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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: Almighty God, strong is Your justice, penetrating all human events and evaluating all human endeavors. Great is Your mercy for each of us as we stand before You today.

Grant the Members of the House of Representatives freedom of spirit; that each may act with a well-formulated conscience and discern the far-reaching consequences of every decision that is made.

While here, working in the public service of the Nation, everything that is done is viewed by all and open to review by others. But far greater is Your judgment, Lord.

Aware that all must appear before Your judgment seat and each will receive recompense according to what he or she did while in Your service, we ask You, O Lord, to grant the vision of faith and trust in Your great mercy 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 California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

PRAISING HOUSE REPUBLICANS FOR GREAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the Republican leadership and my Republican colleagues in the House for the tremendous work we have done ahead of the August recess. The work we have done will have an immediate positive effect on the lives of my constituents.

First off, we enacted effective immigration control with the passage of the REAL ID Act. We also took action to stem the tide of China's unfair trade practices. We are taking the necessary first steps to ensure our domestic manufacturers have a level playing field to compete on.

The passage of the National Energy Policy also symbolizes new economic opportunities for my district. Not only does it decrease our dependence on foreign energy supply, it will boost our economy by providing up to \$10 billion in tax incentives for renewable, reusable energy sources. This will create new markets and possibilities for our farmers.

Today we will greatly improve health care by passing H.R. 5. Health care dollars should be spent on patients in the operating room, not on lawyers in the courtroom.

Mr. Speaker, these are just a few of the many great accomplishments we have made. As we head into August recess, I look forward to building on that progress with my Republican colleagues.

URGING SUPPORT FOR THE THRIVE ACT OF 2005

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

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, 45,000 adult Americans die every year from infectious diseases that could have been prevented by a simple vaccination. Tragically, 40 percent of adults in our country are underimmunized for preventable diseases such as influenza and hepatitis B. The consequences are unnecessary pain, suffering, and loss of life at a cost of more than \$10 billion a year to society.

To address this tragedy, I am introducing the THRIVE Act of 2005 with the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) as part of National Immunization Month. The THRIVE Act authorizes CDC to develop immunization guidelines and increase patient outreach and provider outreach. It directs the Secretary of HHS to launch a national media campaign about the value of adult immunizations, and it establishes a pilot project to distribute influenza vaccine for uninsured, at-risk adults.

The THRIVE Act of 2005 is a critical step towards reducing vaccine-preventable deaths in our country, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

MESSAGE ON MTBE: BAD LAW IS NOT CONGRESS'S FAULT

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I am going to support the energy bill later today, but I am amazed that Democrats in this town have convinced the majority party that law-abiding citizens must clean up Congress's mess.

When Congress mandated use of cleaner-burning gas, MTBE was the

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only way companies could obey its orders. Upon learning MTBE was linked to environmental concerns, Congress did not accept responsibility, change the policy, or invest in alternatives. Congress told the companies to clean up the mess themselves. Trial lawyers loved it. Congress's inaction signaled that obeying law warrants a lawsuit. Now they sue anyone who might have even had a thought of using MTBE.

Mr. Speaker, these companies did not cover up bad data. They did not set out to save money by cutting corners. They did not even choose to use MTBE over a cleaner alternative. Congress made them do it.

The Democrats' own energy chairman in 1990 admits that. He says MTBE "was the only commercially viable alternative at the time."

Democrats are quick to blame corporations, but slow to take responsibility for their own foolish actions. Maybe that is why they are still in the minority.

SUGGESTION FOR THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, while I am not an expert in time management, I do have a suggestion that would allow the House to better use its time.

Last night we spent well over an hour here, a lot of very busy people, while the leadership variously cajoled, bribed, browbeat, et cetera, a few Republicans who wanted to have it both ways, who wanted to give people the impression they were opposed to CAFTA while they were ready to cave in for sufficient inducement.

What we should have done, and I propose this for the future, is the next time we have one of those tough votes where they are going to have to do that with their Members, let us schedule an evacuation drill from the House.

The fact is at the time the plane was flying over here and a roll call was open and we evacuated the House, it took about the same time as it took them to cajole and blackmail and browbeat their people last night.

