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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. SOLIS) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Almighty God and Father of all, yesterday this Nation and the world quickened the living legacy of a great American and citizen of the world, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

May the Members of Congress and all Americans rededicate ourselves to his clarion call to work toward the Beloved Community he envisioned both at home and abroad.

Help us, precious Lord, to dissolve all prejudicial thinking and take practical steps to build peace rooted in equal justice.

At this hour of uncertainty, Lord, fashion leaders whose actions spring from the inherent counsel of Dr. King's living legacy. In charting the course for the national stability of Iraq, let Dr. King's dream of little black children walking hand and hand with little white children come true for little Shi'a, Sunni, Kurdish, Christian and Jewish children. From the southern plains around Basra to the northern plateaus of Ninnevah, someday soon let them sing: "Free at last. Thank God Almighty. We are free at last." Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BUTTERFIELD 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.

APPEALS FOR REDRESS FROM ARMED SERVICES

(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 I received a petition, an appeal for redress from over 1,000 active duty members of the armed services. Many of these honorable soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines have served in Iraq. They did not challenge their orders, they did not challenge their duty to

serve, they do assert their constitutional rights and their military code rights to speak with Members of Congress.

Article 3.5.7, Department of Defense directive 1325.6 provides the right of servicemembers to request redress and grievances against the actions of their commanders. The action taken and presented to me by individual servicemembers is an appeal for redress to end the war in Iraq.

Troops are risking their careers to present this message to Congress. They have all individually signed the following statement:

As a patriotic American proud to serve the Nation in uniform, I respectfully urge my political leaders in Congress to support the prompt withdrawal of all American military forces and bases from Iraq. Staying in Iraq will not work and is not worth the price. It is time for U.S. troops to come home.

SALUTING THE 218TH INFANTRY BRIGADE OF THE SOUTH CAROLINA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

(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, on Saturday, January 7, South Carolina's adjutant general, Stan Spears, hosted the departure ceremony for the 218th Enhanced Separate Infantry Brigade. The event was attended by 10,000 appreciative family members and supporters.

The 218th Brigade is commanded by Brigadier General Robert Livingston. General Livingston and his wife Barbara's daughters, Rachel, Rebecca and Roxanne, led the national anthem at the ceremony. The brigade consists of 1,800 soldiers and will be in Afghanistan for approximately 1 year. Its primary mission will be to train Afghan national army and national police. This is the largest single deployment of South Carolina Army National Guard since World War II.

As a grateful 25-year veteran of the 218th and father of four sons in the military, I have the deepest respect and admiration for the men and women who put their lives at risk to protect American families. My thoughts and prayers are with them and their families. Our office is available at all times for servicemembers and families toll free at 1-888-381-1442.

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

DEMOCRATS ACCOMPLISH MUCH DURING FIRST 2 WEEKS OF 110TH CONGRESSIONAL SESSION

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, as we begin the third week of this new Congress, it is important that the

American people know what we have accomplished so far on their behalf.

During our first week in session, we changed the rules on how this institution works, cutting ties between lobbyists and lawmakers, and reinstituting commonsense pay-as-you-go budget rules.

Last week we began our 100-hour agenda, passing four pieces of legislation that will help the American people live better and healthier lives. We increased the minimum wage for the first time in 9 years. We passed legislation giving the government the ability to fund promising stem cell research. We passed a bill that allows the government to negotiate better prescription drug prices for American seniors. We passed long overdue legislation instituting the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission that should make our Nation safer. And we are not finished yet.

This week we will make college more affordable by cutting interest rates in half on student loans and investing in biofuels by repealing unnecessary tax breaks to Big Oil.

Democrats are delivering on the promises we made to the American people.

TRANSIT FLEXIBILITY

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight an issue of importance to many of our Nation's small- and medium-sized public transportation systems. Outdated population limits established in law in the seventies have caused many of these transit agencies to lose flexibility in the way they spend Federal funds. As a result, many of these systems, approximately 110 to be exact, will be forced to dramatically scale back their operations, and that means not having a ride to work for thousands of riders.

In the coming days, I plan to reintroduce the Transit System Flexibility Act. This bill will allow local officials flexibility in the way they spend their Federal funds and save them from having to shut down important bus routes. And it will not cost any additional taxpayer money.

Madam Speaker, local officials know their own needs best. This is a sensible solution to an urgent problem, and I hope my colleagues who represent one of these 110 small transit systems will cosponsor the bill.

DEMOCRAT PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL IS BAD MEDICINE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, it seems that the Democrats have a one-size-fits-all solution for all the issues facing our country: Big Government. According to the Democrats, the best thing

for the American people is to involve the government in every aspect of our lives instead of letting citizens decide for themselves what is right for them.

An example of this is their current proposal to let the government, quote unquote, negotiate drug prices for prescription drugs covered by Medicare. No one will argue with lower drug prices, but that is not what this bill will accomplish. What the Democrats don't tell you is that this bill will lead to fewer choices of prescription drugs for our Nation's seniors and will hurt community pharmacies, as it will increase mail order prescriptions.

In short, Madam Speaker, this bill is bad medicine, as is the notion of Big Government that the Democrats are pushing on the American people.

JUDGES HALL OF SHAME

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, judges have the public duty to protect children from sexual deviants, including those from Vermont.

Mark Hulett molested a 6-year-old girl for 4 years. Reports indicate he even had a history of abusing women. But when he went to court for the child molesting charge, Judge Edward "Cushy" Cashman of Vermont put the molester in jail for only 60 days and ordered some "Kum-Ba-Yah" type of treatment.

