

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. ALLEN 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.

## REMOVAL AND APPOINTMENT OF CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, December 2, 2015.

Hon. PAUL D. RYAN,  
Speaker, House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER RYAN: I am writing to advise you of my intention to retire from federal service in early 2016. Accordingly, I hereby resign as Chief Administrative Officer of the House effective upon the election of my successor, or as you otherwise direct.

It has been a high honor and distinct privilege to serve you and your colleagues, past and present, since the 1970's; and especially so, to serve alongside the extraordinarily dedicated men and women in the Office of the CAO during the 113th and 114th Congresses.

In order to ensure a seamless transition, I am pleased that Clerk of the House Karen Haas has graciously detailed to my office Mr. Will Plaster, a senior member of her staff, to serve on an interim basis as Deputy Chief Administrative Officer.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate more than words can adequately convey the priceless opportunities afforded me throughout my career to serve this magnificent—and uniquely American—institution we call the people's House.

I congratulate you on your election as Speaker, and wish you all the best in the challenging days ahead.

Sincerely,

ED CASSIDY.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule II, Mr. Ed Cassidy, of the State of Connecticut, is removed effective December 31, 2015.

Pursuant to the provisions of section 208(a) of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, the Chair appoints William Plaster of the Commonwealth of Virginia to act as and to exercise the duties of Chief Administrative Officer of the House of Representatives, effective December 31, 2015.

The Chair will administer the oath at this time.

Mr. Plaster appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter, so help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

## HALT ON K-1 VISA PROGRAM

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the terrorist attack in San Bernardino, the deadliest attack on U.S. soil since September 11, made it clear that our homeland is vulnerable to terrorists.

The terrorist couple's attack also made it clear that there are serious screening problems associated with the K-1 fiancé(e) visa program. That is exactly how the wife involved in these attacks came to the United States to begin with.

Mr. Speaker, protecting our homeland is my most sacred duty, which is why I want the American people to know that right now, I will be introducing legislation to put a halt on the K-1 visa program until the Congress votes to resume it.

In the meantime, my legislation would require the GAO to review the national security risks associated with this program and to submit findings to the Congress.

This is the right and commonsense thing to do. We must protect our homeland.

## PANTHER PRIDE

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

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, the color purple and Panther Pride are alive and well in Texas.

Ridge Point High School has been open for 5 years—5 short years—yet last Saturday, they took us to heights that schools that have been around for 50 years have never achieved. They made the Final 4, the Texas 5A Division 2 State semifinal football playoffs.

Mr. Speaker, the Panthers came up a little short, but fans like me walked out darn proud of our guys. They never quit, and they never will.

I have a warning for teams we play next year: Panthers don't retreat—we reload.

## FUNDING TO TEST RAPE KITS

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow the House will vote on an omnibus spending bill, and I look forward to supporting that bill because it does so much good for America, moves us forward, and brings us together as a body to move America forward. Included in there is the amendment I have had on

the House floor, and the Senate accepted to add an additional \$4 million to test rape kits.

Mr. Speaker, there is a horrific backlog of rape kits in this country, and the Federal Government has stepped forward. Now we will step forward with \$45 million—last year it was \$41 million—to give to local governments to reduce the backlog. That means we will be able to catch the guilty and stop them before they violate the law again and violate another woman, because rapists are often serial offenders.

I look forward to supporting the omnibus bill, protecting women in America, and finding justice for criminals.

## TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY OF FAILED EXCHANGES ACT

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, the only thing 5 years of ObamaCare has shown us has been its multiple and continuous flaws. When this legislation was signed into law, the President freely gave money away to establish State exchanges. However, they forgot one piece of the puzzle: They provided no provisions for recouping funds when the State exchanges failed.

Mr. Speaker, these accounts spent billions of taxpayer dollars and provided zero solutions to protect taxpayers when States decided to stop operating the exchanges. Where is the accountability? This burden cannot be placed on the taxpayer.

Today I introduced the Transparency and Accountability of Failed Exchanges Act to ensure Americans are not on the hook for the billions that were recklessly doled out to the States to establish these State exchanges. By promoting accountability and transparency, my legislation fixes the problems by providing clear steps to recover Federal funds when State exchanges fail, and it requires unused funds to be returned back to the Treasury Department to pay down the national debt.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this legislation that promotes accountability and transparency.

## BOOSTING TIMBERING IN THE ALLEGHENY NATIONAL FOREST

(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, I rise today to once again reinforce the importance of proper management of our Nation's national forests.

Over the past two decades, timber harvests in the Allegheny National Forest have fallen dramatically, following a trend we have seen in national