



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, MARCH 29, 2007

No. 55

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

God of gentle beauty and filled with mercy, we praise You for the seasonal blossoms which color this capital city. Hear the prayers of Your grateful yet repentant people, that we may truly rejoice in our spring feasts and see in our day the way of Your salvation revealed in the course of this Nation.

By Your spirit, enlighten the minds of the Members of Congress and transform their hearts, that they may think creatively and decide, be moved and act in accord with Your revealed truth and be guided by Your ever-present love.

May their self-restraint and disciplined priorities unite the people across this Nation in the ways of law-abiding justice and pave the road to peace.

Then, dying to self-centered lives, let Your people become a blessing to others and give You glory, honor and thanksgiving 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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

WHEN WILL CONGRESS STOP FUNDING WAR?

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, today the House will pass a budget which will fund the war in Iraq far into 2009. The budget includes an extra \$195 billion mostly for military operations in Iraq. Anyone who thinks this Congress is trying to end the war had better think again, because this budget signals we will be in Iraq for another 2 years or more, even though Congress has led the American people and the media to believe otherwise.

Congress recently engaged in a dubious debate about a nonbinding surge resolution. Even though Congress had and still has the authority to end the war now, we instead give it new life with last week's vote.

Now, \$195 billion on top of last week's supplemental means close to \$300 bil-

lion in a week approved to continue the war.

This war has sacrificed the lives of our troops and innocent civilians. It has advanced the interests of oil companies and contractors in the manner of a criminal enterprise. It has besmirched our national honor and alienated America from friends around the world.

When will Congress stand for truth and for peace and stop funding this war?

COMMENDING MEDIA WATCHDOGS

(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. Madam Speaker, 20 years ago Brent Bozell, armed with a handful of employees, a black and white TV and a rented computer, set up shop for what is now the acclaimed Media Research Center.

Believing that an overwhelming percentage of news media exhibit a distinct liberal slant, Bozell intended to document and prove the bias existed. Bozell created a news-tracking system that provides comprehensive analysis based on scientific research.

From its humble beginnings, the Media Research Center has grown to be the Nation's largest news monitoring operation, employing 60 staffers with a \$6 million annual budget.

Bozell, his employees, and their compatriots will celebrate 20 years of success tonight at the company's annual gala. As a former reporter, I congratulate them for their success; and while I remain hopeful liberal bias in the media will dissipate, I am proud the Media Research Center will be on watch until it happens.

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

□ 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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JUVENILE DIABETES

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

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, last weekend, I participated in the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation Walk to Cure Diabetes in my hometown of Boca Raton, Florida. I participated in this walk to help bring attention to the urgent need for finding a cure for juvenile diabetes.

I also walked in honor of two children in my district, Sydney Lubetkin and Nicky Pollack. Nicky was diagnosed with juvenile diabetes as an infant, and Sydney was diagnosed with the illness just this past year.

Juvenile diabetes is a serious disease that inflicts tens of thousands of children across the United States. Not only does this illness cost us \$100 billion in health care costs alone, but living with juvenile diabetes requires 24-7 care. Children must constantly take insulin shots and have their blood checked numerous times a day, and their diet and exercise regimen must always be under strict surveillance. In severe cases, juvenile diabetes can cause blindness, heart failure, stroke and, worst case, death.

This is why I signed on as a sponsor of House Resolution 4 that urges Congress to appropriate \$1.6 billion annually. I thank Members for their support.

DEMOCRATS WANT TO RAISE TAXES

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

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, the Democrats in the campaign last fall said they only wanted to raise taxes on the rich. But I think it is interesting how they define the rich. Take, for instance, the fact that they call for the lowest tax bracket of 10 percent to rise to 15 percent. Madam Speaker, the rich are not a part of the 10 percent bracket.

They are going to resurrect the marriage penalty tax, costing the average married couple \$466 a year more in taxes. They are going to cut the child tax credit in half, costing 31 million American families more in taxes. And if the Democrats are only raising taxes on the rich, it does seem that their definition of "rich" is anyone who is married or has children. In fact, anyone who gets a paycheck.

