



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 152

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2006

No. 18

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISSA).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

February 14, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DARRELL E. ISSA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God Almighty, giver of all good gifts and authority's source of wisdom, we stand humbly before You. We ask Your forgiveness for the times we are self-centered and not attuned to the needs of others or Your holy inspirations.

Give us strength today to accomplish the work of the people in the House of freedom and civil expression. Receive our praise and thanksgiving for Your countless gifts and the opportunity to serve in government.

To You be honor and glory now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY)

come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GINGREY 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.

NSA TERRORIST SURVEILLANCE

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, since it has been revealed that the NSA had a terrorist surveillance program, opponents of the administration have been quick to criticize this program.

Let us try to set the record straight on this effective tool in fighting the war on terror. One Senator has charged the NSA is eavesdropping on Americans who have no indication of wrongdoing. The Senate minority leader, who has been briefed on the program, called it domestic spying.

In fact, this program is extremely limited to international communications, in which one party is suspected of links to al Qaeda or other terrorist organizations, like calls made by 9/11 hijackers to their leaders in Afghanistan.

Are some Democrats so confused, or do they care more about attempting to gain political advantage than protecting our Nation?

Mr. Speaker, we know our enemies place operatives within our borders who blend in and wait to strike as they did on 9/11, but they are still out there. I do not care one iota about protecting the privacy of terrorists who have been sent to this country to murder innocent Americans. It is regretful that some seek political gain at the expense of our security.

THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET PROPOSAL

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

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, today is Valentine's Day, representing our heart. I would like to extend my heart to all of the Members of the United States Congress.

The President's budget does not, in fact, reflect a warm heart, as it eliminates funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. Each month, CSFP provides over 475,000 low-income individuals with nutritious food packages; 85 percent of the recipients are seniors, all with income levels below a meager \$12,400 per year.

In Indiana, 4,979 seniors are currently enrolled in this program. Next year, they could go hungry if the program is eliminated.

The budget proposal enables participants to enroll in a food stamp program once the CSFP is eliminated. The food stamp program, while extremely important, does not offer the same benefit and convenience that CSFP does. The food packages that seniors receive from the CSFP go to veterans who are sleeping under a bridge and who are homeless.

I would ask the majority leadership of this Congress to redress those inequities in the President's budget.

Some seniors are also hesitant to participate in the food stamp program because they perceive it as a welfare program. Yet these same seniors participate in the CSFP in Indiana.

I was touched by the story of a senior who received her first CSFP box from Gleaners. She cried after discovering 12 pudding cups in her box. Her case manager explained, "Pudding is a luxury she has not been able to afford in a very long time." Let's not forget that as we craft a budget resolution, something as simple as pudding cups are a great luxury for some Americans.

□ 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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Our budget is a reflection of our values and priorities. Our seniors deserve the very best from us, and it is incumbent upon us to keep them in mind when determining our budget allocations.

SALUTING THE BRAVERY OF BORDER PATROL AGENTS

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

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to salute the bravery of Border Patrol agents working along the Mexican border. I recently returned from a week-long trip to the Mexican-California border, where I had the opportunity to ride along with our Border Patrol agents.

I was impressed by the bravery of the Border Patrol agents who escorted me. We personally saw a Border Patrol supervisor pull an illegal alien off a 10-foot wall and arrest him despite his violent attempts to resist arrest. I witnessed another Border Patrol agent scale a 5,000-foot mountain at 2 in the morning in freezing 30-degree weather and single-handedly arrest and handcuff eight illegal aliens.

The Border Patrol agent I rode with told me that he had been shot at on several occasions. Twenty-three of his colleagues have been killed in the line of duty since 1990. For example, Border Patrol agents Susan Rodriguez and Ricardo Salinas were gunned down by a murder suspect. Agent Jefferson Barr was shot to death by a drug trafficker.

I have a message for these brave Border Patrol agents: the U.S. Congress knows you are there. We appreciate your service, and help is on the way.

CONGRATULATING THE NCAA FOOTBALL CHAMPION TEXAS LONGHORNS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, for the second time in a row, the University of Texas has won the Rose Bowl. By any definition, the 2006 victory was a classic and made the Longhorns the national champions.

