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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BURNS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 9, 2004.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAX BURNS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 741. An act to amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act with regard to new animal drugs, and for other purposes.

S. Con. Res. 96. Concurrent resolution commemorating the 150th anniversary of the first meeting of the Republican Party in Ripon, Wisconsin.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SOLIS) for 5 minutes.

CURRENT STATE OF OUR ECONOMY

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to talk about the current state of our economy here in the U.S. Three years and three massive tax cuts later, President Bush keeps telling American working families that our economy is turning the corner and that jobs are going to be coming soon. Well, Mr. President, where are the jobs? Where are those promises you made?

Last Friday brought more disappointing news about our jobless recovery. In fact, only 21,000 new jobs were created last month. Many economists had expected 125,000 new jobs, and the President promised 300,000 new jobs. The disastrous job creation levels are further evidence that the Bush economic policies are not working. However, the President continues to insist that his plan is the right approach.

President Bush was in my home State of California last Friday when the dismal employment numbers were released. He was in Bakersfield, a town with an unemployment rate of 12.8 percent, painting an uplifting and positive picture of our troubled economy. When he learned that a local business there would be creating two new jobs, the President called it really good news. We need far more than two and three new jobs, Mr. President, to put our State back on track.

The Bush economic policies have been a disaster for our State. Rather than create jobs, we have lost 3 million private sector jobs under this administration. If the rest of the year mirrors last month's numbers, it would take 9 years, 9 years, to recover all the jobs lost under this President.

Much of the job loss has been in the manufacturing sector, where job loss is at a 53-year high. Another 3,000 manufacturing jobs disappeared last month because of outsourcing, a policy that the Bush administration says is healthy for our economy. Long-term

unemployment also continues to be a very, very serious problem. The average out-of-work American is now unemployed for 5 months, the highest in 20 years.

A report recently released by the Economic Policy Institute and the National Employment Law Project found that college graduates, older workers, and workers in the manufacturing industry disproportionately are likely to experience long-term chronic unemployment in our current economy. To make matters worse, President Bush wants to make it even more difficult for those to find work.

Under his budget proposals this year, worker training and assistance programs for millions of Americans would be cut significantly. He wants to reduce access to worker training, child care support, housing assistance and college tuition relief and public health insurance at a time when most working families need help the most. I think that is wrong.

Those of us that live in my district know how hard it has been. The reality is that in my district we have very high unemployment rates. In the cities that I represent, particularly East Los Angeles where about 70 to 80 percent of the population are Latino families, they are experiencing up to 10 percent and above unemployment rates. It has been that way for the last 3 years.

Where is the relief for the districts that I represent, for the hardworking Americans that contribute to our taxing system here and get nothing in return when they really need it?

I would ask for us to take a strong look at the policies that this administration is advocating and postpone the tax cuts for the wealthy and restore integrity in the health care services and in our education and in our environment.

Our environment is suffering. Latino children in my district suffer higher rates of chronic illnesses, asthma, obesity, and diabetes. If these issues are

□ 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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not contained now, we are going to have to be paying for those tomorrow.

We need to invest in America. We need to stop outsourcing. We need to make sure that our children and our families are taken care of.

I would ask for all Americans to take a second look at this recovery that the President is proposing. I would ask for all of us to join together and make our resources felt here at home.

RESPONSIBILITY WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY) is recognized during morning hour debates.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, this week the House will take up two bills that, in addition to strengthening our economy and improving the quality of American family life, will send a very real message of accountability to two industries not lately known for it.

Opponents of the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act and the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act may dismiss them as meaningless symbols, but American families know better.

The American families know that the raw greed that fuels both abusive lawsuits and vulgar broadcast programming has punctured the boundaries of reasonable tolerance. People have tired of hearing about yet another loopy scam cooked up by predatory trial lawyers to sue some unsuspecting company for some imaginary offense; and at the same time, people have grown weary of the junk that comes across our television screens.

For years we have chastised Hollywood, cajoled Hollywood, and begged Hollywood to shape up. Yet in both cases, the entertainment industry and trial lawyers, either out of arrogance or ignorance or both, have chosen to ignore these pleas.

