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No. 11

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 9, 2000.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

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

O God, our hope for all the years, our faith by You is bold, You help us face unwanted tears, our hands with You do hold.

You promise life without an end. You pledge the gift of love. Your peace and grace forever send, all gifts from heaven above. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. RILEY led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic 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 Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 245. Concurrent resolution to correct technical errors in the enrollment of the bill H.R. 764.

SERIOUS BUDGET CONCERN

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join with my colleagues to express my serious concern with the President's budget proposal that was released earlier this week.

With the surpluses that this Congress has created, the President now seeks to renew the era of big government by expanding the size and the scope of the Federal bureaucracy, including the creation of \$350 billion of new government spending.

Madam Speaker, furthermore, the President failed to provide hard-working Americans with meaningful tax cuts and instead included a \$181 billion tax increase.

I am seriously concerned that the President's budget proposal will actually raid Social Security, rather than safeguarding it for future generations.

Madam Speaker, we need to pass a responsible budget, not one laden with irresponsible spending increases and pointless tax increases, a responsible budget like the budget supported by my Republican colleagues here today that will fund essential government programs, provide necessary tax relief, and protect Social Security while paying down our national debt.

I yield back the President's big budget government proposals which rob Peter to pay Paul.

AIRING OF SUICIDE PROGRAM RECKLESS AND IRRESPONSIBLE

(Mr. RILEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RILEY. Madam Speaker, last week the public-access cable television channel operated by the Community Television of Lane County, Oregon aired a program that is shocking to the conscience of a civilized society. The program in question is a new do-it-yourself video that is a step-by-step guide to committing suicide based on the book "Final Exit" by Derek Humphry.

Mr. Humphry gives a video demonstration on what he claims is "dying with dignity." I do not believe that suicide is synonymous with dignity.

Madam Speaker, it is a sad day indeed when we make readily available on public television a step-by-step guide on where to find lethal drugs, with or without a doctor's prescription, to be mixed with chocolate pudding or applesauce to bring about death or how to use a bag or mask to commit suicide. The airing of this devaluation of life is nothing short of reckless and to me irresponsible.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE PARMA SAMAD

(Mr. CHABOT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, Cincinnati has said good-bye to a wonderful lady and great teacher, Parma Samad, who died last month after a long, courageous battle with cancer.

As a student in Cincinnati's Catholic schools, I had the privilege of being taught by many outstanding teachers.

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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My sixth grade teacher at St. Catharine's, Parma Samad, Miss Fierro at the time, was simply the best. Over her career, she taught in both the Catholic and public schools.

Madam Speaker, our entire community has benefited from her selfless dedication to her students. And she will be long remembered by those whose lives she touched over her 39-year teaching career.

Madam Speaker, I know that I am joined by many in Cincinnati who knew and admired Parma Samad when I offer my sincere condolences to Parma's husband, Ron, to her parents, Cosmo and Agnese Fierro, and to all her family. Parma will be greatly missed.

There is no question in my mind that she is looking down on us right now from a better place, and that she is smiling.

DISAPPOINTMENT WITH LACK OF COOPERATION

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, I was disappointed to read last week a Roll Call story entitled "Democrats Feel Cocky After Big Speech." It said basically that House Democrats feel it is going to be "their way or the highway going into November."

When Mr. HASTERT became Speaker a year ago, he gave a speech in the House that reached out to our Democratic colleagues offering to meet them halfway, and that he expected them to meet us halfway. Now the Democrat leadership seems determined that there will be no legislative progress this year, preferring to sit idly by. The Speaker said, "Stalemate is not an option. Solutions are."

The American people want us to pay down our debt, they want us to give relief from the marriage tax penalty, to ban the raid on Social Security, to renew inner cities and to provide seniors with affordable prescription drugs.

Madam Speaker, I hope the President will reject the foot-dragging tactics of the House Democrats and work with us. I am disappointed they do not want to work, by their own admission, in behalf of a productive agenda.

