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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Pastor Bob MacGregor, City Harvest Church, Vancouver, Washington, offered the following prayer:

Lord, we come today with thanksgiving for the work of Your grace in establishing this at work called America.

Known around the world as the Nation of opportunity, many fight to become a part of us and few desire to leave because You, Lord, have made us great.

Our Founding Fathers understood this by experience and by the Scriptures "that except the Lord builds the House, they labor in vain who build it." So it has been our deep conviction from our conception to daily appeal to You for wisdom to guide the leaders of this great Nation.

So, once again, we ask for the wisdom to protect all our citizens, provide opportunity for all, help our poor, care for our elderly, secure our families, educate our children, and make our economy strong.

We pray for unity in this endeavor. May righteousness exalt us through all our laws. This we ask respectfully in Jesus' name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi 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.

WELCOMING PASTOR BOB MACGREGOR

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Ms. HERRERA BEUTLER. Mr. Speaker, it is my great honor to introduce my pastor and dear friend, Bob MacGregor, as our guest chaplain this morning.

Pastor Bob is the lead pastor of City Harvest Church in Vancouver, Washington, my home church. City Harvest is a thriving church that greatly impacts our community by caring for the needy and supporting mission work.

Pastor Bob and his wife, Sue, have four daughters and eight grandchildren. They have been married for 38 years and share a burden to help build marriages and families of ministers who face the demands of ministry life.

It is my great pleasure to welcome Pastor Bob and thank him as he has blessed us this morning with his prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK). The Chair will entertain up to five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS CHRISTOPHER ROBINSON WAS TRULY THE BEST OF THE BEST

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

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I am humbled today to rise in memory of Army Sergeant First Class Christopher Lee Robinson. He paid the ultimate sacrifice while defending our Nation on March 25, 2006, during Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

Sergeant Robinson was wounded during an ambush in Helmand province, Afghanistan, while conducting joint and multinational combat operations. Master Sergeant Reese Robbins, his friend, was also wounded during the attack. At the time of his death, Sergeant Robinson was the first Mississippi National Guard soldier to die in Afghanistan.

Sergeant Robinson was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group, Mississippi Army National Guard in Jackson, Mississippi. He followed in the footsteps of his father, George Robinson, who also served in the Army.

Retired Sergeant Major Mike Patterson served with Sergeant Robinson throughout most of his military career. Sergeant Major Patterson said Sergeant Robinson consistently displayed

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bravery by volunteering for hard deployments and dangerous missions. He also says Sergeant Robinson had the ability to handle combat in a very deliberate way, yet remain compassionate for people and the unintended consequences that war thrusts upon human beings.

He is survived by his wife, Tamara, and their children, Savannah and Patrick. Sergeant Robinson devoted his life to the safety of our Nation. He will always be remembered for his service and deep love for friends and family and this country.

The first sentence of the NCO creed states: "No one is more professional than I." The level of competence and professionalism that Sergeant Robinson maintained throughout his life, in and out of uniform, shows that he lived by that creed every day of his life.

As a Special Forces Green Beret soldier, Sergeant First Class Robinson was truly the best of the best.

BRAIN RESEARCH IS CRITICAL

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

Mr. McNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Federal investment into brain research.

Congress' commitment to fund basic brain-related research and scientific discovery is critical to developing our capabilities to treat over 1,000 diseases and disorders that directly or indirectly affect 100 million Americans every year. Estimates put the economic burden of these diseases at over \$760 billion a year. Addiction, traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's, and other afflictions can only be overcome through increasing our understanding of how the brain works.

Basic science is the foundation upon which all health advances are built. Federal agencies, such as the NIH, NSF, and DOD, are essential in advancement of brain research, as well as for so many scientific endeavors. Congress enacted the 21st Century Cures Act that provided support for a wide range of biomedical research efforts.

I call upon my colleagues to stand with me in support of brain research into the new Congress. I also beseech my Republican colleagues to withdraw this terrible bill and work across the aisle to find a healthcare plan that will serve all Americans.

