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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. YOUNG of Iowa).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 10, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DAVID YOUNG to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian Pate, one of his secretaries.

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.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE LOST ON SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in memory of those lost in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

It is hard to believe that so many years have passed since the tragic events of 9/11, since the sadness and loss are so fresh for many throughout this Nation.

The attacks on the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and my home State of Pennsylvania stand as the most cowardly and senseless acts of terrorism ever perpetrated against the United States and its citizens.

My family and I continue to solemnly offer our thoughts and prayers for those who were impacted that day. We also salute those who came to aid, those who rushed into the World Trade Center before the towers fell, the first responders at the Pentagon, and the passengers who made the ultimate sacrifice, downing United Flight 93 in Somerset County before it could reach its intended destination.

Among those who lost their lives in the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City was Mary Ellen Tiesi. Mary Ellen was a native of Irvona, Clearfield County, and was working in the South Tower on that morning 14 years ago.

Family members have said that, after the attack, Mary Ellen was exiting the stairs of the tower with a friend.

She stopped to wait for her boss, who she knew had a heart condition. Her boss eventually took the elevator, but Mary Ellen continued down the stairs.

She did not make it out of the building and was the only Clearfield County native to lose her life in the attacks in New York. Three years ago the Pennsylvania Route 53 bridge in Irvona was renamed in her memory.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of the kindness Mary Ellen Tiesi showed for her coworker on one of the worst days our Nation has ever known. Let us never forget the thousands like Mary Ellen who truly embody the undying resolve of the American people.

WILDFIRES

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I concluded my summer tour of Oregon at the fire control center on the Warm Springs Indian reservation.

Summer was an amazing time in my State. Smoke enveloped downtown Portland and drifted all the way for 270 miles to the south in Medford. As I drove past, into central Oregon, the Crater Lake National Park consumed 25 square miles.

Throughout the West, 8.5 million acres have already been burned this year. And like we hear almost every year, the 2015 fire season is one of the worst on record.

We should acknowledge the amazing men and women who are on the front lines and the tremendous strain they bear.

We need so many people that we have actually had active military personnel brought online for the first time in a decade. Even firefighters from Australia, New Zealand, and Canada have come to assist in these efforts.

One cannot say enough about the tremendous bravery and sheer hard work involved on so many levels with the men and women who are literally putting their lives on the line for this heroic fight.

But it is important to note that we are not just decimating our forests. We are decimating the Forest Service budget. The portion of the overall budget spent on fighting wildfires has grown in the last 20 years from 16 percent to over one-half, 52 percent.

Because Congress refuses to treat wildfires like other natural disasters, the Forest Service budget is being consumed, squeezing out other critical areas, not just maintaining these special places and trails and recreational opportunities, but even the efforts that

□ 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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would deal with forest health and reduce the danger and the cost of future firefighting.

The trend is that two-thirds of the budget in the next 10 years will be firefighting. Absolutely, totally unacceptable.

These fires ought to be treated like any other natural disaster, not decimate our ability to manage our national forests.

The people dealing with these megafires know that part of the problem is climate change making itself felt. Less than 2 percent of these megafires consume almost one-third of the total fire suppression costs because our forests are drier.

There is less snow and rainfall, one more graphic reminder of the devastating impact of climate change, with higher temperatures and less water.

It is past time that Congress steps up to reduce carbon emissions. Perhaps the Pope in 2 weeks will inspire us to do something about climate change.

But, in the meantime, we should at least pass H.R. 167, the Wildfire Disaster Act—bipartisan legislation introduced on the very first day of this Congress, but languishing in committee—that would treat megafires like other natural disasters, not discriminate against the Forest Service.

One final point is that we should stop making the problem worse by allowing more and more people to move into the fire zone in the wildland-urban interface and give these people the illusion that somehow they are going to be provided with urban-level fire protection. Sixty percent of the new homes since 1990 have been built in the flame zone.

We should stop this madness because we are putting more people at risk not just to their properties and their families, but also the men and women who fight forest fires to protect structures.

Remember the 19 hotshots who were killed in Arizona a couple years ago who lost their lives trying to save homes that probably shouldn't have been there in the first place?

Commonsense budgeting, fighting climate change, and reasonable land use will reduce costs, protect lives, and allow us to begin spending money on prevention, which will, in turn, reduce further costs. It more than pays for itself.

