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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

In the prophetic vineyard of Isaiah, You God Almighty, are recognized as the vine grower. Your people are the treasured vineyard which is cared for by the vine dressers. As believers and servants of Your people, the Members of Congress, viewed as the vine dressers, turn to You, Lord, in prayer. You must bless their work for You alone can produce lasting results in the roots and all the branches.

Only a healthy and prosperous vineyard will provide good wine for the tables of life in America. Yet, so much depends on climatic incidents, the soil, the water, the sunlight, as well as the human labor of distinguished pruning and attentive care.

Lord of the vineyard, help Congress to seize the right moments and make the right decisions. Especially during difficult times do the vine dressers need to cultivate together and be discerning. Only by mutual trust and conversation can there be a structured response focused not only on the long hanging produce or just on some of the branches, but concern for the whole vineyard.

For the entire vineyard, beginning with the grafted vine from the foreign soil to the very best vintage, Lord, belongs to You, 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 (Mr. GARY G. MILLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California 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 PRO TEMPORE

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

HURRICANE VICTIM IS HURRICANE VILLAIN

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, she lost her house, she lost her way of life, and she lost her innocence. She had fled Katrina. She fled to Texas. But also fleeing with the good were the bad, and then the ugly happened.

Matthew Lindsey, registered sex offender from Louisiana, fled to Texas. He got that free FEMA money and those free FEMA hotel rooms. But FEMA would not let Texas lawmen see their database and cross-check for criminals like Lindsey. It was private, they said.

So it was then while baby-sitting 12 kids at a shelter he molested this 8-year-old girl. Now one little girl has emotional scars that will forever be with her.

Lindsey was one of 146 sex perverts that took the name "hurricane victim" and became that hurricane villain.

Congress must stop this nonsense and make FEMA quit protecting the lawless. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Fraternal Order of Police supports such legislation. We cannot stop hurricanes; we can stop sex offenders. We can force FEMA to help the lawmen find the outlaws and thereby save the innocent.

And that's just the way it is.

IGNORING FISCAL CRISIS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the House we started the appropriations process, and that continues today, but the problem is that the Republican leadership and the President continue to ignore the fiscal crisis that they have created here in the Congress and across the country.

As you know, we passed a budget this week, but at the same time the debt continues to rise and so much of the money actually being spent is going towards the war in Iraq which is not really being addressed. In fact, many times, the budget simply masks that because it does not include the funding and the cost of the war in the budget itself.

So what I say today, rather than just focus on the appropriation bills and the different items back and forth, the Republican Congress should look at the overall picture. They just passed another tax cut bill, with tax cuts primarily going to large corporations, special interests, wealthy individuals, not the average American; and they continue to increase the debt.

Spending is also out of control, and they are not doing anything about it. Unfortunately, over the long term this leads to a fiscal crisis. We continue to go into debt. We don't have the money available to borrow for new production, and the Republicans need to address this fiscal crisis. They are not doing it, Mr. Speaker.

HOUSE PASSES REASONABLE BUDGET RESOLUTION

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

□ 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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minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week House Republicans voted to pass the fiscal year 2007 House budget resolution. I was pleased to support a reasonable budget that will fund our top priorities, continue our program policies, and increase accountability within Federal Government programs. I was especially pleased to see this budget will help cut the Federal deficit in half by 2009 without implementing any tax increases.

Yet, in keeping with their record of being the party of no, Democrats voted “no” on this budget. They voted “no” to even the smallest attempts on holding the line on spending, and they voted “no” to reforming outdated and ineffective government programs. You see, Democrats would rather just raise taxes on hardworking families.

Mr. Speaker, you can rest assured that House Republicans are going to continue to work to keep taxes low and maintain the pro-growth economic policies that have created 32 consecutive months of job growth. After all, if there is something we should all be saying “no” to, it is the Democrats’ tax and spend mentality.

REVEALING THE TRUTH

(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, sometimes it takes a heated exchange to reveal the truth. People say things they would not normally say, or reflect their true thinking.

