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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 13, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable SHELLY MOORE CAPITO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

Dr. Curt Dodd, Senior Pastor, Westside Church, Omaha, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, I ask You this day to empower these representatives, wherever they may be, both in this House and in committee meetings, with true spiritual sensitivity. Give them wisdom to know the difference between loud, hollow requests and opportunities to positively impact an entire nation.

Protect them, O Father, from the temptation to be politically correct for the sake of a few while the audience of heaven watches and millions in posterity wait to weigh their influence.

Help them this day to engage with purpose, using this platform for Your glory and their personal growth. Protect their families, regardless of where they may be this day. Surround them with Your presence, giving confidence that You have met their every need. In turn, may they meet the needs of others through their actions this day.

Help them enjoy the privilege of representing millions of Americans this day. May their decisions this day change our country for the better tomorrow. Give them great joy in what they do in this place.

Father, may they experience what it really means to be in peace because of

a relationship with You through Your Son Jesus, for it is in Jesus' name we pray. 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 Florida (Mr. STEARNS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. STEARNS 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.

RECOGNIZING PASTOR CURT DODD'S MINISTRY FOR CHRIST

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

Mr. TERRY. Madam Speaker, I have the distinct honor to recognize Pastor Curt Dodd, our guest chaplain in the House of Representatives today, and I also want to thank him for his thoughtful and inspiring prayer.

Dr. Dodd began his ministry as an intern at the First Baptist Church in Houston, Texas, in 1973. He was called to serve as associate pastor and then senior pastor at several Texas churches before shepherding the Metropolitan Baptist Church in Houston. Under Dr. Dodd's pastoral leadership, "the Met" received recognition as one of the fastest growing churches in Texas and the Southern Baptist Convention.

From 1995 to 1999, Dr. Dodd was called by God to leave his successful ministry at the church to start a

church in Pueblo, Colorado, one of that State's most under-reached areas. With his trademark enthusiasm and commitment to the Lord, he initiated several other church plants, including Fellowship of the Rockies in Colorado Springs. He then went to Florida to Merit Island, and now serves as the senior pastor of Westside Church in Omaha, Nebraska, where my family and I attend.

Dr. Dodd is also an accomplished author of three books: Add One to Grow On; Hearts on Fire—the Keys to Dynamic Church Growth; and Running on Empty in the Fast Lane.

With a heart for the local church and kingdom expansion, he has served on various national and international denominational boards, but his greatest accomplishments are seen in the eyes of the men and women who have heard and accepted the message he brings, that Jesus is our Lord and Saviour who died for our sins.

Madam Speaker, I know that I speak for my colleagues when I say we are proud and honored to have Dr. Dodd with us today.

IT IS TIME TO LEAD AMERICA TO ENERGY INDEPENDENCE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, as summer approaches, I am concerned about the effect that rising gas prices are having on family budgets and small businesses. In the past 3 weeks, gas prices have skyrocketed by 19 cents because of growing demand, high crude oil prices, and higher refining costs.

Congress can help reduce gas prices by finally implementing a comprehensive national energy policy. For the past 4 years, the House has passed sound energy legislation that will reduce our reliance on foreign sources of

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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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energy, increase conservation and increase the use of clean, modern and reliable sources of energy. But Democrats are playing politics, smearing TOM DELAY, DICK CHENEY and Condoleezza Rice, and the United States still does not have a comprehensive national energy policy.

South Carolina families need relief from record high energy costs, and Congress can now act to lead America to greater energy independence. This is a matter of economic and national security and we cannot afford to wait another year.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

PROTECTING THE NATION FROM AVIAN FLU

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, this country is dangerously close to a real biological crisis. Yesterday we learned an American company mailed a deadly avian flu strain to 37,000 laboratories in the United States and around the world as part of a routine test kit. The potential error is a reminder of the real danger of a flu pandemic and the millions of deaths it could cause. It also reminds us of the responsibility as a Congress and as a Nation to improve our ability to produce and distribute flu vaccine and to prepare for the pandemic.

The Flu Protection Act, which Senator BAYH and I introduced, would help ensure that enough vaccine is produced each year, fund research to combat avian flu, and require the development of contingency plans in the case of a pandemic.