The crime against this little girl is a human rights violation. The judge condoned the violation by not punishing the criminal. Has the judge made Vermont a safe sanctuary State for child molesters?

Almost everyone in America knows, except Judge Cushy, that you cannot cure child rapists. You keep them away from kids. You lock them up in jail. Why do you think we build those prisons? Judge Cushy should be held accountable and removed from the bench, then given sensitivity training on the effects of being raped as a child.

Justice will only be served when judges are as concerned about the molested as they are about the molesters, but for now the Judges Hall of Shame has a brand new member.

And that's just the way it is.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

OBSERVING THE BIRTHDAY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to

the resolution (H. Res. 61) observing the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., and encouraging the people of the United States to observe the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 61

Whereas Reverend Doctor Martin Luther King, Junior, was born January 15, 1929;

Whereas Dr. King attended segregated public schools in Georgia, and began attending Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia, at the age of 15;

Whereas in February of 1948, Dr. King was ordained in the Christian ministry at the age of 19 at Ebenezer Baptist Church, in Atlanta, Georgia, and became Assistant Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church;

Whereas Dr. King was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1948 from Morehouse College, a Bachelor of Divinity degree in 1951 from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in theology in 1955 from Boston University;

Whereas in Boston, Massachusetts, Dr. King met Coretta Scott, his life partner and fellow civil rights activist;

Whereas on June 18, 1953, Dr. King and Coretta Scott were married and later had two sons and two daughters;

Whereas in 1954, Dr. King accepted the call of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, and was pastor from September 1954 to November 1959, when he resigned to move back to Atlanta to lead the Southern Christian Leadership Conference;

Whereas Dr. King led the Montgomery, Alabama, bus boycott for 381 days to protest the arrest of Rosa Parks and the segregation of the bus system of Montgomery, during which time Dr. King was arrested and the home of Dr. King was bombed;

Whereas Dr. King responded to arrests and violence with non-violence and courage in the face of hatred;

Whereas the Montgomery bus boycott was the first great nonviolent civil rights demonstration of contemporary times in the United States;

Whereas on December 21, 1956, the Supreme Court declared laws requiring segregation on buses unconstitutional;

Whereas between 1957 and 1968, Dr. King traveled more than 6,000,000 miles, spoke more than 2,500 times, and wrote five books and numerous articles supporting efforts around the country to end injustice and bring about social change and desegregation;

Whereas from 1960 until his death in 1968, Dr. King was co-pastor with his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church;

Whereas on August 28, 1963, Dr. King led the March on Washington, D.C., the largest rally of the civil rights movement, during which, from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and before a crowd of more than 200,000 people, Dr. King delivered his famous "I Have A Dream" speech, one of the classic orations in American history;

Whereas Dr. King was a champion of non-violence, fervently advocated nonviolent resistance as the strategy to end segregation and racial discrimination in America, and in 1964, at age 35, became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition for his efforts;

Whereas through his work and reliance on nonviolent protest, Dr. King was instrumental in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965;

Whereas the work of Dr. King created a basis of understanding and respect and helped communities, and the United States as a whole, to act cooperatively and coura-

geously to restore tolerance, justice, and equality between people;

Whereas on the evening of April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead sanitation workers in protest against low wages and intolerable working conditions;

Whereas Dr. King dedicated his life to securing the fundamental principles of the United States of liberty and justice for all United States citizens;

Whereas Dr. King was the leading civil rights advocate of his time, spearheading the civil rights movement in the United States during the 1950's and 1960's and earning world-wide recognition as an eloquent and articulate spokesperson for equality;

Whereas in the face of hatred and violence, Dr. King preached a doctrine of nonviolence and civil disobedience to combat segregation, discrimination, and racial injustice, and believed that people have the moral capacity to care for other people;

Whereas Dr. King awakened the conscience and consciousness of the United States and used his message of hope to bring people together to build the "Beloved Community", a community of justice, at peace with itself;

Whereas in 1968, Representative John Conyers introduced legislation to establish the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. as a Federal holiday;

Whereas Coretta Scott King led the massive campaign to establish Dr. King's birthday as a Federal holiday;

Whereas in 1983, Congress passed and President Ronald Reagan signed legislation creating the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, which is now observed in more than 100 countries;

Whereas Dr. King's wife and indispensable partner, Coretta Scott King, was a woman of quiet courage and great dignity who marched alongside her husband and became an international advocate for peace and human rights;

Whereas Coretta Scott King, who had been actively engaged in the civil rights movement as a politically and socially conscious young woman, continued after her husband's death to lead the United States toward greater justice and equality, traveling the world on behalf of racial and economic justice, peace and non-violence, women's and children's rights, gay rights, religious freedom, full employment, health care, and education until her death on January 30, 2006;

Whereas the values of faith, compassion, courage, truth, justice, and non-violence that guided Dr. and Mrs. King's dream for America will be celebrated and preserved by the Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial on the National Mall between the Lincoln Memorial and the Jefferson Memorial and in the new National Museum of African American History and Culture that will be located in the shadow of the Washington Monument; and

Whereas Dr. King's actions and leadership made the United States a better place and the American people a better people: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) observes the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr.;

(2) pledges to advance the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to—

(A) observe the Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the life of Dr. King;

(B) commemorate the legacy of Dr. King, so that, as Dr. King hoped, "one day this Nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be