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No. 6

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 10, 2018.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ADRIAN SMITH to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

PAUL D. RYAN,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 8, 2018, 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. All time shall be equally allocated between the parties, and in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m. Each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, shall be limited to 5 minutes.

TAX BILL RAMIFICATIONS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, one of the phrases one often hears is, "I hate to say I told you so." And it is delivered with a feigned sincerity, but usually people actually like to say, "I told you so."

I must confess that I have some of those feelings myself, as repeatedly during the few hours the Ways and Means Committee met, rushing

through the massive tax cut, the largest transfer of wealth in our Nation's history, which will be paid for on the backs of our children and grandchildren with increased debt and benefiting people who in the main don't need it—I said at the time that each week after this bill passed, if it did, we would have a series of embarrassing stories about mistakes and oversight and special interest provisions that were stuck into it.

Well, actually, the fact is that that was somewhat understated because we are seeing, literally, every day people understand what was tucked in the bill: mistakes, oversight, and special interest provisions.

For example, there is a provision in the bill that was, we were told, designed to help small craft brewers. That is important to me and the people I represent, and there is broad support for minor provisions that would be able to help them by reducing their tax liability. But the provision that ended up in the final bill has massive opportunities to benefit large producers—a little bit for small craft brewers, but for large, international distillers, an opportunity to reconfigure how they do business to take advantage of multiple opportunities for that tax break.

There was an article yesterday talking about how the tax rate for American companies that manufacture overseas, the tax on that activity will be half as much as if they were manufacturing in the United States, providing an incentive to offshore jobs at a time when most of us would like to make sure that it is, here at home, at least, a level playing field, not to disadvantage people manufacturing here at home.

And, of course, there is another story in today's Wall Street Journal, "Tax Law's Effect Fuels Farm Outcry," because there was a provision inserted in the bill that would give farmers a more lucrative deduction when they sell ag-

ricultural products directly to farm cooperatives. There is a story about one gentleman in there who felt that this could put him out of business. It is going to sting large agribusinesses like Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland. The new provision could reshape parts of the agriculture economy and sharply reduce many farmers' taxes as well as scrambling these individual businesses.

John Power, a North Dakota accountant who was the accountant for the small grain operator who is going to be hammered, said: "It is kind of hard to imagine they intended to make farming tax free. Fixing it becomes difficult because they don't think it's something that can be fixed with regulation."

There are a variety of these provisions that are a result of not following what we call "regular order," without having hearings on the provision, of allowing lobbyists and staff to be able to draft the bill on the fly without having members of the committee—not just Democrats, but Republicans—fully know what was in it. That is legislative malpractice. It is one of the reasons why, despite giving over \$3 trillion of tax cuts, the bill remains unpopular.

Americans are nervous about increasing our national debt over \$2 trillion, and they know that the benefits for average citizens are going to go away in a few years and some are actually going to see tax increases, but the benefits for the top 1 percent and the largest corporations are permanent.

People know that it is not fair, that it is unnecessary, and that it is going to have more and more problems here, not just in States like mine where citizens are no longer going to be able to fully deduct their State and local taxes, property taxes, resulting in significant inequity, in scrambling property values, not just in Oregon, but it is across the country where people are going to be facing these problems.

□ 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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H85

CELEBRATING PASSAGE OF THE TAX CUTS AND JOBS ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly 10 years since the Great Recession officially began, when our economy slumped and unemployment climbed to levels not witnessed since the early 1980s, but last month Congress paved the way to create a tax system that is fair, simpler, and one that establishes an environment where our country can unleash our full potential.

Too many Americans are living paycheck to paycheck and have been for too long. Stagnant wages, growing debt, and the inability to save have plagued so many. That is why our tax overhaul is so important. This truly is a once-in-a-generation opportunity that we could not afford to pass up.

The Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will touch every household in the Nation and every corner of our economy. As soon as February, Americans will see more money in their paychecks. When it comes time to file their 2018 taxes, our tax system will be so simple that 9 out of 10 Americans will be able to file on a postcard. The standard deduction will be doubled for individuals and joint filers. Middle class families will also have a significant increase to the child tax credit to help parents with the costs of raising children.

And, Mr. Speaker, for those pursuing opportunity through education, America's students, the graduate tuition voucher exemption and student loan interest deduction remain in our tax reform package. I, and many of my colleagues, urged the conference committee to keep these provisions intact.

