

# ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 5 one-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

## TRIBUTE TO SCOTT ERWIN

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, so many times in our lives, blessings appear to us without our knowing. At other times, Providence just slaps us in the face.

In the summer of 2002, a young man named Scott Erwin, a senior at the University of Richmond, came to work in my office as an intern and made an immediate impact on my staff. To the staff assistants who supervised him and the senior staff who gave him his assignments, Scott revealed himself in short order as a special young man, a man of intelligence, humor and gumption. He was the kind of man who was going to make a difference in the world and leave it better than he found it.

Toward that end, while Scott's classmates spent their senior year taking gut courses and working on their graduate school applications, Scott went to Iraq. He transported a class on American democracy, which he had developed and taught as a student at Richmond to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, where he taught the class to Iraqi university students. He showed them how the institutions and history of American democracy might be translated into Iraqi culture to help the liberated Iraqi people build a democratic society of their own.

On his way back from class one Wednesday this past June, Scott's car was ambushed by terrorists, either Saddam loyalists or foreign killers. They riddled the car with bullets, killing two of those inside. Scott himself was hit three times, once in each arm, once in the abdomen. His life was saved twice in those terrifying moments, once by the translator sitting next to him who pulled him under the seats and once by a very small battery he was carrying near his identification card over his heart which deflected the bullet that would have otherwise killed him. Iraqi police scared off the terrorists and Scott received immediate medical attention. He was soon flown to Germany and then home to the United States, where he is still recovering from his wounds and the surgeries conducted to save his life.

It makes you wonder how you spent your senior year in college.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, sometimes Providence is not a breeze but a hurricane. Sometimes it comes in the shape of a battery, and sometimes it comes in the shape of an intrepid 22-year-old serving his country and all countries in the cause of human freedom.

Scott Erwin came to work for me in 2002 and gave my office a jolt of enthu-

siasm and wit, to say nothing of extraordinary candlepower. Those are the traits he took with him to Iraq and the traits he brings with him every day to physical therapy as he continues to recover.

Today, Scott Erwin is back at the University of Richmond, still fighting, still working, finishing his degree in political science and the classics. He does not know I am even here speaking these words about him, and maybe that is how he would prefer it. But these words deserve the saying just the same.

So, Scott, wherever you are, on behalf of everyone in my office and everyone here on Capitol Hill, thank you for your service, thank you for your courage, and we all look forward to seeing what you do with both of them in the future.

Good luck, Scott, and God bless you.

## URGING THE PRESIDENT TO SPEAK CANDIDLY

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in Denver the President said, "When the American President speaks, he must mean what he says."

That is interesting coming from an administration that told us the Medicare bill would actually cost \$395 billion, all the while knowing it would cost \$540 billion.

From an administration that said it would take less than 100,000 troops to secure the peace in Iraq and then fired General Shinseki, who told us the true number.

From an administration that promised to leave no child behind but purposely left them \$10 billion short.

From an administration that said Iraq had reconstituted their nuclear capability, even though its own intelligence report said the opposite.

From an administration that said a memo detailing al Qaeda's plans to attack the United States was historical and not a warning.

From an administration that says it will cut the deficit in half while proposing \$3 trillion in additional new spending.

From an administration that said their economic policies would create 5.5 million jobs. We are only 2.6 million short.

From an administration that promised a tax cut for everyone but failed to include a provision increasing the child tax credit for 6.5 million working families and military families.

Mr. Speaker, this is a funny way to promise to restore truth and honesty to the White House.

## INTRODUCTION OF CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ALLOWING NATURALIZED CITIZENS TO SERVE AS PRESIDENT

(Mr. ROHRBACHER asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Mr. Speaker, this morning I have introduced a constitutional amendment that will provide the American people with a wider range of presidential candidates. My amendment will allow all those who have been citizens of the United States for more than 20 years to serve as President. This constitutional amendment is fully consistent with my long-held support for a generous policy of legal immigration but at the same time vigorously opposing all illegal immigration.

There are those here today who will interpret this constitutional proposal permitting a naturalized citizen to serve as President as a political ploy designed to permit a prominent California elected official who immigrated to the United States from Central Europe and who still speaks with a thick accent to be eligible to be elected President of the United States.

This is no ploy. I honestly believe that TOM LANTOS should be allowed to seek the highest office in the land just like any other elected official from California.

I ask my colleagues to join me in supporting this constitutional amendment.

## IVAN THREATENS NEW ORLEANS

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, barely have we recovered from Hurricane Hugo and we are seeing Hurricane Ivan pose the threat that has long been feared by those in Louisiana, that this actually might represent the loss of the City of New Orleans. Located 15 feet below sea level, there is the potential of a 30-foot wall of water putting at risk \$100 billion of infrastructure and industry and countless lives.

We all hope that it does veer to the west as projected, but I hope that this brings us to a realization that now is the time for the Federal Government to deal with policies that will make a difference protecting people. Careful planning, strong building codes and balanced transportation are not slogans and bureaucratic hoops. These are simple, commonsense provisions that can save lives, protect property and prevent countless billions of dollars in disaster aid from the Federal Government.

## AGAINST MATRICULA CONSULAR CARDS

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, last night the House voted to strip language in the Treasury bill that would have made a small step towards restoring some sense of sanity to our national immigration policy. Even

though we are supposed to be reforming our immigration system in the aftermath of 9/11, Time Magazine has just reported that 3 million illegal aliens will enter this country, adding to the 10 million who are already here. This is the largest number since 2001, the year we were attacked. Is this progress? No.

