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WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2000

No. 15

Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 22, 2000, at 11 a.m.

House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2000

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Dr. Ronald F. Christian, Lutheran Social Services, Fairfax, Virginia, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, in this moment of silence and reflection, we acknowledge Your presence. The Psalmist reminds us that You hear the prayers of all people, the rich and the poor, the mighty and the weak, the hopeful and the discouraged. And, that before You all words are the same, all petitions are known and all needs are recognized.

O God, we believe it is Your will to bring us all together in a single peace. So, therefore our simple prayer this day is, that we will show mercy, as we would want mercy shown, that we will care about others, as we would be cared about, that we will give love as we would want love to be given, and that we will be patient as we request patience to be provided to us. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

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

Mr. McDermott. 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. Evidently a quorum is not present.

The Sergeant at Arms will notify absent Members.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 354, nays 46, not voting 34, as follows:

[Roll No. 22]
YEAS—354

Abercrombie	Brown (FL)	DeLay	Gonzalez	Kildee	Miller (FL)
Ackerman	Bryant	DeMint	Goode	Kilpatrick	Miller, Gary
Allen	Burr	Deutsch	Goodlatte	Kind (WI)	Miller, George
Andrews	Burton	Diaz-Balart	Goodling	King (NY)	Minge
Archer	Buyer	Dickey	Gordon	Kingston	Mink
Armey	Calvert	Dicks	Goss	Kleczka	Moakley
Baca	Camp	Dingell	Granger	Knollenberg	Mollohan
Bachus	Canady	Dixon	Green (TX)	Kolbe	Moran (KS)
Baker	Cannon	Doggett	Green (WI)	Kuykendall	Moran (VA)
Baldwin	Capuano	Dooley	Greenwood	LaHood	Morella
Ballenger	Cardin	Doolittle	Hall (OH)	Lampson	Murtha
Barcia	Carson	Dreier	Hall (TX)	Lantos	Nadler
Barr	Castle	Duncan	Hansen	Largent	Napolitano
Barrett (NE)	Chabot	Dunn	Hastings (FL)	Larson	Neal
Barrett (WI)	Chambliss	Edwards	Hastings (WA)	Latham	Nethercutt
Bartlett	Clayton	Ehlers	Hayes	LaTourette	Ney
Bass	Clement	Ehrlich	Hayworth	Lazio	Northup
Bateman	Coble	Emerson	Herger	Leach	Norwood
Becerra	Coburn	Engel	Hill (IN)	Lee	Nussle
Bentsen	Collins	Eshoo	Hilleary	Levin	Obey
Bereuter	Combest	Evans	Hinchey	Lewis (CA)	Olver
Berkley	Condit	Everett	Hinojosa	Lewis (GA)	Ortiz
Berman	Conyers	Ewing	Hobson	Lewis (KY)	Ose
Berry	Cook	Farr	Hoechstra	Linder	Oxley
Biggert	Cox	Fattah	Holden	Lipinski	Packard
Bilirakis	Coyne	Fletcher	Holt	Lofgren	Pallone
Blagojevich	Cramer	Foley	Hooley	Lucas (KY)	Pascrall
Biliey	Crowley	Forbes	Horn	Lucas (OK)	Pastor
Blumenauer	Cubin	Fowler	Hostettler	Luther	Paul
Blunt	Cummings	Frank (MA)	Istock	Maloney (CT)	Payne
Boehlert	Cunningham	Franks (NJ)	Jackson (IL)	Maloney (NY)	Pease
Bonilla	Davis (FL)	Frelenghuisen	Jackson-Lee	Manzullo	Pelosi
Bonior	Davis (IL)	Frost	Jones (NC)	Markey	Peterson (PA)
Bono	Davis (VA)	Gallegly	Jones, Sam	Mascara	Petri
Boswell	Deal	Ganske	Jones (NC)	Matsui	Phelps
Boucher	DeGette	Gekas	Kanjorski	McCarthy (MO)	Pickering
Boyd	Delahunt	Gilcrest	Kaptur	McCarthy (NY)	Pitts
Brady (TX)	DeLauro	Gilman	Kasich	McGovern	Pombo
			Kelly	McHugh	Pomeroy
			Kennedy	McInnis	Porter
				McIntosh	Portman
				McIntyre	Price (NC)
				McKeon	Pryce (OH)
				McKinney	Quinn
				Meehan	Radanovich
				Meek (FL)	Rahall
				Menendez	Rangel
				Metcalf	Regula
				Mica	Reyes
				Millender-	Reynolds
				McDonald	Riley

