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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 21, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES F. BASS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Dr. Woodrow Hudson, Chaplain, Georgia Department of Corrections, Atlanta, Georgia, offered the following prayer:

Gracious and merciful God, as we gather in this hallowed hall with the Members of the House of Representatives, we thank You for the great heritage of this body. May our interactions with others bring hope and courage. May our times together teach us patience and perseverance. May our session together be a time of learning and growth with productive results.

O God, protect us from knowledge that has no benefit. Protect us from a heart that is not humble. Protect us from a soul that is never satisfied. And protect us from a prayer that is never answered.

Help us to remember You, to reverence You, to obey You, to humble ourselves before You, to turn toward You in repentance.

Bless, O Lord, these women and men who are defending our country and our freedoms in these days of war.

We ask these things in the name of our Saviour. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. COLLINS 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 Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 1274. An act, to direct the Administrator of General Services to convey to Fresno County, California, the existing Federal courthouse in that county.

H.R. 2489. An act to provide for the distribution of judgment funds to the Cowliiz Indian Tribe.

H.R. 3118. An act to designate the Orville Wright Federal Building and the Wilbur Wright Federal Building in Washington, District of Columbia.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1814. An act to transfer Federal lands between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE REVEREND WOODROW HUDSON

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

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to salute the Reverend Woodrow Hudson, who gave this morning's opening prayer. Reverend Hudson is the Director of Chaplaincy Services for the Georgia Department of Corrections. He leads 118 field chaplains and approximately 4,000 certified prison volunteers in 39 of our State prisons, six transitional centers, six probation detention centers, and three private prisons in the State of Georgia.

In the Reverend's Chaplaincy Services section are the Prison Volunteers and the Reentry Aftercare Partnership. These volunteers offer and provide spiritual guidance to over 50,000 inmates in all of Georgia's correctional institutions. The Reentry Aftercare Partnership works with churches to provide guidance to inmates returning to their communities.

Before Reverend Hudson became Director of Chaplaincy Services in Georgia, he was a pastor for 32 years in churches in Mississippi and Georgia. He was active in many community organizations in each community where he served as pastor. Reverend Hudson resides in Carrollton, Georgia, with his wife, Betty, and we welcome his wife in the gallery. They have been married for 45 years and have three children. And, Mr. Speaker, one of his daughters serves this Nation as an officer in the Secret Service.

Mr. Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I ask my colleagues to please join me in welcoming Reverend Woodrow Hudson, Jr., for his outstanding service to Georgia and for his outstanding opening prayer this morning.

NATIONAL DAY OF SILENCE

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

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide a voice to those who too

□ 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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often are silenced: the gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender students who face verbal, nonverbal, and physical harassment in our schools.

Today is the National Day of Silence across this country. Students have taken a vow of silence to protest the discrimination and intolerance that gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students face on a daily basis.

In my district I am especially proud of Safe Schools Project of Santa Cruz County, which is coordinated by Santa Cruz County High School senior Nikira Hernandez. This program focuses on making K-through-12 schools in Santa Cruz County a safe place for all youth regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Considering our country's commitment to equality and liberty, it is disturbing that anyone is subjected to harassment and discrimination based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. We must work to protect our youth from violence and hatred while fostering a positive academic environment free of derogatory statements, taunts, and slurs.

For that reason I am proud to co-sponsor H. Con. Res. 86, which memorializes the National Day of Silence.

TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, last week millions of Americans got a surprise when they filed their tax returns. This year a record 44 million tax returns, one-third of all returns filed, have no income tax liability because of the available credits and deductions in the Tax Code. This is a 50 percent increase in the number of zero-tax filers in just 4 years. The vast majority of these 44 million filers are from low-income households who saw their tax liability disappear thanks to the tax cuts pushed by President Bush and this House.

The expansion of the 10 percent bracket, the increased child tax credit, and the marriage penalty relief are the leading reasons that so many people were able to have zero liability. All these tax provisions are in jeopardy if Congress does not act to extend them by the end of this year.

