

very hard on this bill, we are hopeful it can move as soon as possible so the Senate can itself consider it.

The next bill that we had thought was going to be on the calendar last week, the Labor-Health bill, is not listed for this coming week. I have noted some of your comments in the papers, but obviously this bill, as you know, includes an increase in the minimum wage, which was voted out of committee on a bipartisan vote, and we believe that if it is brought to the floor, it will be approved on a bipartisan vote.

But can the gentleman tell me what the expectations are for the Labor-Health bill?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. It is not on the schedule next week.

Mr. HOYER. You have no expectations, then?

Mr. BOEHNER. I didn't say that. It is just not on the schedule next week.

Mr. HOYER. Clearly the appropriation bills have been bills which I know the majority wanted to move, and I would hope, notwithstanding the fact that there is a provision that the committee approved, that we would not subject that to a majority vote on the floor.

Mr. BOEHNER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I will be glad to yield.

Mr. BOEHNER. Yes. The bill came out of committee, but typically the rules of the House don't allow Members to legislate on an appropriation bill, and I think there are a lot of people who believe that is legislation on an appropriation bill. So there are some concerns about it. And let me be fair. There are other issues with the bill beyond the provision that was authored by my friend from Maryland.

Mr. HOYER. Reclaiming my time, that was my assumption as well, that there are other issues. But in terms of the gentleman's observation regarding the rules, just as typically it has been our observation that if the majority wanted something on the floor, they simply waived the rules, and they have done so on a very frequent basis. We are just hopeful that you would see your way clear to doing that just one more time.

Mr. BOEHNER. I will take that into consideration.

Mr. HOYER. I thought you would.

Mr. Leader, the Health IT bill and other health care-related bills, I know this was supposed to be Health Care Week. I may have missed it, but in any event, if it went by me, it is Health Care Week.

Can you tell me whether or not the IT bill might come at some point in time?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. Do these questions get any easier?

The Health IT bill has shared jurisdiction between the Ways and Means Committee and the Energy and Commerce Committee. There are some

issues. They are trying to resolve those issues. The chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, as you are probably aware, was preoccupied with two other projects this week, and I do not believe that the issues have been resolved. I do expect it will be up early in July, but I am not sure that we are going to be able to resolve those differences by next week.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information.

Lastly, Mr. Leader, there has been a lot of talk on it, and we have voted on it numerous times, the so-called pledge protection bill. Do you know whether that might be on the floor next week?

I yield to my friend.

Mr. BOEHNER. If it does come up, it will be under suspension of the rules. I would like to see it on the floor next week, and we are discussing that with Chairman SENSENBRENNER. I would hope that it is up next week.

If I could continue, the gentleman was kind enough not to ask me the question that he has asked me for the last 3 months, and that is the status of the pension bill, so I thought I would just do it on my own.

We have made a lot of progress this week, and I have talked to Democrat Members here in the House and in the Senate, as well as my Republican colleagues. We are very close, I believe, to an agreement that will receive the kind of broad bipartisan support we saw of the pension bill when it left the House and the Senate last year. So I am not sure that the conference report will be ready for the floor next week, but it is possible.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for that information. He and I share the view that the pension bill is a very important bill for employees and for employers. I know the gentleman has been working hard on it.

But in light of the fact you did bring it up, last week we talked about the inclusion of both parties in the deliberations. After our conversation, I had the opportunity to check with Mr. RANGEL, and I don't think he has been included. I do believe that Senator KENNEDY and Senator BAUCUS have been included, and there was a lot of discussion, but I will tell my friend that the information I have, which may be incorrect, is that at least in terms of this House, the ranking member has not been included in the deliberations. I think that would really be helpful when it comes back out so that our Members would be able to have the information from our ranking member as to his insights into what has been done, and I would hope that could occur.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2006

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PRICE of Georgia). Is there objection to

the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Ohio?

There was no objection.

COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF HIS MAJESTY KING BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ OF THAILAND

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 409) commemorating the 60th anniversary of the ascension to the throne of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand, with a Senate amendment thereto, and concur in the Senate amendment.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The Clerk read the Senate amendment, as follows:

Senate amendment:

Amend the preamble as follows:

Page 2, unnumbered line 4, strike out "Agency" and insert "Program".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Iowa?

There was no objection.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT, JUNE 23, 2006, TO FILE REPORT ON H.R. 5316, RESPOND ACT OF 2006

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure have until midnight, Friday, June 23, 2006, to file a report to accompany the bill, H.R. 5316, the RESPOND Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

CALLING FOR AN INCREASE IN THE MINIMUM WAGE

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, this week again, Mr. Speaker, the House and the Senate failed to increase

the minimum wage in our country. For 10 years the minimum wage has been stuck at \$5.15 an hour. In my State of Ohio, if we would raise the minimum wage to \$6.85 an hour, as many people want to through a ballot initiative, 500,000 individual Ohioans with 200,000 children in those households would get a raise. It would help their standard of living. It would put more money into our economy. It would be good for our State and good for all of us.