And now we are allowing these matricula consular cards which are issued as a form of identification in Mexico. We are allowing this form of ID even though the FBI reports that there is no centralized database for issuing these cards, there are no uniform standards for its issuance, and in some cases all an applicant has to do is simply say, I am who I am. The FBI determined that these are not adequate standards and that they are fraught with fraud. I wholeheartedly agree.

Mr. Speaker, I am disappointed that we are allowing these ID cards to be used. I am deeply concerned that their use places our national security at risk.

#### WASHINGTON RESULTS BODE WELL FOR DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, my home State of Washington is considered a swing State this November. Yesterday, Washington held its fall primary election, the first litmus test between Republicans and Democrats. The results make clear that Washington is going to vote Democratic in a very big way on November 2.

Christine Gregoire is going to make a fine Democratic Governor.

PATTY MURRAY, Senator MURRAY, will remain a U.S. Senator.

Dave Ross is going to make a fine Democratic Congressman from the Eighth Congressional District, one new seat for the Democrats.

Don Barbieri is going to make a fine Democratic Congressman from the Fifth Congressional District. That is another new seat for the Democrats.

People know, Mr. Speaker, what 4 years of Republican control has done to America. People know and they are paying attention.

So, Mr. Speaker, ask the President to keep coming out to Washington and spend all the money he can. It will be good for tourism. It might even create a job or two, more than he has done in the other Washington.

By the way, Mr. Speaker, I got 86 percent, too. We are all coming back and we are going to get our country back in 47 days and a wake-up.

#### NBC GETS MEDIA BIAS AWARD

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week I announced a weekly award

for the worst example of a biased liberal media article. The nominees for the first Media Bias Award are:

NBC's "Today" show for interviewing Kitty Kelley for 3 consecutive days about her book on the President's family, filled with second-hand sources, rumors, and falsehoods; Newsweek Magazine for this week's cover story on "The Secret Money War" in the Presidential campaign. Newsweek neglected to report that the top five outside money groups all have Democratic Party ties and have spent a combined \$91 million attacking President Bush; the New York Times for repeatedly hammering Republicans for their get-out-the-vote efforts among church members while never criticizing Democrats for political speeches in churches; The Washington Post for its coverage of the Democratic and Republican conventions. The day after the Democratic convention, The Post ran three positive front-page stories about the Democratic nominee; but the day after the Republican convention, The Post featured two negative and only one positive front-page story on President Bush.

Mr. Speaker, the winner of the first Media Bias Award is NBC for its decision to feature Bush critic Kitty Kelley on the Today show 3 days in a row. This is the Media Bias Award to NBC.

#### IN PRAISE OF NORTH CAROLINA SENATOR JOHN EDWARDS

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

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise my friend and colleague, North Carolina Senator JOHN EDWARDS. I want to call attention to a specific accomplishment on behalf of ordinary Americans that has earned him the reputation as a people's lawyer.

Valerie Lakey, a 5-year-old girl, was maimed when a swimming pool drain malfunctioned. Her family had nowhere else to turn, and JOHN EDWARDS proved the company that made the drain knew it was dangerous to children, yet did nothing.

Jennifer Campbell was born in 1979 with severe brain damage because, as a jury later determined, her mother's doctor botched the delivery. The hospital covered up the malpractice and Jennifer's parents were forced to turn to JOHN EDWARDS for a measure of justice.

My Republican colleagues talk about what they call "lawsuit abuse" as part of their negative ads on JOHN EDWARDS and JOHN KERRY. But let the record be clear: JOHN EDWARDS has spent his entire life fighting for ordinary folks who could not fight for themselves. JOHN EDWARDS and JOHN KERRY have a plan to make North Carolina a stronger home and respected in the world. I am proud of my friend JOHN EDWARDS and know he will make a great Vice President.

#### LAWSUIT ABUSE REDUCTION ACT

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

Mr. BURNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to thank my colleagues for passing H.R. 4571, which is the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act.

In the NFL, a coach can challenge a referee's call; but if he is wrong, he has to give up a time out. It seems fair. But there is no personal risk for an unscrupulous trial lawyer to file a lawsuit against a company or a person and then offer to settle a dispute for less than the cost to defend the case in court. In the criminal laws, this would be termed extortion. But under the tort laws, it becomes a thriving industry.

Mr. Speaker, when the Senate passes the Lawsuit Abuse Reduction Act, it will be illegal to sue someone for an imaginary offense and cause them to pay thousands of dollars in legal fees in order for a judge to make a final official ruling. When one of these cases is deemed without merit, the attorney filing the suit will be responsible for paying the legal fees of the defendant. It seems like a simple commonsense approach to me.

I urge my colleagues to join me in asking the Senate to take immediate action to pass lawsuit abuse reduction in the United States.

#### THE NATIONAL DEBT

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

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, it has been 1,215 days since the current administration assumed stewardship over our Federal budget. During that time, our national private debt has increased by 1.733 trillion. According to the Web site for the Bureau of the Public Debt at the U.S. Department of Treasury, yesterday our Nation's outstanding privately held debt alone was \$4.343 trillion, an increase of 39 percent in just 3½ years. And foreign holdings of that debt now total \$1.79 trillion, an increase of \$780 billion since January, 2001, and now 41 percent of all privately held debt.

Total Federal debt at the end of this current fiscal year in just 15 days, including obligations to Social Security and Medicare, is projected to be \$7.372 trillion.

It is time to stop the bleeding.

#### TRANSPORTATION, TREASURY, AND INDEPENDENT AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BRADLEY of New Hampshire). Pursuant to House Resolution 770 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 5025.