These are not tax cuts for the rich. They are tax provisions designed to help working men and women bring home more of their paychecks. In fact, 75 percent of the 44 million will earn less than \$20,000 per year, and 97 percent will earn less than \$40,000 per year.

Congress needs to extend these provisions and continue giving tax relief to working America.

THE GREAT LAKES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes are the largest body of freshwater in North America. They contain literally 20 percent of the entire world's freshwater. Twenty-eight million Americans get their daily drinking water from Lake Michigan and the other Great Lakes, and yet we treat it as just an overgrown pond. Today it is being polluted with invasive species, urban runoff, and mercury hot spots.

We have a bipartisan bill endorsed by every Governor, every Senator from the Great Lakes, and 108 Members out of 125 from the Great Lakes region to clean up the Great Lakes, dedicate \$4 billion over 5 years, just like we are investing in Iraq's water and sewage system, here in the United States to preserve the largest body of freshwater in all of North America.

This issue is not an issue of left versus right. It is an issue of right versus wrong. And it is time to make our investments in our future and our environmental quality and water quality in what is truly a great national heritage, our Great Lakes.

SENATOR KERRY'S ECONOMIC PLAN WOULD HARM OUR ECONOMY

(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, the Democrat candidate for President has promised to create 10 million jobs if elected, but a recent economic analysis of his plan by the Heritage Foundation says he is wrong and showed four negative effects of his scheme. First, employment growth slows under his plan with 225,000 fewer jobs created per year under his policy, in contrast to the fact that in the first quarter of this year, 513,000 new jobs have been created.

Secondly, GDP growth slows for the next decade, underperforming by \$20 billion in just the first 5 years.

Third, after-tax income shrinks. And this makes sense. Taxes go up, take-home pay goes down. And under the Democrat plan, take-home pay plummets \$240 billion below current projections.

And, lastly, savings plummet. The personal savings rate would average 17 percent less during just the first year of his administration.

Each of these items would reverse trends started by President Bush's economic recovery program, a plan that is working.

In the end his tax-and-spend, rob-the-rich-to-pay-the-government economic scheme will do more harm than good.

URGING APOLOGY FROM THE PRESIDENT

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I do not think anything can negate the fact that this President has lost more jobs, 3 million jobs, than any President in our history.

But, Mr. Speaker, I stand today to offer a word of condolence, but also to pay tribute to those who have lost their lives in Iraq, the men and women of the United States military, innocent citizens, and to challenge the President, as the 9/11 Commission families have challenged him, to apologize to the American people for misdirecting men and women of the military, now reservists and National Guard, young men and women, into a war that one wonders whether it matters, into a war where there was not the kind of equipment that those soldiers needed, reinforced Humvees and other equipment, flak jackets that they needed.

I am here to apologize and ask the President that he provide the necessary resources for these troops so that lives will not continue to be lost, so that mothers and fathers, wives and relatives will not have to continue to mourn. It is a tragedy the policy that we have seen in this United States, a policy of reckless direction of men and women in war, bloodshed unnecessary.

Mr. President and the administration, Mr. Vice President, we need a plan, and you need to offer it to the American people now.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind the Members to address their remarks to the Chair and not to the President.

IN PRAISE OF "NATURALAWN," A BUSINESS IN FREDERICK, MARYLAND

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, this Earth Day I want to recognize a company from my district that is making a product people want and is beneficial for the environment.

NaturaLawn is a business located in downtown Frederick, Maryland. Starting small in 1987, they have grown to become the fourth largest lawn care service provider in the United States, generating in excess of \$24 million.

NaturaLawn identified a product that would have popular appeal, an organic-based fertilization program that uses naturally based ingredients as opposed to traditional chemical fertilizers. This product is environmentally friendly and provides a desired product. The company has created many franchises across the Nation.

All of these great things were done privately in our free enterprise system of Congress. No governmental regulations or mandates caused this business