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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. ALTMIRE).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 14, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JASON ALTMIRE 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, early Founders of the Nation on this day in 1777 adopted a flag to symbolize their solidarity in defense and in belief of a new type of Republic. They selected stars and stripes to speak both of colonial individuality as State rights drawn upon a broader field of Federal identity. Our Pledge as a people means even more in today's world on this Flag Day.

Lord, fill us with promising hope and peaceful unity as we stare at the starry sky. Enable us to reach out further and further in the broad bands of freedom and compassion to fellow citizens of this world most in need.

Lord, may this flag, before which we stand, be a mirror of this people and a sign of promise to others that equal justice under governing law assures progressive victory over egoism and evil, both in times of prosperity and adversity, in times of war, and peace.

In our allegiance we witness to "one Nation under God" as a promise of what others in this world can yet become. For this, we Americans stand together today, proud and strong, 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 Ohio (Mr. HOBSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOBSON 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 10 one-minute speeches on each side.

REPUBLICANS DELAY ACTION ON POPULAR MEASURES

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

Mr. CLEAVER. Mr. Speaker, I am sure that people around the country have been wondering what was going on here for the past couple of days. My concern is that the people in Missouri's 5th District are quite concerned about homeland security and many of the issues that we must resolve.

For example, there has been a delay on the construction of a fence on our southern border. If this were in a court, it would be called obstruction of construction. It is a problem that is being caused by this unnecessary delay initiated by the other party.

This is a good bill. It had bipartisan support in the Appropriations Committee, but leaders on the other side of the aisle are choosing to delay things with political games. And so my hope is that from this day forward that both sides will work together to get a solid Homeland Security bill approved, as the American public deserves.

COMPLAINTS DEPARTMENT IS NOT GOOD ENOUGH

(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 love my colleague from Missouri, appreciate his leading our prayer breakfast during the week; but he is wrong. This is not a delaying tactic. We have been bringing things out into the open with this bill, with our discussions of the Homeland Security bill, and he knows and we know that the bill does not have to be approved until September because it doesn't go into effect until October so we are not delaying any fence building.

The discussions we have been having on the floor have been tremendously enlightening, as the Republicans have fought literally through the night to restore openness to our government. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle have raised these complaints that we are distracting from the real issue.

The debate on making earmarks public before we vote on the bill is the real issue. I can think of nothing more important than defending the rights of Members of this House to contest potentially wasteful spending requests. But as we have highlighted for the past couple of days, the majority wants to kill that right and instead replace it

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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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with a complaints department and massive slush funds. A complaints department is not good enough. My constituents, and every American, deserve to know what will be in this bill before we vote on it and telling us to write a letter to the committee when to contest an egregious earmark once they are announced merely amounts to wallpapering over the core issue here.

We need openness. And the more my colleagues in the majority fight to keep earmarks secret, the more Americans will see them as the party of hypocrisy.

OPPOSE COLOMBIAN TRADE AGREEMENT

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in strong opposition to a free trade agreement with Colombia. The Colombian Government has ties with paramilitary organizations and international criminal networks. Each year more unionists are killed in Colombia than the rest of the world combined, many at the hands of country paramilitaries. Yet Colombia is not willing to investigate these murders and prosecute perpetrators.

In 2006, seventy-two trade unionists were assassinated. The perpetrators continue to enjoy 98 percent impunity. Colombia's labor laws also do not conform with ILO recommendations. A trade agreement with Colombia, in my opinion, could cost more U.S. jobs and increase our debt. It would further impoverish rural communities in Colombia and reduce access by Colombians to new medicines.

A U.S. trade policy should promote a democracy based on protection of fundamental human rights, and not a race to the bottom. I urge my colleagues to reject a trade agreement with Colombia.

UNDERAGE COLLEGE DRINKING

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, binge drinking is the silent health epidemic attacking America's underage college students. It is defined as five consecutive drinks for men and four consecutive drinks for women. According to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, 48 percent of college students state they are binge drinkers. Parents and college communities are rightfully concerned.

