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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:
Eternal Father and Lord of the living, enable us to approach You with humility of heart and poverty of spirit.

The Members of Congress are powerful people. Their words bear weight and their positions before the people deserve respect. Therefore, they need to be steeled from arrogance on one side and casual routine on the other.

Lord, only the two-edged sword of Your Word and Your purity of Spirit can bring freshness to their spirits and confirming hope to their constituents. Strengthen their pledge to uphold the Constitution against blatant and subtle attacks and to serve the people with all their hearts.

Then may their speech, their decisions, and their working together with the pluralism of this democracy give You the glory, honor, and power now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KUCINICH 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 with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1134. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for the proper tax treatment of certain disaster mitigation payments.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 101-509, the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, announces the appointment of the following individual to the Advisory Committee on the Records of Congress: Mr. Guy Rocha of Nevada, vice Stephen Van Buren of South Dakota.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minute speeches on each side.

QUESTIONING THE LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE AISLE

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the minority leader of this body slammed the good work we did in repealing the death tax. She called it "reverse Robin Hood."

Well, Mr. Speaker, in my opinion, the minority leader owes an apology to all those families that will get to keep the family farm and to all of those small businesses that will survive a second generation because of this tax relief, and she owes an apology to the 42 Democrats who voted with the Republican majority for this very important tax relief.

One has to question the choice of leadership across the aisle. The liberal leadership has opposed repealing the death tax, which is a triple tax on America's working families. They have opposed an energy bill for years now,

and they have not supported strengthening our immigration laws. Now they are fighting tooth and nail to prevent Social Security reform.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents are asking what, if anything, do they stand for? In my opinion, they stand for more tax and more spend, everything costs more. I want the American people to know the Republican majority in this House is going to fight to be certain they do not get their way.

SUPPORT RESOLUTION OF INQUIRY REGARDING SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I am going to be in Columbus, Ohio, tomorrow speaking on education when the President is visiting the Cleveland area to speak on Social Security. Now, the President has alternately asserted there is no Social Security trust fund or it is just IOUs.

Here is a copy of the trust fund report from the Social Security Administration. There is a \$1.68 trillion surplus in the trust fund. It will grow to \$6.6 trillion by 2028. The IOUs the President speaks about are loans that are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States.

Question: Is the President renegeing on repaying the more than \$637 billion his administration borrowed from the trust fund?

Question: Is this a scheme for the administration to transfer Social Security wealth from tens of millions of American workers to pay for the tax cuts for the rich?

A few weeks ago, I introduced a Resolution of Inquiry asking the President to produce documents to back up his claim there is no trust fund. If anyone in this House has those documents,

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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make them public. Otherwise, support H. Res. 170, which requires the President to prove his assertion about the trust fund.

This Congress was misled about Iraq. Let us not be misled about Social Security. We do not need a select committee, a Presidential commission, or a Senate investigation. We just need the House to support H. Res. 170.

HONORING THE PASSING OF BILL LEHMAN

(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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the passing of a good friend, Bill Lehman, retired Member of Congress and a faithful servant of the Great State of Florida.

In 1972, Bill ran for Congress and got the overwhelming majority of the vote and kept getting reelected easily until his retirement. As chairman of the Committee on Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation, Bill Lehman was a relentless advocate for the needs of the citizens of Miami-Dade County.

Bill was an avid supporter of human rights also, demonstrating his ability to not only fight for the constituents in his district, but also for people throughout the world. He served his country as a Congressman, school board chairman, and was a beloved teacher, husband, father, and grandfather.

During my first term in Congress in 1989, I saw firsthand the tremendous love that Bill had for his constituents and the admiration that the people of south Florida had for him.

Mr. Speaker, I join the people of Miami-Dade, the State of Florida, and our country in honoring the exemplary life of a great statesman, Congressman Bill Lehman. May he rest in peace.

PROTECTING AMERICANS AGAINST ID THEFT

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, another major security breach involving the personal ID theft of 180,000 GM and MasterCard credit card holders should wake up Congress to deliver tough national standards for protecting Americans against ID theft. But this recent outbreak of 180,000 GM and MasterCard credit holders' ID is on the heels of Choice Point, Bank of America and Lexus-Nexus and shows there are too many fraud artists posing as individual businesses and too many individual consumers whose identity is now being stolen and used against them.

According to the Privacy Rights Center, up to 10 million Americans are victims of ID theft each year. They have a right to be notified when their most sensitive health data is stolen.

In response to this problem, there have been bipartisan solutions offered to address it. The gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. BEAN), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIERREZ), the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER), and I have introduced the Notification of Risk to Personal Data Act as one piece of legislation. Our legislation requires consumers to be immediately notified when their personal data has been stolen or acquired by an unauthorized person and imposes tough new penalties on violators.

Mr. Speaker, Americans want, need, and rightfully expect Congress to protect them from the prying eyes of identity thieves and give them back control of their Social Security numbers and personal health information.

SUPPORTING LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY

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

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Speaker, this morning I rise in support of the leadership of our President as it relates to Social Security.

Just a couple of weeks ago the President was in my district, and he shared with the people of north central Indiana that we have an undeniable challenge with Social Security. The President believes that leadership solves problems and that leaders do not pass problems along to future generations. He also said that all ideas are on the table.

So, Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of my colleagues, especially those on other side of the aisle, to become part of the solution, rather than just part of the problem. If we say what we are against and we only say what we are against, we only add to the problem; but if we say what we are for and we offer constructive solutions, even if we do not agree with all the solutions offered, let us say that we have a better idea.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is imperative for the American people that we all become part of the solution, we all offer good ideas to make sure that we address one of the most serious problems we face as a Nation, because that is exactly what we are elected for. So I encourage all of my colleagues to be part of the solution.

CLARIFICATION ON COMMENTS ON JUDICIARY NEEDED

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, some time ago the majority leader of the House, in response to the Schiavo decision, said, "The time will come for the men responsible for this to answer for their behavior." The majority leader yesterday rightfully apologized for those

comments, and I think that we should respect that apology, because we are all capable of saying something that we regret that was misunderstood.

But it is most troubling that at the same time the majority leader again threatened the independence of the judiciary. He threatened them with taking away their jurisdiction, he threatened them with breaking up their districts, and he basically threatened this organ of our government that is responsible for our freedoms, for protecting our freedom of religion and protecting our freedom of speech. We have what Russia did not have, an independent judiciary; and I am most troubled that the majority leader, when it comes to their independence and our freedoms and the importance of both of those things, just does not get it.

Mr. Speaker, I am hopeful that he will reconsider his comments yesterday and follow his first apology, if not with a second, with at least a clarification.

PROTECTING THE AMERICAN DREAM

(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. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's passage of the Death Tax Repeal Permanency Act was a victory for American families, farmers, and small business owners.

Since reducing the death tax in 2001, over 3 million new jobs have been created in our country. Unfortunately, Congress provided the American people with a temporary solution to a serious problem. The death tax is scheduled to go back into effect in 2010.

The leadership on this issue of the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. HULSHOF) and the majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), has been essential in protecting the American Dream.

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The Death Tax Permanency Act will ensure that our tax system does not continue to penalize family-owned businesses such as dealerships, funeral homes, and beverage distributors. As a former probate attorney, I know firsthand we need to end this unfair devil tax which hurts families.

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

ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE VALERIE PLAME MATTER

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

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, nearly 2 years after a columnist disclosed the identity of a CIA employee, the White House and the Department of Justice have yet to find and hold accountable