United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 117th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 167 WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2021 *No. 46*

House of Representatives

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

PRAYER

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

Holy God, a year ago normal was turned on its head, national pastimes canceled their seasons, and Broadway went dark. Since then, our whole lives have been tragically upended, and our sense of health and welfare forever threatened.

But You in Your mercy have set before us many who have stood firm in the face of this year of incredible disruption and uncertainty.

God, we offer our deep-felt gratitude for the frontline workers—medical personnel and first responders—as well as those who have borne the responsibility for maintaining the Nation's infrastructure in all its forms—sanitation, communication, transportation.

We lift up to You in thanksgiving all teachers, counselors, caregivers, and parents who have upheld their commitment to the well-being and the future of our country.

I offer this prayer in these Chambers because each of us, and the American Government itself, is beholden to the scores of Capitol Police, staff members, and concession workers who, without fail or fanfare, have executed their duties in humility and faithfulness.

For their sacrificial dedication, the hours of watch-standing and lost family time, God, we owe them a debt of gratitude for helping to bring us through this tumultuous year.

When our words fail us and our appreciation for these noble public servants proves inadequate, we pray that You would speak Your special blessing on them and give them assurance of Your eternal reward.

We offer our prayers to You in the strength of Your name.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ZELDIN 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

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

ARTS PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN OUR LIVES

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Madam Speaker, these are challenging times for everyone, including for our Nation's young people, who are trying to cope with growing up and learning during the COVID–19 pandemic.

At this challenging time, arts education is more important than ever. The arts provide a way to help people connect and cope; and after this crisis, the arts will continue to play an important role in helping to heal.

In recognition of Music in Our Schools Month, I want to highlight the value of music education. My mom was a piano teacher, and I took lessons myself. I know music is an important part of a well-rounded education. It helps students become critical, creative thinkers across subjects and eventually in their careers.

Yesterday, I spoke with band and choir educators from Oregon, who are working to safely reengage students in in-person music classes. I thank them, and I am grateful that the American Rescue Plan will provide funding to help schools open safely, including those important band and choir classes.

Please join me in supporting music education.

PROUDLY STANDING WITH GUN OWNERS

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, H.R. 8 and H.R. 1446 are attempts by the Federal Government to exert more force over law-abiding citizens who want to protect themselves and their families.

Let me remind my Democrat colleagues that the Second Amendment explicitly states that the right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed. Maybe they would remember that if they carried a pocket copy of the Constitution with them like I do every single day. Apparently not.

I am proud to stand with the millions of gun owners in this great country who share an abiding gratitude for the Constitution and the Second Amendment itself.

Make no mistake, these bills are created in bad faith. They are partisan shams that rob us of our freedoms.

HELP IS ON THE WAY

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

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