However, some universities ignore the problem and, in fact, are complicit in this drinking binge. Middlebury College in Vermont claims to have the cure for binge drinking: lower the minimum drinking age from 21 to 18. The former college president proposes that lowering the drinking age will encour-

age students to drink responsibly. That is an irresponsible statement. This will only encourage younger people to get drunk.

The answer lies in admitting the problem, enforcing underage drinking laws, and educating students on the effect of binge drinking. Lowering the minimum drinking age just adds fuel to the epidemic and gives students a legal license to drink. Colleges cannot consent to the binge drinking by ignoring the problem and making outlandish statements.

And that's just the way it is.

CLEAN ENERGY REVOLUTION

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, next week the House will take the second step in the clean energy revolution. The new Congress a couple months ago passed a bill, the first step, to reel back \$14 billion of tax giveaways to the oil companies and create a fund for clean energy; but the second step starts next week.

When we take that step, we ought to be invested with the same ambition and innovative spirit of these companies that are doing great work around America, like A123 Battery Company that is making a battery so you get 150 miles a gallon in a plug-in hybrid; the Imperial Fuel Company, the biggest biodiesel supplier in the western hemisphere; the RAMGEN Company, making a compression technology to burn clean coal cleanly.

We ought to be invested with the same spirit of innovation that we had when John F. Kennedy stood behind me in 1961 and said we are going to do the Moon. So next week when we start, we should not hear the voices of timidity saying that we cannot improve our fuel mileage. We need a giant leap for mankind with innovation. Americans are a people with can-do spirit, and we will do it next week.

OPEN AND HONEST?

(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, I am intrigued by the other side's definition of what constitutes "open and honest." After all, that was their pledge to America last year: if given control of Congress, they would make it the most open and honest Congress ever.

So how has it been going? They started their new openness campaign by not allowing a single amendment to be offered on legislation for nearly a month. That's right. That's right. No amendments from Republicans.

Not long after that, they had threatened to clamp down on a basic right of the minority, the motion to recommit that hasn't been changed since 1822.

And now that appropriations season is officially under way, more progress.

The Democrats decided to take the earmark process behind closed doors and away from the public eye.

Closed rules, threatening basic minority rights, secret slush funds for earmark spending. Mr. Speaker, these tactics seem rather closed and deceptive to be taking place in the most "open and honest" House in history.

ENERGY AND WATER APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, during this year's appropriations process, Democrats have brought forward funding bills that allow the Federal Government to meet the needs of the American people while adhering to fiscal responsibility and balancing the budget in the next 5 years.

One example of this is the 2008 Energy and Water Appropriations bill which was supposed to be on the floor today, but it has been delayed by the Republican Party. This legislation works to force the twin concerns of global climate change and the national energy crisis that is weighing on our country. It includes over \$3 billion for researching climate change and the technologies to help slow it down, and invests in renewable energy programs that both reduce greenhouse gases and help our Nation meet its energy needs.

I hope my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will join us in moving this important process forward so we can produce positive results for the American people.

ONLINE PREDATORS THREATEN CHILDREN

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, last night Michael Macalindong of Fox Lake, Illinois, was charged by Federal authorities with luring a 15-year-old minor to his home. This happens too often in America.

What is new is that Macalindong used a social networking site, Facebook.com, to attack a minor child. Congress can do something about this. Sexual predators now use MySpace.com and Facebook.com to attack not dozens of children but thousands.

In the last Congress, we overwhelmingly passed the Deleting Online Predators Act by a vote of 400-15, but this act stalled in the Senate. The House should now take up this bill again, now with over five dozen cosponsors, to protect children.

The danger posed by predators online in Facebook and MySpace have turned those sites into a virtual hunting ground. This was not part of my childhood, but it is now part of growing up