from different countries to discuss joint cooperation on important issues.

As I have witnessed firsthand, the Center is focused on producing results. This will be crucial as we continue to move forward with the rebalance and begin to tackle some of the most pressing security-related issues.

Once again, I want to extend my congratulations on 20 years of service and my warmest thanks—mahalo—for the tremendous work being done there.

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 8 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. HARRIS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We come to You as a Nation in the midst of significant imminent transition, even as important disagreements on policy promise vigorous debate in the days and weeks to come. As people look for causes and solutions, the temptation is great to seek ideological position.

We ask that You might send Your spirit of peace and reconciliation; that instead of ascendancy over opponents, the Members of this people's House and all elected to represent our Nation might work together humbly, recognizing the best in each other's hopes, to bring stability and direction toward a strong future.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory. 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.

CYBER WEEK

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to ad-

dress the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week the House Armed Services Committee, led by Chairman MAC THORNBERRY, marks Cyber Week, a week that highlights the importance of cyber to our families and to our military. This week of hearings, with witnesses from private corporations and the Department of Defense, is a fitting start as we also recognize Cyber Security Awareness Month during October.

Recent cyber attacks, like the devastating attack on the Office of Personnel Management, have made it clear that cyber is the new domain of attacks on American families. Personal data, such as Social Security numbers, financial information, and security clearance documents, were stolen, putting the personal and financial security of our citizens at risk. The attack underscores the increased reports of cyber attacks against our military Web sites, government data, and businesses.

As chairman of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Capabilities, with dedicated staff members like Pete Villano, Kevin Gates, and Nevada Schadler, I look forward to Cyber Week's focus to protect American families.

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

GOP GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, almost unbelievably here we are just 2 days away from another GOP government shutdown. Republicans, who control both Houses of Congress, have yet to bring a budget agreement, just a couple of days before the government shuts down, that would keep government open. Democrats stand ready to negotiate, to talk, to come up with an agreement that can move this country forward, that can keep government open, at the very least.

We just can't afford another government shutdown. The last time this happened, it cost the economy billions of dollars and people lost their jobs. Shutting this government down, allowing the government to be shut down over a partisan ideological point, is reckless, and it ought to be avoided at all costs.

You don't have to look very far in the headlines to see that the Republican Conference is in some disarray. I understand that. The politics of that are just going to have to work themselves out.

Meanwhile, the business of the American people has to be attended to. We have got to get this country back to work. If we don't do that, we will not be doing the jobs that people sent us here to do.