USDA FOOD PROGRAMS ARE CRITICAL

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, this week, the House Committee on Agriculture's Subcommittee on Nutrition hosted a hearing to examine USDA's three commodity distribution programs: the

Emergency Food Assistance Program, the Commodity Supplemental Food program, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Committee members heard from a panel of witnesses representing each of these programs who explained how the programs differ, interact, and work together to meet the nutrition needs of America's most vulnerable citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of this subcommittee, I know Federal nutrition programs are vital to ensuring that all Americans have healthy foods within reach, whether low-income populations, the elderly, or those living in areas with strained access to nutritious foods. Along with SNAP, these programs support agriculture and lessen the effects of poverty on our most vulnerable citizens.

As we begin to work on the next farm bill, we will continue to identify ways to work alongside State and local organizations to help provide safe, nutritious food for those who need it most. I thank our witnesses for sharing their time and their expertise to help strengthen these programs.

REJECT TRUMPCARE

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, our first duty here is to the American people. I rise to call on my colleagues to fulfill that duty and reject TrumpCare.

President Trump made big promises on health care during his campaign. TrumpCare proves those promises were empty. He promised a plan that would cover everyone. TrumpCare would cover even fewer people than were covered before the Affordable Care Act.

He promised better coverage. TrumpCare guts basic healthcare standards. Many TrumpCare plans won't be worth the paper they are printed on.

He promised cheaper coverage. TrumpCare breaks that promise, driving up premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs for everyone. It also hits our Nation's seniors with a devastating age tax or perhaps a senior tax that will literally price many seniors out of the healthcare market.

Mr. Speaker, TrumpCare is a tax break for millionaires parading as a healthcare plan. It will do unimaginable harm to our rural hospitals and our economy. The bill was written in secret. It was rushed through this Chamber. And it represents a big-time broken promise. I urge my colleagues to reject TrumpCare.

HONORING SECOND LIEUTENANT MAAX CURTIS HAMMER, JR.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a southern Illinois native who

flew planes in Southeast Asia more than 75 years ago. This hero finally returned home this week for burial.

Second Lieutenant Maax Curtis Hammer, Jr., died when his plane crashed in what was then Burma in 1941. Hammer was part of the Flying Tigers, a group of volunteer pilots who helped the British and Chinese defend against Imperial Japan.

His remains returned to Carbondale, Illinois, this week, via dignified transport from Hawaii, where he had been buried for 67 years in a grave marked "Unknown."

Maax, it has been a long time. With heavy heart, we welcome you home to southern Illinois, and we thank you for your service.

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE WATCHING

(Ms. VELÁZQUEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today House Republicans are preparing to vote to rip away health care from 24 million Americans, 2.7 million of them in New York. In my district, 122,000 people will lose coverage, including 12,700 children. Those who do retain coverage will pay more for less, with deductibles and premiums skyrocketing.

This is what House Republicans plan to put on the floor today. It is a plan that benefits the healthy and the wealthy while hurting everyone else. If you have a preexisting condition and your coverage lapses, under TrumpCare, get ready to pay more.

Are you a senior? Good luck affording medical coverage if TrumpCare becomes law. You are going to pay the insurance company five times more than younger people.

Mr. Speaker, the American people see this for what it is, a direct assault on the vulnerable in order to give a tax cut to the wealthy and the healthy. Reject TrumpCare.

THINK ABOUT YOUR CONSTITUENTS

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, the GOP health repeal bill rips coverage from 24 million Americans.

So I ask my colleagues: Can you imagine what it is like to gasp for air, your chest tightening and your lungs burning from asthma, worrying that you might black out because you cannot get enough oxygen?

This week a constituent of mine from Fort Lauderdale told me: Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, I am finally able to breathe.

The ACA dropped her asthma medicine costs from \$600 per month to \$10. Without the ACA, she cannot afford to breathe.