

Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the British-American Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 119th Congress: The Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE).

The message also announced that pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276d-276g, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the following Senator as Vice Chairman of the Senate Delegation to the Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group Conference during the 119th Congress: The Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR).

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 23 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1530

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. MALOY) at 3 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

PROCUREMENT AND PLACEMENT OF STATUE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 250) to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to procure a statue of Benjamin Franklin for placement in the Capitol.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 250

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. PROCUREMENT AND PLACEMENT OF STATUE OF BENJAMIN FRANKLIN IN THE UNITED STATES CAPITOL.

(a) OBTAINING OF STATUE.—Not later than December 31, 2025, the Joint Committee on the Library shall enter into an agreement to obtain a statue of Benjamin Franklin, under such terms and conditions as the Joint Committee considers appropriate consistent with applicable law.

(b) PLACEMENT.—Not later than December 31, 2026, the Joint Committee shall place the statue obtained under subsection (a) in a suitable permanent location in the United States Capitol where the statue is accessible

to the public during a guided tour of the Capitol provided by the Capitol Visitor Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MORELLE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, today I bring forward two bills. Our Nation faces major challenges and concerns, and this body continues to work on those. While we do that, these bills are simple and non-controversial and do require legislative action to take effect.

I rise today to urge my colleagues to support H.R. 250 to direct the Joint Committee on the Library to procure a statue of Benjamin Franklin for placement in the Capitol.

The nonpartisan legislation will allow Congress to place a statue of Benjamin Franklin in the Capitol. The legislation will require that not later than 2 years after enactment, the Joint Committee on the Library shall enter into an agreement to obtain a statue of Benjamin Franklin. It will also be required that the statue be placed in a publicly accessible permanent location no later than December 31, 2026.

Madam Speaker, I thank Representatives HOULAHAN and FITZPATRICK and their 72 additional cosponsors for bringing this legislation forward. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of H.R. 250, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MORELLE. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I want to begin by thanking my dear friend and colleague, the chair of the Committee on House Administration, for bringing these bills to the floor and also for his partnership and all the great cooperation that we enjoy.

I rise today in support of H.R. 250. The bipartisan legislation would direct the Joint Committee on the Library, as Mr. STEIL said, to procure a statue of Benjamin Franklin for placement in the Capitol to be observed by all those blessed to come and tour the United States Capitol.

As my colleague and friend, the sponsor of this bill, along with Representatives BRIAN FITZPATRICK and CRISSY HOULAHAN have observed—and I am quite certain will observe once again in just a few moments—while there are references to Benjamin Franklin across the Capitol and a statue tucked away in a back hallway, it is black when

there are no lights on. There is no statue of one of the most important Founding Fathers accessible to the millions of visitors who have the privilege of touring the Capitol each year.

This legislation would change that, honoring one of the greatest minds and patriots in American history.

Benjamin Franklin was a statesman, diplomat, scientist, inventor, political philosopher, and businessman. His groundbreaking experiments pushed forward scientific understanding, his role as the first Postmaster General created the foundation of our modern mail system, and he was resolutely committed to freeing the Colonies from British rule.

He helped draft both the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution, and he negotiated the treaty that ended the Revolutionary War. His genius has shaped our Nation in innumerable ways, and he deserves to be prominently displayed and honored in the United States Capitol.

Madam Speaker, I look forward to working with the Joint Committee on the Library to obtain a new statue of Benjamin Franklin. I urge my colleagues to support this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) to speak on the bill.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I thank the chairman, my friend from Wisconsin, Representative STEIL, for yielding.

To my friend and colleague from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN), this is really the product of her hard work. I was proud to partner with her and accept an invitation. If Benjamin Franklin were here today, he would give Representative HOULAHAN a big hug of gratitude for finally recognizing him.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in resolute support of H.R. 250, the Benjamin Franklin statue placement act. Alongside my friend and colleague from Pennsylvania, Congresswoman HOULAHAN, I am proud to advance this effort to enshrine one of America's most extraordinary minds and consequential patriots in the heart of our Nation's Capitol.

Madam Speaker, few figures in our history so fully embody the spirit of American ingenuity, perseverance, and democratic virtue as Benjamin Franklin. He was a statesman whose diplomacy secured our independence, a philosopher whose wisdom guided our early Republic, and an inventor whose genius advanced mankind.

More than a son of Pennsylvania, Benjamin Franklin was and remains a towering architect of the American experiment, a testament to what is possible when vision and virtue work in concert with one another.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of our great Nation, it is both fitting and necessary that Benjamin Franklin take his rightful place amongst the great figures enshrined in this amazing

place. To commemorate this milestone without visibly honoring one of its chief architects would be to overlook the very ideals that built our great Republic.

Benjamin Franklin lived his life with a deliberate sense of purpose, beginning each day by asking: What good shall I do on this day? And ending every evening in reflection: What good have I done today?

Madam Speaker, that is not just a measure of a life well lived. It is the measure of leadership, of duty, and of a nation that strives always to be better than it was the day before. Let us take up that challenge not merely in words but in action.

Let us ensure that Benjamin Franklin's presence in these Halls serves as a constant reminder that our charge is not to serve ourselves, but to serve a greater good.