This Congress, instead of passing a minimum wage increase, continues to give tax breaks to people who make more than \$1 million a year. They get hundreds of millions of dollars. The CEO of Exxon makes \$18,000 an hour. A woman in Girard, Ohio, who fills her tank with gasoline from ExxonMobil that lives on the minimum wage makes \$11,000 a year.

IT IS UP TO CONGRESS TO BE FISCALLY CONSERVATIVE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today the House took several measures that I believe it is important for the American people to understand. Of course, it sounds like the estate tax potential has great merit for many who believe that they are either engaged in family farming or small businesses. Might I say that the existing relief under estate tax actually gives those whose estates are \$7 million absolute relief.

So at this time when we are at war, to give another \$800 billion giveaway really is unreasonable. And, therefore, even though I have in the past supported the estate tax, this is not the time. And the reason is because, of course, the minimum wage has not been raised for the past 6 years. In fact, it is at a rate that shows that it is as low as it was 50 years ago in today's dollars. When are we going to see relief for those single parents and hard-working families who can barely make ends meet on \$5.15?

Then we want to give the President a line item veto, which has already proven to be unconstitutional.

It is up to this Congress to be fiscally conservative, not rely on an unconstitutional law such as line item veto.

CONTINUATION OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY WITH RESPECT TO THE WESTERN BALKANS—MES- SAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 109-117)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on International Relations and ordered to be printed:

To The Congress of the United States:

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice to the *Federal Register* for publication, stating that the Western Balkans emergency is to continue in effect beyond June 26, 2006. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on June 24, 2005, 70 FR 36803.

The crisis constituted by the actions of persons engaged in, or assisting, sponsoring, or supporting (i) extremist violence in the Republic of Macedonia, and elsewhere in the Western Balkans region, or (ii) acts obstructing implementation of the Dayton Accords in Bosnia or United Nations Security Council Resolution 1244 of June 10, 1999, in Kosovo, that led to the declaration of a national emergency on June 26, 2001, in Executive Order 13219 has not been resolved. Subsequent to the declaration of the national emergency, I amended Executive Order 13219 in Executive Order 13304 of May 28, 2003, to address acts obstructing implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement of 2001 in the Republic of Macedonia, which have also become a concern. The acts of extremist violence and obstructionist activity outlined in Executive Order 13219, as amended, are hostile to U.S. interests and pose a continuing unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For these reasons, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the Western Balkans and maintain in force the comprehensive sanctions to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH.

THE WHITE HOUSE, June 22, 2006.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE ESTATE TAX AND MINIMUM WAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DeFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DeFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, so today the United States House of Representatives voted in the next decade, the coming decade with the retirement of the baby boomers looming before us, to borrow, borrow \$762 billion so the wealthiest among us can escape taxation and helping to carry the burden

of the United States. On the same day the Republican leaders refused to allow any vote on an increase in the minimum wage, \$5.15 an hour, the Federal minimum wage. Fairly extraordinary, but it says a lot about priorities.

On my side of the aisle there was near unanimity on increasing the minimum wage, and a large majority voted against borrowing \$762 billion so we can give massive tax cuts to estates, for the most part, worth more than \$25 million.

It is not about small business, family farms, tree farmers. There will be in 2009 an exemption of \$7 million per family. That will take care of most small businesses, family farms, and tree farms that I am aware of. No. This is about the massive accumulation of wealth, some of it unearned.

□ 1830

For instance, let's take Lee Raymond, a wonderful gentleman, recently the CEO of ExxonMobil. We all know them well. They made \$100 million a day last year. ExxonMobil made \$100 million a day last year extorting the American public, the driving public, through price gouging and extraordinary profiteering.

Now, Mr. Raymond, who held the helm until recently, was rewarded fairly handsomely for doing that, a \$400 million retirement payout. So this one gentleman, one gentleman, of course, he really worked hard to earn that \$400 million, and he is going to have to limp through his retirement on \$400 million, although I think he still gets to use the corporate jet, and they still would have to provide him some other emoluments suitable to his status.

But, in any case, this one change in the Tax Code is going to be worth an approximately \$160 million tax break to Mr. Raymond. So while ExxonMobil is fleecing the consumers over here, Mr. Raymond gets a \$400 million windfall pension, and then he gets from the Republican leadership a \$160 million tax break.

Now, that might be kind of okay, except they are going to borrow the money to give him the tax break. We are borrowing right now \$1.3 billion a day to run the Government of the United States, and with this new tax break for the richest among us, estates worth more than \$25 million, we are going to borrow another \$210 million a day. Our credit is good. Isn't that great? That is the good news, they would say, our credit is good.

Unfortunately, the bill isn't going to go to Mr. Raymond. The bill is going to go to people who work for wages and salaries. Under the bill that passed here today, a schoolteacher will pay a higher rate of taxation on their salary than Mr. Raymond will on his windfall from ExxonMobil. Now, that is fair in their world. It is not fair in my world, and it is not fair to the people I represent.

You can look at it another way. The next decade, as the Social Security annual surplus diminishes down toward