PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Margaret Grun Kibben, offered the following prayer:

Test our hearts today, O God.

May the clashes we endure and the roadblocks we encounter serve like a crucible for silver, that in the midst of these ordeals, You would rid us of ugliness, wrongful attitudes, and hurtful ways.

In the heat of our arguments and in the intensity of our discussions, refine us as a furnace does gold.

Remove from us our long-held grievances and free us from our unseemly behaviors.

Purify our thoughts of corrosive intent. Then forge us, that we would be molded and shaped to Your will and useful to the common good.

Into Your hands, O God, we yield our spirits and in the strength of Your name, we offer our prayers.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 5(a)(1)(A) of House Resolution 8, the Journal of the last day's proceedings is approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MURPHY) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MURPHY of North Carolina 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 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

SUPPORT THE EQUALITY ACT

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the LGBTQ-plus community throughout Chicagoland and Illinois in support of the Equality Act.

While we have come a long way in the fight for equality through the Supreme Court's decisions on recognizing the marriage of same-sex couples in Obergefell v. Hodges, and protecting workplace rights for the LGBTQ-plus community in Bostock v. Clayton County, it is time to codify protections into law.

The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and extend existing nondiscrimination laws to ensure that LGBTQ-plus individuals are treated equally in all facets of their life.

In 2021, it is unconscionable that LGBTQ-plus people continue to face harassment and outright discrimination while attempting to access healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities.

It is past time that Congress pass legislation so that all people, no matter your race, color, creed, or sexuality, are treated equally under the law in this country.

I rise as an ally in support of the Equality Act because no one should be discriminated against for who they love or who they are.

CONGRATULATING THE LURAY BULLDOGS GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

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

Mr. CLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Luray Bulldogs Girls Basketball Team who won the Virginia Class 2 State championship this weekend.

After falling just short to Gate City in last year's state title game, the Lady Bulldogs were ready to enact their revenge in Saturday's rematch.

It was a nail-biter of a game as the two teams traded leads heading into the fourth quarter. And with just a minute and 40 seconds remaining, the game was tied at 54 apiece.

Following back-to-back steals and uncontested layups by senior, Brynlee Burrill, the Lady Bulldogs pulled ahead by four and maintained their lead. When all was said and done, Luray had avenged their previous loss to Gate City with a 61–56 victory. This win capped off a perfect 13–0 season and was the first State title in the program's history.

The team has had a remarkable 2 years, with an overall record of 42–2; and after battling obstacles all season, the win shows true toughness, determination, and resiliency.

Congratulations to Coach Lucas and the entire Lady Bulldogs squad on this incredible achievement.

INVEST IN OUR COMMUNITIES AND HELP OUR NEIGHBORS

(Ms. BROWNLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BROWNLEY. Madam Speaker, all across the country, including my home district in Ventura County in California, Americans continue to feel the overwhelming burden of the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic.

I regularly hear from small businesses fighting to keep their doors open; from parents struggling to put food on the table after losing their jobs; and from people who live in fear of being evicted from their homes. It is imperative that we invest in our communities and help our neighbors now.

With money specifically dedicated for vaccine development and distributions, testing, the production of PPE, more relief for small businesses, and additional aid for the unemployed and struggling families, passage of the American Rescue Plan is critical to ensuring economic recovery, getting our kids back to school, providing relief to small businesses and, most importantly, saving lives.

My Republican colleagues went big when it came to massive corporate tax cuts. It would be incomprehensible that we nickel and dime working families and small businesses during the worst pandemic in over a century.

DEEP FLAWS OF THE DEMOCRAT COVID BILL

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the legislation that we are scheduled to consider on the floor tomorrow, the so-called American Rescue Plan.

The sad truth, Madam Speaker, is that this bill does very little to address the real issues impacting communities across the country. Instead, the majority has elected to weaponize the reconciliation process to push through a Democrat wish-list of what are, frankly, left-wing policies.

Only 9 percent of this bill actually goes to combating COVID. But Democrats have found the wisdom to insert $510 billion to bail out poorly run blue States; $470 billion-plus for a policy that we know will kill jobs; a $100 million earmark for a rail project in the Speaker's district; a $1.5 million earmark for a bridge to Canada for the Senate majority leader. All the while, there is still $1 trillion in unspent funds from previous COVID packages.

Madam Speaker, these are just a few of the many deep flaws in the Democrat COVID bill, and I am grateful so many of my colleagues are coming forward to help highlight the shortcomings of this bill, and how we should move forward to best serve the American people.

I urge everyone to oppose this monstrosity.

DELIVERING ON PROMISED COVID–19 RELIEF

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

Mr. CARTWRIGHT. Madam Speaker, in December, this House passed a COVID–19 relief compromise, during which time we pledged to the American people that we would do more. Now is the time for us to deliver on that promise.

The American Rescue Plan is that promise delivered. It is something that enables us to put people back to work; put kids back in schools; to put $1,400