Sensible budgeting, prevention, sound land use planning, will protect people and our forests, along with our budgets, while we start our long overdue actions to reduce carbon pollution.

It is time that Congress steps up to start addressing these problems now. This is not rocket science.

MINNESOTA'S BEST BAGGER GOES TO THE SIXTH DISTRICT

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate

Lauren Gillson of St. Cloud for her first place win in the Minnesota Grocers Association 2015 Best Bagger Contest, which took place at the Mall of America last month.

I would also like to commend the Minnesota Grocers Association for hosting this competition. It demonstrates how much value they place on providing excellent customer service.

Anyone who visits a grocery store will understand just how crucial a bagger's role is to the industry. They are, by far, one of the most memorable employees in the store, as they are the last person to be in contact with the customer. A bagger can often make or break the customer's overall experience.

Lauren competed against nine others before winning first place. Her win is truly impressive, as she has only worked at Lunds & Byerlys in St. Cloud for less than a month.

I wish Lauren good luck as she competes in the 2016 National Grocers Association Best Bagger Championship this February.

LIVE UNTIL THE DAY YOU DIE

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Jim Davis for all that he has done to help those affected by cancer.

Over the past 4 months, Jim has flown throughout the continental United States and given free plane rides to cancer survivors and patients. By sharing his passion for flying, Jim has brought comfort and everlasting memories to these individuals in their time of need.

What truly is amazing about Jim's story is that he is going through a similar situation as the people he is helping.

After being diagnosed with liver cancer and given just 9 months to live, Jim decided that he wasn't going to give up. Instead, he made it his mission to help others affected by this terrible disease.

Jim has said, "Some people get a cancer diagnosis and just sit and wait to die. Not me. I want to live. Cancer patients, live until the day you die."

Jim, I want to thank you for your amazing acts of kindness. I am in awe of your positive attitude and capacity for helping others.

MINNESOTA IS PROUD OF HER VETERANS

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the individuals from my district who were recently recognized for Veterans' Voices Awards.

I am proud to recognize State Representative Bob Dettmer of Forest Lake, Minnesota; Ralph Donais of Elk River; Jim Tuorila of St. Cloud; Megan Allen of Ramsey; Scott Glew of Elk River; and Shelby Marie Hadley of Rice.

These awards are given to individuals who have nobly served their country in the Armed Forces and gone on to volunteer in their communities after returning home.

Each one of these incredible men and women, chosen by the Minnesota Humanities Center, has positively impacted the United States and Minnesota's Sixth District in a major way.

There is so much to thank these individuals for. Thank you for defending our country and for realizing that there was still so much to be accomplished once you returned home. Your work has not gone unnoticed, and we are forever grateful.

THREE AMERICAN HEROES

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

Mr. BERA. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the three young men from Sacramento County who have deep roots in my district and whose quick thinking onboard a train to Paris saved lives and inspired our country.

Alek Skarlatos, Anthony Sadler, and Spencer Stone sprang into action to stop a man wielding a gun and a box cutter onboard their train. The childhood friends were on vacation when the gunman burst into their cabin.

As an Oregon Army National Guardsman, Army Specialist Alek Skarlatos had recently returned from a tour in Afghanistan. He was the first to sound the alarm, telling his friends, "Let's go," as they moved to subdue the gunman.

Anthony Sadler, a senior at Sacramento State University, and Airman First Class Spencer Stone of the United States Air Force acted without hesitation.

Stone was slashed while trying to disarm the man, but the injury did not stop him. After subduing the gunman, the trained EMT went on to help treat other injured passengers.

These men showed bravery as they put themselves in harm's way to save those around them. Today I commend them and recognize their great service.

A parade in their honor will be held tomorrow in Sacramento. The date September 11 is fitting. They will be welcomed home and honored for their heroism. The story of these three men is a reminder that everyone can be a hero.

Thank you, Alek, Anthony, and Spencer. You have made your hometown proud, and you have made the United States proud.

REFUGEES

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

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw attention to the tragic humanitarian crisis currently underway with the migration of refugees from Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey making their way into Western Europe.

With the unfolding of the horrific conflict in Syria and the continuing grotesque violence of ISIS, we can only