TIME TO END MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the House is going to vote to end the marriage penalty. Right now married couples pay more in taxes than two single taxpayers living together. That is not right. It is just not right.

Washington must stop penalizing the cornerstone of our society, the Amer-

ican family. We should encourage marriage, not penalize it. We are restoring family, children, and the American dream.

Last year President Clinton and his Democrat allies labeled marriage penalty relief as risky, and the President vetoed it. This year the Democrats are encouraging him to veto it again.

In my district alone, this bill will help end the marriage penalty for over 150,000 Americans. The President and his Democrat friends should stop playing election-year politics.

Mr. President, it is time for you to help us help American families.

VIRGINIA LEADERSHIP DOES NOT GET IT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, yesterday the Virginia legislature just said no to the citizens' efforts to try and control the problems of livability in their community. It is sad that the new leadership in Virginia just does not get it.

Smart growth is good for the economy. It helps declining and distressed areas, and it does not force the Hobson's choice of dumb growth. But the State of Virginia refuses to deal meaningfully with the transportation and finance problems on a State level and at the same time, refuses to give local governments tools to handle it themselves.

I hope that the citizens of Virginia, as I hope that citizens around the country, will hold each elected official responsible on all levels for their efforts to give the tools to make sure that our communities are more livable so our citizens can be healthy, economically secure and safe.

SUPPORT THE LEAP ACT

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

Mr. BARRETT of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, I rise as a sponsor of H.R. 3429, the LEAP Act. We all agree that immigrants should come to this country legally, and LEAP will remove the magnet that brings undocumented workers to the country in the first place, jobs.

LEAP will improve current employment verification programs so that businesses can make sure that employees are legally authorized to work in this country. Right now, employers are in a catch-22 situation. Under the law, they cannot hire illegal immigrants; but they do not have all of the tools necessary to hire legal workers.

The bill is not anti-immigration. I certainly recognize the many benefits that legal immigrants bring to this country. Most people who come across the border without proper documenta-

tion only want to improve their lives and the lives of their families. But we must remember that there are a lot of people who also want to come to America and must wait years, perhaps, to come legally. It is not fair to them if we do not enforce the law.

Madam Speaker, I hope all of my colleagues will support this common sense approach to discourage illegal immigration.

KEEP SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE SOLVENT

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Madam Speaker, early this morning the Steve Forbes campaign called me and said that Steve Forbes' wife flew into Michigan late last night; and sometime between 12 p.m. and 5 a.m. this morning, the family made its decision that he would be withdrawing from the presidential race.

As one of the Michigan cochairmen for Steve Forbes, I was disappointed, because what Steve Forbes brought to the podium, to public discussion, was detailed plans on where this country goes, where we go, in terms of fixing Social Security, where we go in terms of fixing Medicare, both insolvent.

In my 5-minute speech today under Special Orders, I will be talking about what could happen on paying down the debt, but probably that it is not going to happen, and that what is really going to happen is a tremendous burden on our kids and our grandkids if we do not wake up, if we do not pay attention, if we do not come out with some of the solutions to make sure that we keep these important entitlement programs solvent.

A FAIR MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

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

Mr. MENENDEZ. Madam Speaker, tomorrow the Republican majority starts on their march to trying once again to pass over a \$1 trillion tax cut, the same tax cut that Governor Bush offers his candidacy for President. They begin, instead of offering it as a whole, by dividing it up. They will start with the marriage tax penalty.

The fact of the matter is we Democrats also want to end, not just adjust, we want to end the marriage tax penalty; but we want to do it in ways that not only value the institution of marriage, we want to do it in ways that value other issues, such as extending the life of Social Security and Medicare, the values of our seniors, and such as improving the quality of education for children, the value that we hold of our children.

This Republican bill is too expensive than it needs to be. It makes no attempt to pay for itself; and lastly,