So why not do two things at once? The next time they know there is a bill they are going to cram down people's throats that they do not want to vote for and want to pretend to their voters they are against it, and it is going to take them an hour or 2 to find out ways to get them to help fool people, why not schedule in advance an evacuation drill, and that way we can kill two birds with one stone? And since people might not know it is a drill, they can threaten people who do not vote with them: They can make them stay here in case there is a plane crash.

VIDEO CHOICE ACT OF 2005

(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, the laws governing delivery of television programming in this country are outdated, and we have not kept up with emerging new technologies.

I have introduced the Video Choice Act of 2005 to bring these laws into the 21st century.

Current law requires that all companies interested in offering cable service or video service, as it is called in the industry, must negotiate an individual agreement with a local franchising authority. This mandate serves as a barrier to competition, effectively preventing new technologies from entering the market. The Video Choice Act of 2005 will streamline the franchising process for new marketplace entrance and give American consumers choice over their video and cable service at a lower cost.

Our telecommunications services are rapidly changing and expanding. Congress must act to ensure our laws do not crush innovation and competition.

The bill is H.R. 3146. The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. WYNN) is the co-sponsor on this legislation with me. I look forward to working with him for its passage here in the House of Representatives.

WE NEED A NEW ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, we will adopt a so-called energy policy for the United States later today. We are in the beginnings of a 21st century energy crisis, skyrocketing prices at the pump, consumers are being gouged, growing dependence on foreign oil. And what is the answer of the Republican majority and this administration? Let us obligate the taxpayers of the United States to borrow \$15.4 billion as a gift, a needed incentive to the oil industry to go out and produce more.

At 60 bucks a barrel and \$2.40 a gallon and record profits and huge piles of cash they do not know what to do with, we need to subsidize the oil industry? I do not think so.

We need a new energy policy that will serve this country and the challenges of the 21st century with new technologies, new efficiency, and breaking our dependence on foreign oil. Unfortunately, we are getting exactly the opposite here today.

RECOGNIZING DANIELLE SIMONETTA

(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, I rise today to salute an individual without whom Members on this side of the aisle and indeed Members of the entire House would be lost.

Danielle Simonetta has been a public servant for the last 8 years, 5 of which have been spent with us here in the House. A New York native and a graduate of my alma mater, Washington Lee University in Virginia, Danielle began her Hill career with the legendary Gerry Solomon and then the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) as a Committee on Rules staffer. After 2 years with Mitch Daniels at the Office of Management and Budget, she came back to us again and has spent the last 2½ years as the senior floor assistant to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. DELAY), majority leader.

In her time with leadership, she has worked tirelessly for the members of the Republican Conference. Those who know Danielle know she is a reliable source of information to us here on the House floor and a constant advocate for us in scheduling the floor. Whether it is adding a Member's last-minute suspension to the House schedule, advising Members on the merits of a particular amendment, or bragging about her beloved dog Otis, Danielle has always been here when we need her.

This fall Danielle will be leaving us to pursue an exciting new career opportunity. In addition, she is putting the finishing touches on her upcoming wedding. Congratulations to Danielle. We will miss her, and we wish her well.

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

THE AMERICAN PEOPLE DESERVE ANSWERS

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, as the questions surrounding the Bush administration's case for war continue to mount, and the administration continues to stonewall, the American people deserve answers.

I want to read from an editorial from yesterday's Los Angeles Times. It says: "Scandals metastasize. That is the pattern since Watergate. What starts out looking like a small, isolated incident gradually reveals itself to be a part of a larger abuse of power. Meanwhile, an unraveling cover-up adds new elements. Is that happening now with the scandal over White House leaks of the identity of a CIA agent?"

As new elements of this unraveling cover-up are revealed, we should not lose sight of the larger abuse of power and the real scandal here.

As Chris Matthews said on Hardball on July 24: "The larger scandal in this White House/CIA leak story is not just who leaked the name of an undercover agent, but whether we were given a case for war, the deciding factor for many of us, knowing that it didn't hold water. As we work to find our way out of Iraq, we should focus a bit . . . on how we got in."

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve answers.