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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,
September 9, 2004.

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 Reverend David O. Jones, Headmaster, Heritage Covenant Schools, Franklin, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Lord God Almighty, we rejoice in You, that Your word is truth, that You are faithful in all Your works, that You love righteousness and justice.

By Your word the heavens and the Earth were created. You formed man out of the dust and set him, both male and female, to carry Your image. You have fashioned our hearts individually, and You look upon the inhabitants of the Earth and You have blessed us.

But, Lord, in our rebellion we insist on trusting in our own purposes and works. Father, forgive us. We do not realize the gravity of our sin or the destruction wrought by our pride.

As we are confronted with the anniversary of the horrors of the 11th of September, 2001, give us an assurance of Your grace and mercy. Allow us the ability to know the presence of Your Holy Spirit. And for every victim of terrorism, both civilian and military, and their families, grant healing and peace.

With the Psalmist we pray, Lord, be our strength, our defense, our refuge in the day of trouble.

In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, grant us the ability to think and act in truth, with justice and mercy. 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 Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BEAUPREZ 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.

WELCOMING THE REVEREND DAVID O. JONES

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, today I want to thank the Reverend David O. Jones of Franklin, Tennessee, for joining us to deliver the opening prayer for this day of session in the U.S. House of Representatives.

As we near the third anniversary of the September 11 attacks on America, it is more important than ever that we continue to seek the guidance of our creator.

Reverend Jones has a long and distinguished history of dedication to his faith and to his community. He is a pioneer in the home-school movement who has made a real difference in the lives of thousands of Tennessee chil-

dren and their families, and has worked to ensure that we protect the sanctity of life as an example to each and every one of us.

We begin each day of legislative session with a prayer, and I am thankful that on this day Reverend Jones could join us as we begin our work.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to ten 1-minute speeches on each side.

SALUTING THE LAMAR LITTLE LEAGUE ALL-STARS

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

Mr. DELAY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Lamar National League All-Stars of Richmond, Texas. I congratulate them on their magnificent performance in the Little League World Series this year.

I want to thank Jim Michalek, the team's manager, not only for leading the Lamar All-Stars to Williamsport for the second straight year, but for doing it the right way, by teaching his players the fundamentals of baseball and of teamwork and sportsmanship. If he keeps this up, I would not be surprised to hear the Astros want him in their dugout next year.

Mr. Michalek and his coaches, Tommy Abraham and Bobby Murski, gave more than their time and energy to this team. They gave themselves to it, and the character the boys displayed during their tournament run showed the Houston community and our Nation once again that there is no substitute in a boy's life for the strong influence of good men.

□ 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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I want to thank them for their dedication and example.

As for the players, Joey Scheurich, Dustin Moehlig, Chance Murski, Stephen Michalek, Tyler Ford, Steven Crawford, Cody Abraham, Ray Cervenka, Randal Grichuk, Christian DeLeon, Matt Daniels and Daniel Homann, well, I am certainly glad these young men are from my district. They did Richmond and Fort Bend County proud this year, and I am honored to represent them and their families in Washington.

It is often said that sports teach kids important lessons about life. Well, Madam Speaker, I think the Lamar All-Stars taught us a thing or two this year. Throughout their season, they modeled the virtues of hard work, persistence, courage and determination. Their amazing performance this summer is a testament to their talent, certainly, but, most of all, a testament to their character.

I offer every player, coach, parent and friend who followed the Lamar All-Stars this year my congratulations for their success, and, more importantly, my thanks for their example.

RISE IN MEDICARE PREMIUMS CATASTROPHIC EVENT FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. BERRY. Madam Speaker, I remember in 1995 when the leadership on the other side of the aisle stood before this House and talked about how they wanted to see Medicare and Social Security wither on the vine. It is a matter of public record. It is not speculation; it is not putting words in someone's mouth. Now they have been in power long enough to begin to accomplish that goal.

Part B Medicare premiums have gone up 17 percent, from \$66.60 to \$78.20. We have raised \$10 a year the deductible for part B services, and the story goes on and on. This is a catastrophic event for senior citizens, particularly in rural America, where they get charged four times as much for their prescription medicine as anyone else in the world.