At the close of each day, may we too be able to answer that question with certainty, having served with purpose, led with integrity, and upheld the ideals that Franklin and our Founders entrusted to us.

Mr. MORELLE. Madam Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. HOULAHAN), who is my dear friend and the person who has really led this effort.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Madam Speaker, I thank Ranking Member MORELLE for yielding.

Today, I am so grateful to have the opportunity to rise and offer this bipartisan legislation, H.R. 250, the Benjamin Franklin statue placement act. It is so very important to highlight moments where we do come together here in the body, and this bipartisan, bicameral legislation is a bright moment of that kind of unity.

I am really grateful for the support and partnership of my colleagues in this effort, Representative FITZPATRICK and Senators COONS and BOOZMAN, on the other side of the Capitol.

The Benjamin Franklin statue placement act does seek to honor Benjamin Franklin, as mentioned, a renowned author, inventor, statesman, and dare I offer, the most important Founding Father of our great Nation.

Mr. Franklin's accomplishments and inventions are numerous and infamous. Electricity, bifocals, and the lightning rod are just a couple of examples that every day still centuries later are in our lives. He is known, as was mentioned earlier, for very pithy, very profound, and witty statements, such as a stitch in time saves nine or a penny saved is a penny earned. Most memorable, perhaps, is: "It is a republic, if you can keep it."

Arguably, Mr. Franklin's most important accolade is that he is the only person to have signed formally all three foundational documents separating our new Nation from the British monarchy.

The Treaty of Paris, the Declaration of Independence, and the Bill of Rights, together known as the Charters of

Freedom, boast the signatures of some of our Nation's most revered figures. Mr. Franklin's signature is the only one that appears on all three documents, however. That is not only something worthy of note, but something, of course, to celebrate.

This is why I was shocked when I learned on my very first official tour of the Capitol Building—which was given to me by my own team member, Emma Consoli, who is the one we really should thank for this legislation—that there are no statues on the Capitol tour of Mr. Franklin. Indeed, Mr. Franklin's lone statue sits at the base of a stairwell, a dark stairwell, just off the Senate floor, out of sight of the hundreds of thousands of people who visit the Capitol.

As we approach this Nation's 250th anniversary, it really is of utmost importance to have Mr. Franklin rightly on display and immortalized for his contributions to our foundation. The Benjamin Franklin statue placement act will do just that.

While Representative FITZPATRICK and I both are both immensely proud of Pennsylvania's own Ben Franklin, we know this is not just for Pennsylvania but for our entire country. I am very grateful to the 77 Members who shared this sentiment last Congress and to our 22 evenly bipartisan original cosponsors and to the 33 Members who have already sponsored it today.

I am also very grateful for the leadership of Chairman STEIL and Ranking Member MORELLE who supported this bill and believed in it as it passed through the House Administration Committee unanimously in September.

This placement act, as written, directs the Joint Committee on the Library to procure and to place a statue of Mr. Franklin along the Capitol tour route, as mentioned, before 2026 ends in celebration of our 250th anniversary.

The installation of this statue in the Capitol Building will not only be an apt celebration for such an important figure in our history, but it is something that I will urge my colleagues to make sure that we vote in favor of today, so we can start that clock ticking. It is important that we take up this legislation now so that this awesome statue that has already been built and already been donated can be cast to perfection and placed ahead of 2026.

I am grateful for the support of this effort. I thank the sculptor, Zenos Frudakis, for his beautiful work already. I appreciate so much the hard work that has gone into this by all of the people who stand around me for being able to get this to the floor for consideration.

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I am prepared close.

Mr. MORELLE. In closing, Madam Speaker, I thank the people who have spoken here on an idea whose time has more than come. I think this is the appropriate way, and particularly, as Ms.

HOULAHAN says, in recognition of our 250th anniversary upcoming, this will be the appropriate way to honor one of our truly great founding members of the American Revolution and our country.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I would like to say, once again, I thank my colleagues, Representative HOULAHAN and Representative FITZPATRICK, and my long working relationship with Ranking Member MORELLE for being able to bring this to the floor.

It is correctly noted that as we approach the 250th anniversary of the United States of America, I think it is true and important that we put this statue here in the United States Capitol.

Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 250, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 250.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1545

SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CONGRESSIONAL TIME CAPSULE ACT

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 469) to provide for the creation of a Congressional time capsule in commemoration of the semiquincentennial of the United States, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 469

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Semiquincentennial Congressional Time Capsule Act".

SEC. 2. SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL CONGRESSIONAL TIME CAPSULE.

(a) CREATION BY ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL.—The Architect of the Capitol shall create a Congressional time capsule, to be known as the "Semiquincentennial Congressional Time Capsule" (in this Act referred to as the "Time Capsule").

(b) CONTENTS.—

(1) DETERMINATION BY CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP.—The Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Office of the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, Office of the Majority Leader of the Senate, and Office of the Minority Leader of the Senate shall jointly determine the contents of the Time Capsule, taking into account the requirements of paragraph (2).

(2) SPECIFICATIONS.—The contents of the Time Capsule shall include—

(A) a representative portion of all books, manuscripts, miscellaneous printed matter,