Mr. Speaker, this week the House will send a very clear signal to one and all: enough is enough. Predatory lawsuits undermine our economy; offensive television programming undermines the moral imagination of our children; and both undermine the fundamental human value of personal responsibility.

Lawyers and broadcasters may not care about their moral responsibilities, Mr. Speaker; but under these bills, if they do not at least start to fake it, they are going to pay.

Under the Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act, Congress will declare, as if we should have to, that restaurants are not responsible for the tummy aches that their customers suffer when they eat too much.

Under the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act, television broadcasters who have thumbed their noses at the FEC's maximum obscenity fine of \$27,500 per offense will soon have to reassess the actions of their respective thumbs and noses in the face of maximum fines of \$500,000 per offense.

So after years of trying the American people's patience, predatory trial lawyers and irresponsible broadcasters are going to be held accountable for their actions. It is Responsibility Week here in the House, Mr. Speaker; and thankfully for the viewers at home watching C-SPAN, there will not be a half-time show.

JOB NUMBERS FOR LAST MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, last Friday, we got another reality check as to how, after 3 years in the White House, President Bush still has not figured out how to create jobs for Americans here in the United States. The February job numbers illustrate how the economic policies of President Bush and the Republican Congress still are not creating jobs.

Last month, only 21,000 jobs were created by the American economy. That is 21,000 jobs. The Labor Department also revised its numbers for both December and January, stating that 23,000 less jobs were created during those 2 months than when it was first reported; and this means employers have added an average of 61,000 jobs per month since August, well below the 150,000 new jobs economists said were needed to keep pace with population growth.

If the jobs recession does not end soon and the economy does not create 2.1 million jobs this year, then President Bush will be the first President since Herbert Hoover to preside over an economy in which he did not create one net job; and yet the President continues to say that the best way to create more jobs in the upcoming month is for Congress to make permanent all his tax cuts, the tax cuts that overwhelmingly benefit our Nation's wealthiest Americans.

I would just like to know, Mr. Speaker, when is the President going to learn? Congressional Republicans cut taxes year after year, and the jobs they predicted would be created have never become a reality. Last year, when the President was touting another round of tax cuts benefiting our Nation's wealthiest elite, the White House predicted the cuts would create more than 2.1 million new jobs in the 7 months after its passage. And what actually happened during that period? Only 296,000 jobs were created, 1.8 million short of the President's predictions.

Now President Bush says he is going to create jobs, but he is about as good at predicting job creation as he is in advancing policies that create those jobs. He is not very good at it, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps that is why President Bush and some of his leading economic advisers are now backing away from their own "Economic Report of the

President," in which the administration predicted that 2.6 million jobs would be created this year. Just one week after release of that report, Treasury Secretary John W. Snow and Commerce Secretary Donald Evans refused to embrace President Bush's own economic projections.

One would think the Bush administration would be concerned about the job losses, but last month we learned that President Bush and his economic advisers view the movement of American factory jobs and white collar work to other countries as a positive transformation that will, in the end, enrich our economy.

The President's chief economist, Gregory Mankiw, made national headlines when he said, "Outsourcing is just a new way of doing international trade. More things are tradeable than were tradeable in the past, and that's a good thing." President Bush supported this view in his annual economic report in which he wrote: "When a good or service is produced more cheaply abroad, it makes more sense to import it than make or provide it domestically."

Mr. Speaker, how can we have economic success if we send jobs overseas, but do not create enough new jobs with comparable wages here in the United States?

I think it is about time that the Bush administration realizes that shipping jobs overseas and cutting taxes for the wealthiest elite in our country will not create jobs. President Bush and congressional Republicans have had 3 years to turn this jobs recession around. They have totally failed. It is time for Congress to pass measures that will encourage companies to keep jobs here in the United States, and it is time we level the playing field and protect American jobs here rather than exporting them overseas.

EXTENDING OF UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 20, 2004, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), just talked about the new economic statistics, that some 21,000 jobs were created last month in this country. The President had predicted 250,000 jobs. The Wall Street Journal had predicted 150,000, something like that; 21,000 were actually created. Of those 21,000, actually every one of those jobs was a government job, many of them in education, productive, important jobs; but actually there was no private sector job creation, period. There was actually a loss of private sector jobs.

This is where it really matters to people. There were 760,000 American workers whose unemployment benefits have expired in December, January,