The impending crisis must encourage this administration to take action now. Earlier this month, President Bush took an important step when he authorized a quarantine to stem the spread of avian flu.

In a letter that Senator BAYH and I will send today to the White House, there are other steps the President can take without legislation. He can increase our vaccine stockpiles, help States and cities prepare for the crisis of a pandemic, and provide the incentives for vaccine manufacturers to increase their production.

Madam Speaker, yesterday's announcement reminds us that the next flu pandemic is just around the corner, and the time to act is now. Congress and the President should not wait for this disaster to reach our shores before acting to protect this Nation.

SUPPORT THE CHILD INTERSTATE ABORTION NOTIFICATION ACT

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, in most schools an underage child is

prohibited from attending a school field trip without first obtaining parental authorization, yet nothing forbids this child from being taken across State lines in disregard of State laws for the purpose of undergoing a life-altering procedure, an abortion.

Please note these documents from a local school district in which it is required to have extensive information and parental authorization for a simple field trip or for a release for disbursement of medication, a total of eight pages for a field trip or for giving an aspirin, even brought from the child's home. But for an abortion, nothing is required.

My legislation, the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act, CIANA, would make it a Federal offense to transport an underage child across State lines in circumvention of State and local parental notification laws for the purpose of having an abortion. It will also require that, in a State without a parental notification requirement, abortion providers be required to notify a parent.

Today, CIANA will be marked up by the House Committee on the Judiciary. I hope we can pass the bill in the House quickly to protect our underage girls.

THE CHARADE OF GOP LEADERSHIP REGARDING THE ESTATE TAX

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I was moved by the words of Dr. Dodd from Omaha and thought about today's continuation of the charade our friends in the Republican leadership play, a very cynical game that they have done every Congress since I have been here that is both unnecessary and unjustified.

Instead of allowing the legislative process to work here to deal with the consensus that exists to raise estate tax limits and solve problems of family businesses and farms, instead they are going to go through an empty effort to repeal it altogether, which ultimately they know will not happen.

In the meantime, this week, 2.9 million families are caught in the snare of the Alternative Minimum Tax, not the fabulously wealthy who are dodging taxes but hundreds of thousands of hard-working, non-rich Americans, whose only sin is, they pay their taxes, they are raising their family and they are saving for the future.

Rather than the fixing the Alternative Minimum Tax, today's charade is a shameful dereliction of duty for American taxpayers.

LET THE DEATH TAX DIE FOR GOOD

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Madam Speaker, it is time that we bury the death tax today, once and for all. For too long the American dream has turned into the American nightmare and for too many citizens and countless small businesses.

Many Americans with dreams take risks, invest their savings, work long hours, and the government keeps over half of their assets when they die, 55 percent. That is the amount Washington takes with the death tax, 55 percent, and that is not fair to anyone.

The death tax undermines our economy, and I know that we can do better. It costs our economy over 250,000 jobs a year. That is a quarter of a million people who should be collecting paychecks rather than unemployment checks.

Madam Speaker, the death tax is hurting families, and it is killing our small businesses. Freedom and liberty demand that hard-working Americans be able to leave their children the results of their success, not have Washington get a windfall. Let us act today and let the death tax die for good.

ETHICAL SYSTEM OF U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Ms. SOLIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my Republican colleagues to join me in restoring the ethical system to this Chamber.

Currently, a member of the Republican leadership is at the center of a troubling array of investigations into corruption, abuse of power and ethics violations. Instead of being forthright and open to these allegations, the Republican leadership has stripped the ethical rules of this institution to cater and protect one of their own. By doing so, Republican leadership has abandoned a tradition of trust and transparency in this body.

As Members of Congress, we are responsible to adhering to the ethical guidelines set forth by this Congress. As public servants, we must answer to the American public, and while we craft the law, we are not above the law.

I urge my colleagues to answer the concerns of the American public and remove the question of any possible ethics violations that tarnish the reputation of this Chamber. Democrats want to restore strong, bipartisan ethics rules. It is time Republicans join us in passing the Mollohan resolution and restore the ethical system and the integrity it upholds in the U.S. House of Representatives.

DEMOCRACY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, it has been 2 years since the United