Led by quarterback Vince Young, the Longhorns fought their way to a stunning 41-38 victory over the top-ranked University of Southern California Trojans.

Vince Young ran for 200 yards, passed for 267 and scored the winning touchdown with 19 seconds left on the clock. It does not get much better than that, which is why Vince Young won the Most Valuable Player trophy.

UT Coach Mack Brown and the entire Longhorn football team have a special place deep in the hearts of all Texans. Through hard work, determination and teamwork, the Longhorns beat the odds and became an example for all of us of what sportsmanship really means.

Today, appropriately, the Longhorns were honored at the White House by

President and Texan George Bush. Please join me in congratulating the Longhorns on their championship season. Hook 'Em Horns.

OLYMPIAN AND TEXAN CHAD HEDRICK

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, there is a Texas-sized force to be reckoned with in Italy. Chad Hedrick, the 28-year-old former inline skating icon from Spring, Texas, is speed skating his way to victory.

In the first day of Olympic competition, he has already garnered gold, the first for him and the United States in these Olympics. Chad's love for skating started at age 2 in roller skates at his parents' roller skating rink in Spring, Texas.

He grew up and became one of the world's most famous inline skaters, but he switched to speed skating only 4 years ago. Chad Hedrick is a contender for four more medals in the games in Italy, and he is off to a spectacular start.

Although the rink and the type of skates have changed, this hometown hero's passion and talents have only gotten stronger throughout the years, and his passion was shown when he became teary eyed when the Star Spangled Banner played as he was awarded the gold medal.

The entire State of Texas and the Nation congratulate Chad on this astounding accomplishment, and we will be cheering for him for the remainder of the games. As we say in Texas, get 'er done, Chad. And that's the way it is.

CUTS TO ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise because I am deeply concerned with respect to the President's budget, his proposed cuts to women and children. In particular, the budget of fiscal year 2007 fails on all accounts and provides insufficient funding for our Nation's greatest investment, its children.

Domestic programs, as we know, are vital to women and children, particularly the WIC program, which will see its funding decline by almost \$5 billion over the next 5 years. For low-income families who rely solely on WIC to feed their children and keep them healthy, these cuts are simply unacceptable.

We will see a continued rise in poverty and food shortage among these families. The President's budget is also hurting women who work to provide for their families by cutting back on their health care.

Despite the huge budget cuts made already to the Medicaid program in the budget reconciliation bill, the President proposes to slash another \$17 bil-

lion over the next 5 years. Medicaid, as many of you know, helps women and children, the most vulnerable in our population. I urge the Congress to reject this morally irresponsible budget.

MORAL SECURITY

(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, our constituents expect us to not only guard the economic and national security of this Nation; they expect us to preserve the moral security that has made this Nation great. Just the other day, I had the chance to deliver the keynote address at an event for the Tennessee Boy Scouts.

Mr. Speaker, in this job we do as Members of Congress, there are times when you speak to a group and you can just feel that they are doing the right things. The Boy Scouts fit in that category. They are teaching our boys what it means to serve their community.

We are a Nation built on shared moral values. Families across the country know that our communities are strong and that this country is strong when those values are respected and protected and preserved for future generations. House Republicans know this, and we will be working here each and every day to protect this Nation's security.

STUDENT AID

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

Mr. DOGGETT. I have just returned from a joyful celebration at the White House, not one about red or blue States, but about burnt orange, branded into the pages of sports history.

As much as all of us can come together to celebrate the dramatic UT National Championship, I think that supporting Longhorns and supporting university students means much more. It means providing a Federal financial commitment to our students to let them achieve their individual greatness.

When qualified students cannot afford to attend a university, all of us lose. This President's budget, as far as I can tell, is one big fumble. Because once again, added on top of the \$12 billion that Republicans have just cut in Federal student financial assistance, are additional cuts to Perkins loans and to GEAR UP for those who are trying to get into college.

For the students that I represent at the University of Texas-Pan American, who already face big financial challenges, this burden is going to be a great one. One in four of the students have dependent children and more than 75 percent are first-generation students. I hope that we can make substantial changes and show a real commitment to Longhorns and students everywhere.