Our Tax Code should provide incentives for greater opportunity. For many, this is realized through higher education. The student loan interest deduction helps make higher education more affordable, and based on the most recent yearly data available, 12 million taxpayers benefited from that deduction.

I advocated keeping this provision as well as the graduate tuition voucher exemption and other higher education tax credits as a part of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act because they truly do make a difference in the lives of so many Americans. It makes financing an education possible for many low- and middle-income individuals.

In addition to education, another great cornerstone of the American Dream is homeownership, and, proudly, the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will continue to provide tax relief to current and aspiring homeowners alike.

Mr. Speaker, there are many accomplishments in this historic tax overhaul, including lowering the corporate tax rate, which will put our job creators on a level playing field with their global competitors. This has already led to increased bonuses and pay raises

for millions of workers. Quite simply, this bill provides the kind of tax relief that Americans deserve.

We challenged the status quo and the special interests who said it couldn't be done, and we did it. And the American people won.

CELEBRATING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Washington (Ms. JAYAPAL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of the upcoming holiday remembering Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As a lifelong activist fighting for immigrants, civil and human rights, and now as a Member of Congress, Dr. King has been a deep and central inspiration throughout my life. His work has helped me to make possible the path that I have taken, from being a 16-year-old immigrant girl who came to this country by herself for college, to serving, now, as the first Indian-American woman elected to the United States House of Representatives—and it is the courage and the fight of Dr. King that made my journey possible.

I knew of Dr. King first because of his connection to Mahatma Gandhi, a great leader from my own birth country of India. Like Gandhi, Dr. King was a once-in-a-generation leader. Like Gandhi, the problems that Dr. King tackled were once seen as insurmountable problems, institutional barriers of race and class that seemed as if, if taken on, would topple society as we knew it, tall walls of tradition and practice that kept our society segregated and divided.

But that did not stop him from speaking out, organizing, and leading a growing movement that reminded the leaders of our country of the very dream that made America possible: that all men and women were created equal and that we should be judged by the content of our character and not the color of our skin.

Dr. King's gift was in his unique ability to bring truth, compassion, and justice together for a better future and to remind us of how much we share even across our differences. He followed Gandhi's principles of nonviolent resistance, also known as satyagraha: "satya" meaning truth, and "graha" meaning adherence to truth.

Satyagraha then meant insistence on truth, and that is what Dr. King preached and acted upon: truth about ending segregation and discrimination, truth about ending the war in Vietnam, truth about lifting up sanitation workers and ending poverty, truth, ultimately, that it is love and not hate that builds our character and our collective society.

If Dr. King were here with us today, he would call on us to have faith in our fight for justice and to substitute courage for caution. He would call on us to

work passionately and unrelentingly for the very vision of our country that inspires so many around the world, for that more perfect Union that we know is still ahead of us, for that society that remembers that we are all better off when we are all better off.

Dr. King would remind us that justice is what love looks like in public. He would call on us to move into that plane of higher education, that plane of moral consciousness where we simply cannot stand by as injustice occurs around us.

He would call on us to address economic inequality by raising the minimum wage and enacting real tax reform whose benefits accrue to the masses and not to the top 1 percent and the wealthiest corporations.

Dr. King would call on us to pass the Dream Act and support the futures of 1.5 million young people across the country. He would call on us to expand and support the Affordable Care Act and healthcare for everyone so that no one is one healthcare crisis away from bankruptcy.

Our work is still to fight for justice and build that beloved community where each of us has a place to stand regardless of the color of our skin or where we live or how much money we have in our pockets, and in this beloved community, we would tackle the legacies of racism and implicit bias that we all carry with us with courage and with fortitude. We would work together to build that community that inspires us and to leave a world to our children that makes us proud, and, most importantly, we operate always from a place of generosity and abundance rather than fear and scarcity.

From that jail cell in Alabama, Dr. King wrote: "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny," or, as the great civil rights leader Reverend Joseph Lowery once said to me during the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride: "We may have come over on different ships, but we are all in the same boat now."

To make a difference, to truly serve the people, it only takes courage and coming together as a collective, across the aisle, across rural and urban, across Black, White, and Brown. Dr. King showed us what that really looks like, and he died because he was compelled to stand for making a reality from a dream of what was possible only in a country as great as the United States of America.

Today, as we remember and honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., we remember, too, that if we are courageous, if we put people over politics, our actions have the power to change lives, to push that moral arc of the universe more quickly towards justice. As Dr. King said: "We must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back."