For instance, while debating the budget the other night, a member of the Republican leadership said, “If you earn \$40,000 a year and have a family of two, you don’t pay any taxes.” Well, that would be news to that middle-class family.

According to the Center of Budget and Policy Priorities, middle-class families paid an average of 13.6 percent of their income in Federal taxes in 2003. Additionally, these hardworking families pay State income taxes, property taxes, gasoline taxes, and sales taxes. If anything, middle-class families are paying too much in taxes.

But the truth serum clearly did not wear off, because the next day the same member of the Republican leadership sent out a press release titled “Fiscal Responsibility is Not an Option in This House.”

After 5 years of record budget deficits of \$3 trillion in new debt, for a total of \$9.6 trillion of debt, never were truer words spoken in that press release.

Mr. Speaker, I am glad that the truth about the Republican Congress has finally come out. Now the American people have a choice between leadership and the Republican Party that cuts taxes on the wealthy and leaves trillions of dollars of debt for the rest of us.

As Ronald Reagan once said, “Facts are a stubborn thing.” Mr. Speaker, it is time for a change. It is time for new priorities. It is time to give the people back their House.

HONORING CAMERON STAY

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a friend of mine, Cameron Stay, a friend from Henderson, Nevada. Cameron has been an inspiration for me. We had a chance to meet recently. He experienced a tragic motorcycle accident just a few months ago.

Cameron is a friend of Nevada and a friend of the country. He is a Green Valley High School graduate from Henderson, Nevada, in my district and has a college degree in criminal justice. He also was a firefighter with the BLM and with the Hotshots 777 group and worked for TAB Construction.

I mention Cameron today because he is an inspiration for me as a Member of Congress. As we look at issues ranging from world peace to education to health care to children and families, Cameron has been that inspiration for his courage, his enthusiasm, and his will to live a full life. He truly represents what this country is about; and today I would like to recognize Cameron and his mother, who is here today, Denise Olson and her husband, Stan, who are in the audience, and say thank you for sharing with us your son as an inspiration for us as Members of Congress.

SECURING OUR BORDERS

(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, on Monday night, President Bush demonstrated his commitment to securing our country. By placing thousands of National Guard troops on our borders, he will help decrease illegal border crossings, stop drug trafficking, and prevent terrorism. As a veteran of the National Guard, I know our troops are well prepared to assist temporarily with this critical mission.

In December, the House of Representatives passed legislation to prevent illegal crossings by addressing the hiring of illegals and gaining control of our borders.

As the House and Senate now work to find a long-term solution to America’s immigration problem, House Republicans will continue to fight to ensure securing our borders remains the first priority. We will resist any frivolous lawsuits and protect American families.

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

CONGRATULATING LESLI MCCOLLUM GOOCH

(Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, occasionally we have an opportunity to come to the floor to celebrate something. Lesli McCollum Gooch has been my legislative director for over 3 years. She began her service on Capitol Hill in the fall of 1999 as a Congressional Fellow for Marge Roukema of New Jersey. At the conclusion of the fellowship, Lesli served as Representative Roukema’s legislative director until the congresswoman retired at the end of the 107th Congress.

Lesli has been working on her Ph.D. for 10 years. She began working as a Graduate Fellow at Carl Albert Congressional Research and Study Center at the University of Oklahoma. In 1998, Lesli joined the University of Oklahoma’s Institute of Public Affairs. She received a Master’s in political science from the University of Oklahoma in 1999.

Leslie defended her dissertation on April 10, 2006, and graduated with her Doctorate of Philosophy degree on May 12, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, I will not call her “Doctor,” but do as I do, call her “Fudd” when you see her.

0915

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5385, MILITARY CONSTRUCTION, MILITARY QUALITY OF LIFE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2007

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 821 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 821

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5385) making appropriations for the military quality of life functions of the Department of Defense, military construction, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. Points of order against provisions in the bill for failure to comply with clause 2 of rule XXI are waived except for title IV. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether the Member offering an amendment