



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE **106th** CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 145

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1999

No. 153

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
November 3, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVEN C. LATOURETTE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

Let us pray, using the words of Psalm 46:
God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.
Therefore, we will not fear
though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of
the sea;
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.
There is a river whose streams make glad
the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.
God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved;
God will help her right early.
The nations rage, the kingdoms totter;
He utters His voice,
the earth melts.
The lord of hosts is with us;
The God of Jacob is our refuge. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Chair's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. McNULTY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills and concurrent resolutions of the following titles in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 440. An act to provide support for certain institutes and schools.

S. 1843. An act to designate certain Federal land in the Talladega National Forest, Alabama, as the "Dugger Mountain Wilderness".

S. 1844. An act to amend part D of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide for an

alternative penalty procedure with respect to compliance with requirements for a State disbursement unit.

S. Con. Res. 66. Concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of "Capitol Builder: The Shorthand Journals of Captain Montgomery C. Meigs, 1853-1861".

S. Con. Res. 67. Concurrent resolution to authorize the printing of "The United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Construction, Design, and Politics".

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minute speeches on each side.

GOOD NEWS

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, no surprises, just some good news. Yesterday the U.S. Government announced that it paid off nearly \$16 billion of the national debt.

There is more. The Treasury Department also stated that it expected to retire another \$12 billion in the first quarter of next year alone. We are beginning to pay off that \$5.5 trillion national debt, and for the first time since Dwight D. Eisenhower was President, the U.S. can boast of back-to-back budget surpluses.

How did we achieve those budget surpluses? Simple, a Republican Congress remained committed to reducing wasteful government spending.

As we continue to debate the appropriation bills for next year, it is my hope that we can continue to build upon our successes. Americans want and deserve a Federal Government that spends their tax dollars wisely. Let us not disappoint them.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of any remaining government waste that continues to permeate this area.

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.



Printed on recycled paper.

REGARDING THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

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

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the First Amendment on a very important victory. A Federal court has ordered the mayor of the city of New York and his administration to end its campaign to evict the Brooklyn Museum from its facilities over an exhibit that he and some others found offensive.

This was not a serious challenge for the First Amendment, because it is clear to even students of the most basic constitutional law class that this case had no merit and was brought for entirely political reasons, though every once in a while it is nice to reaffirm that the First Amendment is as strong as ever.

Mr. Speaker, the Bill of Rights is clear, the government may not interfere with the free expression of anyone. What the mayor and his administration attempted to do was censorship, pure and simple. The mayor tried to impose his own cultural tastes on the museum, and tried to hold it hostage to his demands that a particular exhibition would be withdrawn.

If he had been victorious, it could have had a real chilling effect. But the First Amendment is stronger than the whims of elected officials. It has won yet again. Quoting from the said Federal court decision, "There is no Federal constitutional issue more grave than the effort by government officials to censor works of expression and to threaten the vitality of a major cultural institution as a punishment for failing to abide by governmental demands for orthodoxy."

This is a victory for the Brooklyn Museum, for the artistic community, a victory for the First Amendment, and for constitutional liberty.

REPUBLICANS MAKE WASHINGTON KICK TWO BAD HABITS AT ONCE

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, bad habits are hard to break, especially when those habits are 30 years old.

Maybe it should not surprise me that the Washington big spenders who have raided the social security trust fund for the last 30 years are having trouble kicking that habit.

But just because it is not surprising does not mean that it is okay. It is not okay to raid the social security trust fund and use the money for other governmental programs. It is not okay to jeopardize the retirement security of millions of hard-working Americans.

While I am not surprised that President Clinton and the Democrats in Congress are having such trouble kick-

ing this bad habit, I am disappointed by it. But we Republicans will stand firm. We have stopped the social security raid. We have passed a bill that protects the retirement money of America's working men and women, and at the same time we are rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse in Washington bureaucracy.

We are making Washington kick two bad habits at once. That is what I call good government.

REPUBLICANS' TAX BREAK PLANS STILL IGNORE NEEDS OF SERVING AMERICANS

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, for 9 months out of this year the Republicans fought for a \$1 trillion tax cut at the expense of our balanced budget and at the expense of our social security system. That was overwhelmingly rejected by the people of this country.

Now the Republicans tell us that we cannot afford a prescription drug benefit for our seniors, that we cannot afford a Patients' Bill of Rights to protect our families against managed care and HMOs that deny them care, that we cannot afford a minimum wage for our low-income workers in this Nation, and that we cannot extend the fiscal security of social security by even one day.

No, the Republicans still want to try to pass tax breaks for the wealthiest individuals, corporations, and special interests in this country. When in this session, in the last remaining 8 or 10 days of this session, when is it that Republicans are going to start thinking about our elderly, our children, and the working families of this Nation?

LOCKBOX

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

Mr. SCHAFER. Mr. Speaker, this House demonstrated this year that it is indeed possible to stop the raid on social security. We know this is the right thing to do. Americans know this is the right thing to do. Of course, the right thing to do is not always the easy thing to do. It is a lesson we all learned as children, and it is a lesson we all hope to pass on to our own children.

On May 26, this House voted to make doing the right thing a little easier by passing the social security lockbox, with a vote of 416 to 12. With the lockbox protections in place, raiding social security will no longer be an easy thing for the President to do.

The House passed the lockbox bill 160 days ago. For 160 days, the Democrat party in the other Chamber has held this vital bill hostage. They are refusing to allow the bill to the Senate floor for a vote.

It is time to do the right thing for America's seniors, for their children, and for their children's children. One hundred sixty days is too long to leave social security unprotected from the President's propensity to spend and spend and spend.

THE LADY BUCKEYES AT THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. The Ohio State women's rugby team, Mr. Speaker, wanted to do something memorable in D.C. It was memorable, all right. Unlike Brandy Chastain's highly publicized sports bra exposé, the Lady Buckeyes went topless. That is right, topless. The Lincoln Memorial became a strip joint. Bras were flying everywhere. Unbelievable.

Now, after all this, the University has suspended the team, and these Buckeye vixens are awaiting the final decision.

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Leave these foxy ladies alone. If America can forgive the President, the Ohio State University can forgive these Buckeye divas. I yield back all of the memorable excitement at the Lincoln Memorial.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind all Members to avoid personal references to the President of the United States.

TRIBUTE TO THOMAS P. FISCHER

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Thomas P. Fischer as he today begins his last day of public service. After serving his country in Vietnam and other Federal positions, Tom Fischer accepted the challenge of serving in a leadership position in the Immigration and Naturalization Service, including heading the INS district office in Atlanta.

The people who have benefited from Tom Fischer's public service are legion: the hundreds of Federal workers who have served under him; the many public officials, including myself as the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia, that served alongside of him; and thousands of hopeful new American citizens that he helped guide on their road to citizenship.

Mr. Speaker, as Thomas Fischer begins today his last day of Federal service, I join in thanking him for an outstanding job, and wishing him well in his new endeavors, which will, I am certain, be marked by the same integrity, dedication, patriotism, and diligence that have characterized every day of his service to America.