



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 153

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2007

No. 64

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC.

April 20, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EARL POMEROY 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:

Lord God, in whom all can take refuge, on this day of reflection and mourning for the victims and all those affected by the tragedy which took place on the campus of Virginia Tech, we appeal to Your boundless mercy and steadfast love.

The whole House of Representatives pulsates with compassion for the surviving student body, faculty and especially the parents of those young people now taken into Your eternal embrace.

May love conquer hatred. In Your infinite goodness heal the wounded, reinforce the bonds of relationships that hold Your people together.

Knowing how fragile life is and how precious the time we have together, enable all to draw closer to You and to one another in learning true wisdom, in affirming their deepest love and commitments and in reaching out to the alienated and those most in need.

We ask for Your help, Lord, calling upon Your holy name, 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title.

H.R. 1130. An act to amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to extend the authority to withhold from public availability a financial disclosure report filed by an individual who is a judicial officer or judicial employee, to the extent necessary to protect the safety of that individual or a family member of that individual, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 378. An act to amend title 18, United States Code, to protect judges, prosecutors, witnesses, victims, and their family members, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-286, the Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, and after consultation with the Republican Leader, appoints the following members to serve on the Con-

gressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China:

The Senator from Nebraska (Mr. HAGEL).

The Senator from Kansas (Mr. BROWNBACK).

The Senator from Oregon (Mr. SMITH).

The Senator from Florida (Mr. MARTINEZ).

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches per side.

HONORING COMMANDER CAROL BOHN, U.S. NAVY, RETIRED

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Commander Carol Bohn, U.S. Navy, retired.

Commander Bohn provided 25 years of outstanding service to our country as a commissioned officer in the Navy Nurse Corps and continues, in retirement, to provide exceptional service to our community and to our men and women in uniform.

A member of the VFW for approximately 15 years, Commander Bohn now serves as chaplain for the VFW Pleasanton Post 6298. She was instrumental in leading drives to obtain essential items for our Nation's troops, and her efforts have improved the morale of our men and women in uniform deployed overseas.

Commander Bohn is also instrumental in organizing Pleasanton's yearly Veterans Day Parade, which honors the many sacrifices made by our fighting men and women. Through Commander Bohn's tireless efforts, the

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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people of Pleasanton and the 11th Congressional District are assured that our veterans will not be forgotten.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing this outstanding citizen and leader.

SURRENDER IN IRAQ DAY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, in World War I, the U.S. and Allied victory was called Armistice Day. In World War II, it was called VE Day, Victory in Europe, and VJ Day, Victory over Japan. Now, this Congress has already proclaimed SI Day, Surrender in Iraq Day.

By proclaiming a day to the world that we plan to "get out of Dodge," no matter the situation, no matter the consequences, because some lack the moral will to win defies commonsense and basic military logic. You never tell the enemy that you will retreat, much less give them the day, month and year.

I am sure that in the rat holes of Iraq where the cowardly enemy hide there is joy and laughter. Congress knows as much about running the details of a military operation as FEMA does about disasters.

Let the generals finish America's duty. We have the duty to give them the tools, weapons, money and the troops to take care of business.

General Stonewall Jackson allegedly faced the same complaints from the Confederate Congress and reportedly responded: "Send more troops, not more questions."

We cannot retreat and allow Surrender in Iraq Day to become part of our history.

And that's just the way it is.

FUNDING FOR THE IRAQ WAR

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the President said, "If Congress fails to pass a bill that I can sign by mid-April, the Army will be forced to consider cutting back on equipment, equipment repair and quality of life initiatives for our Guard and Reserve forces."

Today, though, the Pentagon reports it has enough money to pay for the war in Iraq through June. So despite the doomsday reports from the White House, our military leaders are confident we have sufficient funding while we debate a new direction for the war in Iraq.

Then the President said that the timeline for redeployment that was part of our funding would undermine our troops and send the wrong signal to the enemy. Yesterday, Secretary Gates said our debate here in Congress has had a positive impact by "communicating to the Iraqis that this is not an open-ended commitment."

Mr. Speaker, this is not the time for scoring political points or posturing and positioning. The President should know that after 4 years of chaos and bloodshed, the American people sent Democrats to Washington to bring a new direction to our Iraq policy.

Today, thousands of American troops find themselves in the middle of someone else's civil war, backing an Iraqi government that has yet to stand up for itself.

Democrats are calling for a new direction in Iraq.

DEMOCRAT TAX HIKE

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, some Democrats like to boast about all the increased spending in their budget plan, but they are less eager to discuss how all this new spending is going to be paid for. That is because it is paid for with the largest tax increase in American history, nearly \$400 billion over 5 years.

Mr. Speaker, while some Democrats on Capitol Hill may not understand the impact this tax hike would have, my constituents most certainly do. Several have written in to let me know how it would affect their families.

One woman said it would mean less money for vital health care costs. Another parent said it would hurt her ability to pay for after-school activities for her kids. Someone else said more money for Washington would mean less money for charitable causes. And one single parent told me it would mean, "less food on our table."

Mr. Speaker, the proposed tax increase would affect real families in real ways. Let's balance the budget by reining in spending, not by taking more money from hardworking American families.

HONORING DREYFOOS HIGH SCHOOL

(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. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to honor a special group of south Florida high school students for being selected to participate in a prestigious debate competition this weekend in New York City.

The students, Zoe Friedland, Samuel Natale, Alexandre Pouille, Jemma Hinkly, Emily Deyes, Christopher Bahls-Mariles, and Rachael Mielke, hail from Dreyfoos High School in Palm Beach County, and will represent the school at the National Public Policy Forum debate championship this weekend.

I wish these students the best of luck. They are some of the best and brightest, and I know they will represent south Florida well. I commend

them for their hard work, dedication and perseverance that got them to this level and qualified them for this competition.

I also want to take this opportunity to express the condolences from my district to the family and friends of the Virginia Tech students who were tragically killed on Monday, and wish a speedy recovery to those who were injured.

Our children are the future of our Nation and our greatest asset. I join my colleagues in the House of Representatives to express our grief and sympathy. Our thoughts and prayers are with their friends and families.

STAND UP FOR OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, our troops in combat deserve to be sent the resources and reinforcements that they need to be successful in their mission in Iraq, without strings and without delay.

Putting in place an inflexible timeline that culminates with a date certain time for withdrawal micromanages our commanders in the field and undermines the efforts of our troops on the ground. The Washington Post describes the Democrat plan as "an attempt to impose detailed management on a war without regard for the war itself."

The L.A. Times called for the bill to be vetoed saying, "It's absurd to try and micromanage the conflict, and the evolution of Iraqi society, with arbitrary timetables and benchmarks."

I urge my colleagues to stand up for our troops. Our troops deserve a clean bill, not one bulging with add-ons and political statements.

GONZALES REFUSED TO ANSWER CRITICAL QUESTIONS IN THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT SCANDAL

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Attorney General Gonzales cancelled a vacation and an entire week of work so he could prepare for his testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee yesterday on the expanding U.S. Attorney scandal, but it does not seem to have helped him very much.

Despite all that prep time, the Attorney General could still not remember why most of the prosecutors had been fired by him in the first place. Worse yet, Gonzales said he could not recall attending a meeting where the discussion of the fate of these prosecutors was debated.

Democratic and Republican senators alike grew increasingly frustrated throughout the day as the Attorney General answered "I do not recall" to more than 70 questions. It was so bad that conservative Republican Senator