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No. 9

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 17, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN B. LARSON 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: Almighty God, You brought us to the light of a new day. Keep us attuned to Your Word the whole day through.

Do not allow us to bend to every sinful inclination which leads only to self-centeredness and blindness to the needs of others; rather, may all our thoughts, conversations and decisions bring us closer to serving the needs of our constituents and the common good of all Your people. For You have called us to serve in 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 Indiana (Mr. PENCE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PENCE 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 pursuant to Public Law 106-170, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, after consultation with the Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Finance, announces the appointment of the following individual to serve as a member of the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Advisory Panel:

Mr. David L. Miller of South Dakota. The message also announced that pursuant to sections 42 and 43 of title 20, United States Code, the Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, appoints the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD) as a member of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, vice the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. Frist).

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 106-398, as amended by Public Law 108-7, in accordance with the qualifications specified under section 1238(b)(3)(E) of Public Law 106-398, and upon the recommendation of the Majority Leader, in consultation with the chairmen of the Senate Committee on Armed Services and the Senate Committee on Finance, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints the following individual to the United States-China Economic Security Review Commission:

Mr. Peter Videnieks of Virginia, for a term beginning January 1, 2007 and expiring December 31, 2008, vice Patrick A. Mulloy.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 85-874, as

amended, the Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, appoints the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts:

The Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN).

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. KELLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss student loan interest rates. As the ranking member on the Higher Education Subcommittee, I believe in higher Pell Grants, lower student loan interest rates, and a leveling off of tuition.

If you ask a college student, would you rather have a 6.8 percent loan or a 3.4 percent loan, he will tell you 3.4 percent. If you ask him, would you rather have a 3.4 percent student loan that you have to pay back or a Pell Grant to help you go to college that you will never pay back, they will say Pell Grants.

The Democrats should have taken the \$6 billion in spending and invested it in Pell Grants to help students on the front end instead of only helping those college graduates on the back end.

Education should not be a partisan issue; no one party has all the answers. Today, I will show a little good faith and vote for this bill. Tomorrow, I hope the Democrats show some good faith and listen to people like me when it comes to Pell Grants.

LET'S SUPPORT H.R. 5

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, as a State senator in Tennessee, I worked for

□ 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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more than 20 years to pass a State lottery with proceeds benefiting education programs. The primary recipients of the proceeds are college students. In addition to keeping Tennessee's best and brightest in Tennessee, the purpose of the Lottery HOPE scholarship program is to provide students with a means to focus on their studies rather than having to take a second job to pay their tuition, and also to permit them to enter the workforce without the burden of student loans.

Tuition has risen sharply at both public and private universities, particularly at public institutions; interest rates on student loans have risen as well. This has been an onerous burden on students and their families, and for many Americans it has left them out in the cold in terms of pursuing a college education.

For the U.S. to be able to compete for jobs in the world, we must have an educated workforce. We are facing a shortage of up to 12 million college-educated workers by 2020. We need to remove roadblocks to education. There is nothing more important than the education of our citizenry, because it impacts every facet of our society.

I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join the Democratic majority, join with me in supporting H.R. 5 as part of the 100 hours. Pass this student loan reduction bill.

PELOSI STEWARDSHIP

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment with the broken promises of the Democratic leadership. I had high hopes that the promise of unlimited amendments and bipartisanship would prevail in the 110th Congress, but there have been no signs of these promises.

From the beginning, hypocrisy and corruption have reared their ugly heads. The minimum wage bill is touted as a massive relief for the poor, while only 2.5 percent of the population are actually making the minimum wage. This bill was nothing more than a kickback to unions, who use the Federal minimum wage to negotiate their salaries. This increase is a whopping 41 percent over 26 months; not to mention that in the bill American Samoa was exempt, a place where there are two canning plants for Del Monte Corporation, headquartered in San Francisco.

The pledge for open debate and unlimited amendments has been completely ignored. Democrats' bills have been rammed through without opportunity for amendments. So many promises made, all of them broken.

Mr. Speaker, this 100-hour agenda is a pure sham of political showmanship. The Democrats have distorted the North Carolina State motto, which is, "To be rather than to seem." While

these bills seem worthwhile, they are nothing more than window dressing for political gain.

PELL GRANTS

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, here we have some born-again student advocates on the Republican side of the aisle. They are criticizing our legislation to cut student financial aid interest rates in half. Now, I might understand that because they just doubled student financial aid interest rates 1 year ago to pay for tax cuts for wealthy investors, so I guess they already took a position on that and they don't want to have to be forced to vote to provide help to students.

Then they say, well, no, we want to do Pell Grants. Well, you were in charge for 12 years; why didn't you increase Pell Grants during the 12 years you were in charge? We are going to cut student financial aid interest rates in half and take on the big banks, and we are going to increase funding for Pell Grants, something the majority failed to do in 12 years.

THE WAY FORWARD IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PENCE. Last week, President George W. Bush outlined a new strategy and new tactics in our war in Iraq; he called it, "The Way Forward." Sadly, many in Congress and many around the country want to go backwards; to redeploy, to undo our military commitment to freedom in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I understand this temptation, even though I disagree with it. It is always tempting to go backwards, always tempting to want to go back before loss and hardship and war. The Old Book tells us otherwise, reading, "Forgetting what is behind, I press on."

Winston Churchill gave us this counsel: "One ought never to turn one's back on a threatened danger and try to run away from it; if you do that, you will double the danger. But if you meet it promptly and without flinching, you will reduce the danger by half." So said Winston Churchill.

I support our Commander in Chief. I support our new way forward. We must come together as a Nation. We must decide as a Nation not to see freedom fail in Iraq.

SUPPORT THE COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the passage of the College Student Relief Act of 2007. This legislation will help families with the cost of college.

Let's make college affordable and accessible for all students.

In California, the average student is graduating with over \$15,000 in debt. Students are relying more on student loans. The cost to attend a 4-year public university has increased by 41 percent since the year 2001. Students can't afford to finish because the costs are too high. This legislation will help over 200,000 students in my home State alone. It also will give an opportunity for students to fulfill the American Dream in obtaining higher education.

We must do something about this now. It's good for our students and working families. It's good for our Nation and our future.

Let's support this legislation.

IN SUPPORT OF INCREASING PELL GRANTS

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of increasing Pell Grants, which we have done over the past 12 years, contrary to what we heard earlier. This action would have the greatest impact on helping lower-income students afford a college education.

Later today, the House will consider legislation that is intended to increase college access by temporarily reducing subsidized student loan interest rates, a helpful measure. But I suggest to my colleagues that an average 18-year-old student will not base whether they can go to college on whether their percentage of interest rate is 6.8 today or 6.14 for the 2007 year. What would make a difference is the amount of aid, either grants or loans, that is immediately available to help them afford school. To make college accessible, we should focus on what we can do now for students, not when they graduate.

Regardless of how you feel today, we need to work together on a bipartisan basis to increase Pell Grants to ensure that they are sufficient to help students to afford a higher education. This would be a very effective way to help students from low- and middle-income families afford college.

SUPPORT THE COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT

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

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong support for the College Student Relief Act, legislation that will cut interest rates in half over the next 5 years.

We live in an information-driven world where a college education is more vital than ever. Yet financial barriers will prevent millions of American high school graduates from realizing their full potential and getting the