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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Rivers	Shimkus	Thornberry
Rodriguez	Shows	Thune
Roemer	Shuster	Thurman
Rogers	Simpson	Toomey
Rohrabacher	Sisisky	Towns
Ros-Lehtinen	Skeen	Traficant
Rothman	Skelton	Turner
Roukema	Smith (MI)	Upton
Royal-Ballard	Smith (NJ)	Velazquez
Rush	Smith (TX)	Vitter
Ryan (WI)	Smith (WA)	Walden
Ryun (KS)	Souder	Walsh
Salmon	Spence	Wamp
Sanchez	Spratt	Watkins
Sanders	Stabenow	Watt (NC)
Sandlin	Stark	Watts (OK)
Sawyer	Stearns	Waxman
Saxton	Stump	Weiner
Scarborough	Stupak	Weldon (FL)
Schakowsky	Sununu	Weldon (PA)
Scott	Sweeney	Wexler
Sensenbrenner	Talent	Whitfield
Serrano	Tancredo	Wicker
Sessions	Tanner	Wilson
Shadegg	Tauscher	Wise
Shaw	Tauzin	Wolf
Shays	Taylor (NC)	Woolsey
Sherman	Terry	Wynn
Sherwood	Thomas	Young (FL)

NAYS—46

Aderholt	Hill (MT)	Sabo
Bilbray	Hilliard	Schaffer
Borski	Hulshof	Slaughter
Brady (PA)	Klink	Stenholm
Clyburn	Kucinich	Strickland
Costello	LaFalce	Taylor (MS)
Crane	LoBiondo	Thompson (CA)
English	McDermott	Thompson (MS)
Etheridge	McNulty	Udall (CO)
Filner	Meeks (NY)	Udall (NM)
Ford	Moore	Visclosky
Gibbons	Oberstar	Waters
Gillmor	Peterson (MN)	Weller
Gutierrez	Pickett	Wu
Gutknecht	Ramstad	
Hefley	Rogan	

NOT VOTING—34

Baird	Danner	Myrick
Baldacci	DeFazio	Owens
Barton	Doyle	Royce
Bishop	Fossella	Sanford
Boehner	Gejdenson	Snyder
Brown (OH)	Gephardt	Tiahrt
Callahan	Graham	Tierney
Campbell	Hutchinson	Vento
Capps	Jones (OH)	Weygand
Chenoweth-Hagee	Lowey	Young (AK)
Clay	Martinez	
Cooksey	McCollum	

□ 1028

So the Journal was approved.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. PORTMAN 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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 396

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that my name be removed as a cosponsor of House Resolution 396.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 one-minutes on each side.

SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS LIMIT

(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, Benjamin Franklin once said that when people "are employed, they are best contented." Unfortunately, our Government right now is denying contentment to millions of seniors who want to work but cannot because of the Social Security earnings limit.

Because of this earnings limit, seniors who work are being stripped of their Social Security benefits, the very Social Security benefits that they have spent their adult life earning and paying for with their own money. They are being penalized \$2 for every \$1 they earn if they choose to keep working. This is nonsense. It is wrong. And it must end.

Fortunately, the Republicans here in the House are supporting a plan that would give relief to the millions of seniors who are burdened by the earnings limit. We understand that senior citizens who choose to work should not have to put their Social Security benefits at risk.

Senior citizens can and do make lasting contributions in the workforce, and they should not be denied that right. The time has come to put an end to the Social Security earnings limit and tell our working citizens that we do not think they should be punished for having a job.

AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, the discharge petition drive that is being launched today is strong medicine, and it is the right prescription for American families.

But do not take my word for it. Just ask Sue Darling, who is a constituent of mine in Port Huron, Michigan.

Mrs. Darling suffers from Parkinson's Disease and other illnesses. In fact, before her husband died last year, they spent 60 percent of their income on the medicine that they both needed.

The cost of filling three prescriptions Mrs. Darling needs just for her emphysema alone comes to more than \$300 per month. That is \$300 for three prescriptions.

She has Medigap coverage, but it is exhausted after three months.

Mrs. Darling is at the point now where she would beg her physician for free samples of the inhalers that she needs. That is why we are jump-starting the debate over affordable prescription drugs in this country.

The chance to craft a sensible solution, we are not asking for anything more than that.

Lord knows Americans like Mrs. Darling deserve nothing less.

□ 1030

LET US GIVE SENIORS RELIEF FROM SOCIAL SECURITY EARNINGS LIMIT

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, Thomas Edison once said, there is no substitute for hard work. I think most of us in the chamber could agree with that. There is no substitute for the feeling of satisfaction after a hard day's work. Too often, work is something that many people take for granted. But one group of people who do not take work for granted is our seniors. Because of the Social Security earnings limit, working seniors can literally not afford to take work for granted. Because of the Social Security earnings limit, millions of working seniors are stripped of their Social Security benefits. Their crime is employment. Because they have a job, the government takes away the Social Security benefits that they have spent a lifetime earning.

This is wrong. This is not fair. Last week, the House took the first step in giving relief to married couples who pay tax penalties because they are married. Now it is time to give relief to seniors who are penalized because they work. Let us all join together and give seniors relief from the Social Security earnings limit.

SENIORS DESERVE TO PAY LESS FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, we have a health crisis in this Nation. Our seniors are being priced out of the prescription drugs that help keep them alive and allow them to live healthy lives. I submit that after a lifetime of service to family and community, our seniors deserve to pay less. They deserve to pay less than customers of drug companies who receive discounts because they have market power. But more importantly, they deserve to pay less than that which is paid for drugs used by animals. Today I am releasing a government reform minority study of my district in Maryland which reveals that drug manufacturer prices are twice as high for humans than for animals, and these price differentials cannot be justified by quality differences