This administration has been working on this issue for 4 years. It gets worse and worse and worse. It is time to make a change.

EXPRESSING OUTRAGE AT INCREASE IN MEDICARE PREMIUMS

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, I also rise, like the previous speaker, to express my outrage at the recent announcement that Medicare premiums will go up by 17 percent in 2005. This will eat up half of a senior's Social Se-

curity cost-of-living adjustment. At the same time, Medicare itself is shoveling an additional \$46 billion to managed-care companies so that they can push seniors into HMOs.

This is just another example of how the Bush administration puts the interests of the drug and insurance companies over our seniors' interests. They passed a bill, written by the drug companies, that prevented Medicare from negotiating lower drug prices for seniors and blocking reimportation from Canada. The bill pushes seniors out of traditional Medicare and puts them at the tender mercies of the HMOs.

To sum up this President's Medicare policy: seniors pay higher premiums and higher drug costs so Medicare can give more money to HMOs and the drug companies.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11

(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, on September 11, 2001, some 3,000 innocent men, women and children were killed in an act of war, including 30 from my home State of Pennsylvania. This weekend we will honor the memory and rededicate ourselves to defeating the evil that killed them.

We should never forget why they died, for no other reason but that they were Americans, because the agents of evil believe that they can bully us and change our policies by murdering innocent people. And they continue to believe this. We saw it in Russia last week; we saw it in Spain this summer.

Madam Speaker, it is our duty to use every element of national power to defeat them and the conditions under which they thrive. Three years after 9/11 we have made progress. I am proud of the way our country has responded. I am proud of our troops. I am proud of our Commander in Chief, who has led us in the war on terror with a steady hand. Most of all, I am proud of the American people, who have joined together to renew our commitment to what makes America great.

Let us keep praying that the world will be rid of terrorism.

EXTEND THE ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

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

Mr. ROTHMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call on the House Republican leadership to allow us to vote on H.R. 2038 and H.R. 3831, which would allow us to decide whether we should let the assault weapons ban stay in effect or disappear from America.

This Monday, September 13, the assault weapons ban will expire, unless the House Republican leadership allows us to vote on whether to keep it in effect or let it expire.

Madam Speaker, the second amendment to the United States Constitution allows individuals to own firearms. The question is, where do we draw the line? Should people be allowed to have shoulder-fired rocket launchers that down airplanes? Of course not. Well, you do not need a 20-round-a-minute assault weapon to take down a deer.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House Republican leadership to allow this Congress to allow us to vote on whether we should extend the assault weapons ban or should we just, because they will not let us vote, have it expire. The assault weapons ban works. Since it went into effect, these crimes have gone down 66 percent.

GUARANTEEING A BRIGHTER FUTURE BY PREVAILING IN THE WAR ON TERROR

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

Mr. BEAUPREZ. Madam Speaker, on September 11, 2001, America rallied around the Stars and Stripes as we have never before seen. From downtown Manhattan to the streets of my hometown in Colorado, Americans shared their pain and support by raising the flag. And in our flag we found our strength and resolve.

Today, America is safer than ever before, in large part because we did not yield to those terrorists who lacked humanity and virtue.

Our selfless soldiers continue to fight and prevail in a war on terror all over the world. These young men and women engage in battle, so that their children and grandchildren will not have to.

As terrorist organizations are dismantled, we guarantee our young ones a brighter future. With every dictator we put away, we help ensure that our sons and daughters and their families will never have to carry a loved one out of rubble.

Madam Speaker, our Nation has always been an extraordinary Nation, but today we rise up once again for those phenomenal firefighters, police officers, doctors and, yes, today's soldiers, who by their actions say we will not give in.

God bless them, and God bless America.

REMEMBERING 9/11

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

Mr. HOLT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues in remembering the victims of September 11, 2001. There are still no words that any of us can speak that will truly ease the pain and the profound sense of loss that families of victims feel, so many in my own district.

I continue to marvel at the courage and determination of the surviving