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No. 14

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 24, 2007.

I hereby appoint the Honorable EMANUEL CLEAVER 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 of history, and ever-present to those in need, we come to You in prayer to dedicate the work of this government to the common good of Your people, and to give glory to Your holy name.

May the words of Your prophet Isaiah ring true in this place at this time in history:

“A strong city have we. The Lord has set up walls and ramparts to protect us. Open wide the gates to Your presence and let in a nation that is just, one that keeps faith.

“A nation of firm purpose You will keep in peace. There will be peace if it places its trust in You. Because the Lord is an eternal rock, trust in the Lord 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 gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN 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 and a concurrent resolution of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 475. An act to revise the composition of the House of Representatives Page Board to equalize the number of members representing the majority and minority parties and to include a member representing the parents of pages and a member representing former pages, and for other purposes.

H. Con. Res. 41. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches on both sides.

LIEUTENANT COLONEL DAVID CANEGATA III AND SERGEANT FLOYD JAMES LAKE

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, it is with a heavy heart that I rise this morning to grieve, along with the residents of my entire district, over the loss of two members of the Virgin Is-

lands National Guard who were lost when the Black Hawk helicopter they were on was shot down in Iraq on Saturday.

We thank God for them, their professionalism, dedication and their service, Lieutenant Colonel David Canegata III and Sergeant Floyd James Lake. And we thank God for the over 400 soldiers, men and women, who have served in this war, including five others who also made the ultimate sacrifice. We pray for their families and for the day that we will bring all of our soldiers home.

And so, Mr. Speaker, especially now, I am forced to ask on their behalf and on behalf of all of the people of the Virgin Islands who have sent our loved ones to every war from the Revolutionary to this in higher per capita numbers than most States, why it is that some would seek to deny us an even limited vote in the Committee of the Whole.

These brave men died in support of extending democracy in the Middle East. Every Member of this body should vote to extend democracy here at home, to support your colleagues and fellow Americans who happen to live in the District and territories, and we should have a unanimous vote on H. Res. 78.

THE TOWN STALKER

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Justin Thurber was a deviant that liked to secretly sneak, slither around, and follow women who rebuffed him. He tracked them like one would track an animal for prey. He did not like being told no.

For the young women in a small Kansas college town of Arkansas City, Thurber's predatory actions were well

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known. He was the town stalker, the town weirdo. Jodi Sanderholm was one of his victims. When Jodi disappeared, her college friends knew who was responsible.

On January 5 of this year, Thurber had enough of being ignored by Jodi. He kidnapped her; he drove her to a remote, lonely, desolate area in the county. He raped her; he strangled her to death. He covered up his dastardly murder by hiding her body in the remoteness of the woods and he dumped her car in the lake. Jodi died, and the last person on Earth she saw was not her family, but the town stalker.

Mr. Speaker, nearly 1.4 million people are stalked each year, and most of them women. Intimidating a woman by following her around and showing up outside her home, work, and school is not romantic, it is a perverted crime. Hopefully the good people of Kansas will put this stalker in the ground.

And that's just the way it is.

BUSH HEALTH INSURANCE PROPOSAL

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, last night President Bush unveiled a health insurance proposal that is nothing more than a tax hike on middle-class Americans. The President's plan would provide tax breaks to Americans who purchase their own medical insurance and would pay for it by taxing so-called high-priced health insurance plans.

And just who is the President referring to when he talks about those supposed high-priced insurance plans? Paul Krugman of the New York Times writes, "We're not talking about the wealthy, we're talking about ordinary workers who manage to negotiate better-than-average health plans." That's right. In the same year that the President is once again submitting a budget making his tax cuts permanent, tax cuts that go overwhelmingly to the richest of Americans, he is proposing to shift more of the cost of health onto working Americans.

Mr. Speaker, this is not the way to solve our Nation's health care problems. This Democratic House will work and look at creative ways to reduce the number of uninsured without taxing the health care benefits of middle-class workers.

SCHOOLS, COUNTIES SUFFER WHILE CONGRESS FAILS TO ACT

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, the failure of Congress to reauthorize and fund the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act amounts to a breach of faith to more than 600 forested counties across America.

For rural Lake County, Oregon, no stranger to economic challenges, this means 93 percent of the county's road budget has vanished. With 709 miles of road to maintain during rugged winters, basic maintenance and sure passage for school buses and emergency vehicles will be crippled.

County Commissioner Brad Winters says, "Without these dollars, the destruction of our roads through lack of repair will be inevitable and we will be back to dirt."

Failure to reauthorize delivers a blow to our schools, too. School District Superintendent Judy Graham put it this way: "Our past challenges have made it difficult to offer even limited services. Losing county payments funding will devastate the environment our children rely upon to learn and grow."

My colleagues, Congress must pass H.R. 17 and keep the Federal Government's promise to timbered communities. Time is running out.

RETURNING FREEDOM TO AMERICAN WORKERS

(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. Mr. Speaker, today I will reintroduce the National Right to Work Act. This bill seeks to end compulsory union dues and return to American workers their unalienable freedom of choice.

As ranking member of the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections, this is an issue with which I am actively involved. No American should be forced to pay union dues to get or keep a job. Ironically, even proponents of compulsory unionism acknowledge that coercion is the central pillar of our current Federal labor law.

By simply repealing certain provisions of the National Labor Relations Act and the Railway Labor Act, we can abolish forced union dues.

I am pleased to introduce this bill with 51 of our colleagues, and I urge you to join us in increasing the freedom and prosperity of American workers.

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

DELEGATE VOTING IS UNFAIR

(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, "The Democrats are stretching the Constitution beyond its limits and inviting further partisan abuse." Mr. Speaker, those aren't my words, that is a direct quote from a 1993 USA Today editorial. That was the last time House Democrats moved to give congressional voting privileges to the Delegates of the U.S. territories, and today they will attempt the same thing.

While the other side will cloak this move in the language of inclusion and

fairness, make no mistake, this is a power grab. Democrats are simply looking for more votes on this floor. They will say this is fair and just, but keep in mind that four of the five U.S. territories are exempt from U.S. Federal income tax laws.

What is fair or just about letting untaxed Delegates vote on tax policy for the rest of Americans who do pay taxes? The American public should not be fooled by my friends on the other side of the aisle today. This is nothing more than a thinly veiled power grab, and it comes at the expense of the U.S. Constitution.

EAGLE SCOUT KNAVENSHUE

(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 to extend congratulations to Jeremiah Kent Knavenshue, who recently accomplished the highest rank in boy scouting, becoming an Eagle Scout on October 4, 2006.

Jeremiah achieved a new title at the end of a 7-year career in Boy Scout Troop 88, which is chartered by the Elkins United Methodist Church. He served as an assistant patrol leader and bugler, and was elected patrol leader.

Jeremiah performed many community service projects, including Adopt-a-Highway and other community beautification projects. Boy Scout Troop 88 also organized a "Scouting For Food" project at Elkins, which is a national Boy Scout activity where members of the troop collect food donations from their community to allocate to food banks. For his Eagle Scout project, he cleared and finished an area in Riverbend Park for the public to use.

Jeremiah is a student at Elkins High School, where he is president of the Future Farmers of America chapter. He is a member of the National Honor Society and is on the wrestling team and participates in the band.

I am proud to recognize Jeremiah on his accomplishments. Randolph County and the State of West Virginia are fortunate to have him as a leader and a volunteer in his community.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBER TO BOARD OF REGENTS OF THE SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to sections 5580 and 5581 of the Revised Statutes (20 U.S.C. 42-43), and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Member of the House to the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution:

Mr. SAM JOHNSON, Texas.