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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, October 21, 2019, at 3 p.m.

House of Representatives

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2019

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. NEGUSE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 18, 2019.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOE NEGUSE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

As the House comes to the end of an emotional week, we ask that You give all Members Your calming and comforting spirit.

We mourn the loss of a colleague, and implore Your healing presence in this Chamber, in the Cummings family, and in the hearts of all who have labored in these Halls, especially in the Oversight Committee in these most recent years.

We continue to rely upon Your wisdom and understanding, and ask Your favor for us and for our Nation.

May all that is done 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 gentlewoman from Indiana (Mrs. WALORSKI) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. WALORSKI 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

UAW STRIKE

(Mrs. DINGELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, for the last month, my brothers and sisters in the UAW have been standing up for their livelihoods, their families, and their future. When home, I have joined them at all hours and all shifts just to listen, to support, and to understand.

Being on a picket line is hard work, but UAW workers are committed workers who are a crucial component of building America's auto industry and driving our Nation's economy.

This strike has been about the collective community and workers across America being treated fairly, with dignity and respect. Many UAW members are newer hires and temporaries, workers who are paid less than their colleagues whom they work side by side with. Many temps work 7 days a week, get no overtime, have no sick pay, and can't take time for a family emergency.

The good news for the country is that a tentative agreement between the UAW and GM is now going for ratification.

All workers need to recognize they benefit from the courage, commitment, and caring of these UAW workers. We need their jobs here; we need manufacturing here in this country; but we need fair pay, fair benefits, and commitment to produce here in the United States of America. Their fight is the fight of all workers.

ABANDONED COAL MINES

(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 draw attention to our Nation's abandoned coal mines.

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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Pennsylvania's heritage is rooted in coal. It powered an industrial revolution and won two world wars. However, as more and more coal mines continue to shut their doors, properly closing these mines is incredibly important.

Of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, 43 have abandoned mine lands. My district, Pennsylvania's 15th Congressional District, has the most, nationwide. These sites are a danger to the environment and to Pennsylvania's residents.

To take action on this, I was pleased to join my colleague, Representative MATT CARTWRIGHT from Pennsylvania's Eighth Congressional District, in introducing H.R. 4248, the Abandoned Mine Land Reauthorization Act.

The Abandoned Mine Land trust fund is set to expire in September of 2021. This bill will not only reauthorize the fund for the next 15 years, but helps for economic growth in coal communities impacted by mine closures.

Since 1977, the AML program has eliminated over 46,000 open mine portals, and reauthorizing the AML trust fund is critical to continued progress.

REDUCING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

(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, 3 in 10 adults in America today have reported not taking medicine as prescribed because of the cost. Our seniors and families should not have to choose between paying their monthly bills and affording their prescription drugs.

That is why I introduced the Advancing Enrollment and Reducing Drug Costs Act with my friend from New Hampshire, CHRIS PAPPAS, to simplify how low-income seniors get the help they need affording their medications.

That is why I introduced the Star Rating for Biosimilars Act with my friend from Ohio, BOB GIBBS, to drive down costs and provide greater access to generic biosimilar drugs treating cancer, arthritis, and many other conditions.

And that is why the House is moving forward with H.R. 3, the Low Drug Costs Now Act, which will use competitive price negotiation to save Medicare some \$345 billion and save United States households nearly \$160 billion, combined. Private businesses would save some \$46 billion under our bill.

Across America, seniors and families are struggling to afford the prescription drugs that they need to stay healthy and alive. It is time for Congress to act. Let's act now.

HONORING SENATOR RICHARD LUGAR

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

Mrs. WALORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3152 and to honor the life and legacy of Senator Richard Lugar, who passed away earlier this year.

Senator Lugar was a true statesman, whose unwavering dedication to his community and his country led to a lifetime of service. He worked tirelessly to champion freedom, advance democracy, and build peace and prosperity both at home and abroad. His wisdom, bipartisanship, and commitment to America's ideals made our country stronger and safer.

Though we will miss his spirit and conviction, the values he fought for will endure in those who follow his example of servant leadership. He built a foundation of opportunity and empowerment so future generations of Hoosiers could carry on his life's mission.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3152 to dedicate the Richard G. Lugar Post Office in Indianapolis and to celebrate a leader who never stopped working to make the world a better place.

SOLIDARITY WITH HONG KONG

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in defense of liberal democratic values and in solidarity with the people of Hong Kong. Earlier this week, the House passed legislation in support of these values and of human rights.

A strong nation is one that does not turn to its worst instincts in the face of dissent. A strong nation does not see liberal democratic values as a threat. A strong nation tolerates differences in pursuit of prosperity for itself and prosperity for the world.

To my fellow Americans, I say that we must not turn our backs on our principles in exchange for profit; we must not trade away our freedoms or be indifferent to those who yearn to be free.

To the 2 million courageous young people in Hong Kong who marched, to those who are willing to fight for a prosperous future where their rights will be respected and where their freedoms will be protected: We are with you.

NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. CLINE. Mr. Speaker, I am here once again to sound the alarm bell about our country's addiction to spending the hard-earned tax dollars of its citizens and future generations.

It is with great regret that I report, as many are already aware, that our country's national debt has topped \$1 trillion for fiscal year 2019.

Now, we know that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will blame President Trump's Tax Cuts and Jobs Act for this shortfall; but, in fact, the corporations they attempt to hold responsible have paid \$8 billion more in the 11 months of this fiscal year than they did in 2018, according to issuesinsights.com.

No, the increase in the deficit over the past year is due to rampant spending, stemming from right here in this Chamber. Wasteful spending increases have been seen across the board; and, to add insult to injury, the interest owed on this money is now up more than 14 percent.

This is an issue that can go on no more. I promised my constituents when I came to Washington that I would convey their concern about our runaway national debt. It is time for all lawmakers to understand that we cannot afford to use tax dollars as a piggy bank for pet projects. Spending like what we have seen is a threat to our national security and a disservice to the American people.

Since I started speaking 50 seconds ago, our national debt has risen nearly \$2 million. Therefore, we cannot simply encourage leadership in Congress to commit to restoring regular order in the appropriations process, but we must demand that we address this fiscal crisis before it is too late.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

(Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. KENDRA S. HORN of Oklahoma. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the urgent need to address the high and rising costs of prescription drug prices in this country.

Far too often, I have heard heart-breaking stories from Oklahomans and people in my community who face the unacceptable reality of choosing between putting food on their table and taking the lifesaving medications they need.

Earlier this year, I held a townhall where I heard from many people in Oklahoma, and we released a report about the soaring costs of insulin. In my district alone, more than 22,000 seniors on Medicare and other Oklahomans living with disabilities and diabetes face prescription drug costs of more than \$25 million.

It is time to act and make medicine more affordable and make it possible for people to get the lifesaving prescription drugs they need.

One important solution is limiting the out-of-pocket costs for patients at the pharmacy counter. That is why I introduced the Capping Drug Costs for Seniors Act. This practical solution lowers the cost for patients directly. This bill keeps Medicare part D patients from paying more than \$2,000 out of pocket, which has a real impact for 46 million Americans who rely on this program.