

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Ed Pastor, D-Ariz., Arizona's senior member of Congress, reached a milestone today in the U.S. House of Representatives when he completed 100 hours presiding over the business of the U.S. House of Representatives.

Serving as Speaker pro tempore during Wednesday's consideration of H.R. 5551, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to make a certification when making purchases under the Small Business Lending Fund Program, Pastor gaveled in 100 hours in the chair's seat at 12 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. He is the only member of Congress who has reached this milestone during the 111th Congress.

"It's humbling to reach this milestone, knowing that I am presiding over the business of our great nation's lawmaking body," Pastor said. "It was good to spend that much time in the chair and to gain the experience. I am thankful to the Speaker and the staff for the opportunity, and to the Parliamentarian and the staff for keeping me informed and providing the rules and language I needed to make judgements. I'm also grateful to my colleagues for showing respect and cooperation to the chair when I was presiding."

Rep. Nancy Pelosi of California is the Speaker and presiding officer of the House. The Speaker may designate other members, often senior members of Congress, as Speaker pro tempore, which means "speaker for a time."

"Congressman Ed Pastor has now earned the distinction of becoming the first Member in the 111th Congress to preside over the House for 100 hours," Pelosi said Wednesday. "As Speaker Pro Tempore, Congressman Pastor is always fair to all Members and has played a key role in ensuring congressional debate is of the highest standard. His hard work and his service to this institution—the people's House – is appreciated by all Members of Congress."