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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CAPUANO).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 8, 2007.

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

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

You, O Lord, are our light and our salvation. Lord God, may living faith lead to greater charity and strengthen our service. Fill us with wisdom that all may know the fullness of life is not found in self-interest, but in love and commitment to others.

Whether members of a family, CEOs in business, or elected officials in government, You ask all to show their faithfulness to love and their promotion of justice in ordinary decisions each day.

Those who say they love God and do not know how to be loving to others or forgive others or how to seek justice in practical ways for the voiceless and the powerless are living in blinding darkness. You, O Lord, are light for conscience, for the heart and for the world both 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 Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HENSARLING 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 pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to ten 1-minute speeches on each side.

HUD FY08 BUDGET REQUEST

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

Mr. Sires. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share my thoughts on the Department of Housing and Urban Development fiscal year 2008 budget. In my opinion, it is disgraceful. This budget cuts vital housing assistance programs, leaving low-income families, elderly and the disabled out in the cold.

The President's request cuts the Community Development Block Grant by 20 percent, cuts public housing programs by 7 percent, cuts disabled housing programs by 47 percent, and cuts elderly housing programs by 22 percent. The budget eliminated entirely the HOPE VI housing program, among others.

At the same time, the President also cuts the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program by 56 percent. So with both cuts to housing and the heating assistance programs, the President will leave the most vulnerable out in

the cold. I hope that this Congress will act with more thought by appropriating more funding for these vital programs.

CONGRESSIONAL INACTION JEOPARDIZES BAKER COUNTY ROADS AND VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, failure of Congress to reauthorize the Secure Schools and Community Self-Determination Act amounts to a breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties and 4,400 school districts across America. To Baker County, Oregon, this breach of faith means the road department crew who plow snow 5 months out of the year will be cut in half. The county will also have to fire the only trainer who prepares volunteer firefighters in 13 rural communities.

If this Congress fails to act, the 11 people left in the road department will be responsible for maintaining 1,100 miles of road; that is one person for every 100 miles of road, the same distance from here to Richmond, Virginia.

If this Congress fails to act, volunteer firefighters might not receive the vital life-saving training on equipment, tactics and communications. County Judge Fred Warner says, Because we have vast Federal lands, we have no tax base to replace the lost funding. We just need the Federal Government to honor its commitment.

My colleagues, Congress must renew the Federal Government's promise to timbered communities. Pass H.R. 17. Time is running out.

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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