



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

No. 153

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 25, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ELLEN O. TAUSCHER 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, Your Divine Providence has inspired people to seek elected office and serve the public. Still others come as volunteers or become staffers who find work in government. Most come because they wish to make a difference. The desire You place in their hearts moves them beyond self to help shape a better America and recreate the face of the Earth along the ideals and hopes of Your kingdom.

Not content to simply "go through the motions" or "settle for the status quo," they are restless to seek for something better, something greater for the American people as a whole.

Such patriots make themselves greater by pursuing something greater than self, by listening to others. They step into the forces of contradictory causes, try to reconcile differences, find the common ground, and make unity amidst diversity a living reality day by day.

We praise You, Lord, for those who offer their minds and their hearts, as well as the work of their hands, to make government of the people work for the people. Their dedication and ef-

forts move us as Americans to bless and thank You, 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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas 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. 6370. An act to transfer excess Federal property administered by the Coast Guard to the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians.

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

H.R. 928. An act to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to enhance the independence of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2840. An act to establish a liaison with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to expedite naturalization applications filed by members of the Armed Forces and to establish a deadline for processing such applications.

S. 3550. An act to designate a portion of the Rappahannock River in the Commonwealth of Virginia as the "John W. Warner Rapids".

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 10 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION DETERIORATING IN VIETNAM

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring urgent attention to the deteriorating human rights conditions in the country of Vietnam.

Most recently, Vietnamese students and bloggers have been harassed and detained for peacefully voicing their concerns about the Vietnamese government's policies. It is becoming increasingly evident that the Government of Vietnam is not living up to its commitment to honor and to protect human rights.

This month, over 3,000 Vietnamese Catholics were harassed by Hanoi's police with tear gas, electric batons and other repressive measures while attending a peaceful Thai Ha prayer vigil. We are continuing to see more and more activists being detained and imprisoned for exercising their freedom of speech, religion and expression, rights that are guaranteed under the International Covenants on Civil and Political Rights.

☐ 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H9871

This week, I, along with six other Members, sent a letter to President Nguyen Minh Triet to express outrage over Vietnam's ongoing human rights violations, and to urge the Government of Vietnam to stop using violence against its own people.

I encourage my colleagues to continue addressing this serious issue and speaking out for those in Vietnam who are putting their lives in danger in the name of freedom.

TAXPAYERS DESERVE ANSWERS AND ACCOUNTABILITY ON WALL STREET BAILOUT

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, the news on this Wall Street bailout has me fuming. Taxpayers want, need, and deserve answers and accountability. The Treasury Secretary should not have the authority to spend \$700 billion with zero oversight.

Meanwhile, a provision in the bill says that banks that bought Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac preferred stock get better tax treatment than an individual who bought preferred stock. That is wrong. Why shouldn't banks be held responsible for their mistakes?

I am not sure this is the best way to fix the problem. We need to discuss serious alternatives before we ask Americans to shoulder billions in additional debt.

Hundreds of my constituents have called outraged at this Wall Street rescue. They want to know when we are going to bail them out.

I am outraged too. Taxpayers deserve better from America.

REJECT FUNDING FOR ABSTINENCE-ONLY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, 750,000 American teenagers will become pregnant this year. This is clear evidence of a serious problem in our country. According to the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, teen parents are less likely to complete their education and more likely to depend on welfare.

Unfortunately, for the last several years the Bush administration has insisted we waste money on abstinence-only education programs that the GAO has deemed ineffective. In fact, a University of Washington study revealed that students who receive comprehensive sex education are less likely to become teen parents than those who receive abstinence-only information.

Not surprisingly, my home State of California, which rejects title V abstinence-only funding, has a teen birth rate that is lower than the national average.

Madam Speaker, we need to teach our children commonsense decision-making skills and not withhold vitally important health information from them. I urge my colleagues to join me in rejecting any future funding for abstinence-only education. Instead, let's spend it where we will see real results.

A SHOOT-FROM-THE-HIP DECISION?

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, they tell us that we are facing financial Armageddon. They tell us we must buy our way out of this. They tell us we must act now or the country will fall into the abyss.

The plan? A \$700 billion bailout will be given to the very people who are responsible for this financial mess: Wall Street money grabbers. And to top it off, the idea for this bailout is from the same financial schemers who themselves are responsible for this chaos.

We in Congress have to resolve three issues first: What is the problem? What caused the problem? And what is the solution?

We are still debating what the problem is and what caused it. Until we figure that out, we should not come up with a shoot-from-the-hip, quick-draw decision on what to do.

We have spent more time in congressional hearings on steroids in baseball than we have in discussing this \$700 billion ripoff of the American people.

Before we strong-arm American citizens into paying for the sins of New York City financial markets, we need to do more investigation. Then we can come up with the right thing to do and make sound judgments—sound judgments that the so-called experts from Wall Street don't make.

And that's just the way it is.

SERGEANT RAFAEL PERALTA, AN IMMIGRANT AND A TRUE AMERICAN HERO

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I stand here to honor a true American hero, Sergeant Rafael Peralta, an immigrant that made the ultimate sacrifice for this country, using his body as a shield to protect his fellow marines from a grenade blast.

Peralta's story is an example of the heroes that love this Nation. For his disregard of personal safety and heroism, his commander recommended him to be awarded the Medal of Honor. This was not the case. Sergeant Peralta was awarded the Navy Cross, which is also an extraordinary feat.

However, his sacrifice merits that of the Medal of Honor. That is why I have joined my colleagues in asking the President to review this case.

Sergeant Peralta is a true example of how much many immigrants in Amer-

ica love this country. No one can deny Peralta's love for this country, having joined the United States Marine Corps right after becoming a legal permanent resident.

Recognizing the sacrifice of Peralta, America cannot turn her back on immigrants.

I urge my colleagues to support comprehensive immigration reform.

WE NEED A CAUTIOUS AND COMPETENT APPROACH

(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, hardworking Americans understand that our Nation's financial markets are very fragile. The American people are rightfully concerned when they see a \$700 billion price tag on a plan to address this crisis. They are hesitant to give the Federal Government an extraordinarily large amount of taxpayer dollars, especially before the right questions and the right concerns have been given their due process.

This Nation has a long history of balancing the needs of a market economy and the realities of government involvement in those markets. We have weathered our fair share of storms as well. Before Congress endorses a multi-billion dollar effort to address our financial situation, it would serve this Nation and the wallets of those we represent not to forget that history.

We need a full review of different alternatives to a simple bailout. Otherwise, we risk placing a daunting financial burden on our children's futures.

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

TAXPAYERS BEING ASKED TO PAY FOR A GRAND OLD PARTY ON WALL STREET

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, in somber terms last night, President Bush described a crisis as if it had emerged on Wall Street from outer space. Never accepting any personal responsibility, this is the man who chased the sheriff off Wall Street while it had a party, a grand old party.

That infamous Republican earmark, that Bridge to Nowhere up in Alaska, it carried a hefty price tag, \$223 million. Well, what President Bush is now asking Americans to do is to pay for the equivalent of 4,500 Alaskan bridges, a \$1 trillion gold-plated, diamond-encrusted bridge to Wall Street.

And our job here in Congress is to ask, is this just another Bridge to Nowhere, and ask why is it that the party-goers don't have to pay for the party? Why should American taxpayers and future generations of Americans