They said they only wanted to raise taxes as a last resort. But with the budget we will be voting on today, they have just made reservations for a long stay, with the American taxpayers footing the nearly \$400 billion bill, the largest tax increase in American history.

That didn't take long.

REPUBLICAN RHETORIC ABOUT BUDGET ASTOUNDING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, the Republican rhetoric about the Democratic budget still echoes in the Chamber, and the misrepresentation is astounding.

Why, just last night, jaws dropped across America as the author of the Republican alternative referred to the Concord Coalition, a respected centrist organization, as a "left-wing think tank".

Well, the Republicans have zero credibility when it comes to the budget. Last year, when they were in complete control, they couldn't even pass a budget resolution. They couldn't even pass the appropriations process, leaving town with 11 of the 13 budgets unfinished. The wheels completely fell off. These are the folks who gave us the rainforest in Iowa, the Bridge to Nowhere.

This is why 77 prominent national organizations have endorsed the Democratic budget, from the American Legion to Ducks Unlimited, the Environmental Coalition, the Military Officers Association to Veterans of Foreign Wars and the National Education Association.

I am proud of this Democratic alternative. I hope people read it to see through the Republican rhetoric.

DEMOCRAT BUDGET RAISES TAXES

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

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, the Democrat budget raises taxes, plain and simple. You can cite all of these other groups that say one thing or another, but the group that counts is the Congressional Budget Office. That is the official scorekeeping agency that measures our budgets.

And according to the Congressional Budget Office, the Democrat budget provides for the largest tax increase in American history. Either that, or they don't balance the budget. They can't have it both ways. They are saying they balance the budget, and the only way they balance the budget is by raising taxes, cutting the child tax credit in half, bringing back the marriage tax penalty, bringing back the death tax, raising tax rates across the board on all income tax payers, repealing the 10 percent for low-income Americans, bringing back higher tax rates on capital gains and dividends which create jobs and help seniors save.

In fact, if their tax plan comes to fruition, if they actually accomplish what they are seeking to accomplish, they will tax the small businesses of America at higher tax rates than the largest corporations in America.

Madam Speaker, these tax cuts created jobs. They created 7.6 million jobs. Don't raise taxes.

COMING TOGETHER IN UNITY

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

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, Monday evening begins the Jewish celebration of Passover. Passover is when the Jews remember when they were enslaved in Egypt and Moses led the Jewish people out of bondage and to freedom.

It is an important holiday, and one in which we remember where we came from and about how good God has been to us and about being enslaved and being in bondage. During this holiday, Jews remember others who have been enslaved and call on Jews to remember and never forget and to try to see that others are not enslaved.

Partly for that reason, I introduced some time ago H.R. 194 to have our country make an apology for the history of slavery and Jim Crow laws we had in this country. That was an error, that was wrong, and it needs to be apologized for, and a dialogue needs to begin to understand about slavery and its effects.

I wish everybody a happy holiday season and hope we all come together in unity to apologize for slavery.

EQUIPPING OUR NATIONAL GUARD

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, from its birth before the Revolutionary War, the National Guard has served as our first defense against catastrophic disaster. We all remember the scenes during Hurricane Katrina. The National Guard came to the rescue. They were the ones in the helicopters, along with the Coast Guard, rescuing people after FEMA had collapsed and had not fulfilled its responsibilities.

After we invaded Iraq, it was our brave soldiers in the National Guard that once again answered the call to duty. They have served side by side with the regular forces doing an incredible job. They also have a job to do in our country, though. But multiple deployments and use of equipment has degraded the equipment they have at home to protect us in our own States.

The National Guard currently has about 40 percent of the equipment that it needs at home. The American people deserve to know this, that we do not have the equipment that we need, and the National Guard has a right to have the equipment so they can fulfill their duty in case of a national domestic disaster.

I thank the National Guard and their families who stand by day after day, serving us during any kind of catastrophe. I urge the American public to