



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2009

No. 30

House of Representatives

The House met at 9 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,
February 13, 2009.

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: To open the Bible, Lord, and just read a few lines offers such consolation. The message may not be advice or command an action. It is just rewarding to know You are not silent. You have words to speak. I simply need to take the time, open the Book, and listen.

If I open my heart and listen intently, I can hear Your love behind every word. I sense Your presence, and it is enough for me. 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 Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KUCINICH 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 five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VOTE FOR THE STIMULUS

(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, we learned today that more Americans are applying for jobless benefits. We also learned that, according to Moody's Economy.com, that the measure that is before us may not create as many jobs as we had hoped, perhaps only 2.2 million jobs by the end of 2010, leaving unemployment hovering around 10 percent.

Look, I understand the limitations of this bill, but we have to recognize something: Government spending is stimulative. We have to stimulate our economy. We have to do everything we can right now to try to lift America up.

Now we can debate the details of this bill, and they should be debated, but one thing for sure, we need to pass this stimulus. And we are probably going to have to come back here and pass another stimulus, which I hope will focus on putting millions of people back to work, rebuilding America, rebuilding and building a new energy infrastructure, and making massive investments and moving our health care system in a new direction. Vote for the stimulus.

SAMMY MAHAN: "OPT ME OUT"

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, this morning I was talking to my friend Sammy Mahan. He is from Baytown, Texas. He is a wrecker driver, and has five wreckers under his service. He was asking me about the stimulus bill. And he said, "How are we going to pay for it?" And I said, "Well, we don't have the money, so we are probably going to have to borrow it maybe from the Chinese. Eventually there is going to be a tax increase."

And he said, "How much is it going to cost?" And I said, "\$790 billion." Then he said, "No. How much is it going to cost me?" I said, "It is about \$10,000 per family, is what they say."

Then he said, "Well, I don't have \$10,000; and unlike you government boys, I can't spend money I don't have. So I want you to opt me out of this deal." And I said, "What do you mean, 'opt me out'?" He replied, "Give me a form. I want to sign it. You take \$10,000 off that \$790 billion, and I don't want to pay it because I don't have the money."

Madam Speaker, I suspect that if most Americans read this bill and they realized how much it was going to cost them personally, they would want to opt out of this deal. We need to come up with a plan, but this isn't the deal. And since people I represent can't opt out, I am going to opt out for them.

And that's just the way it is.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PACKAGE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, last month the unemployment rate increased from 7.2 percent to 7.6 percent. If these increases continue, we will hit double digits this summer and would

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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reach our highest unemployment number since the Great Depression. But this unemployment number does not tell the complete story.

Last month alone, 731,000 people simply gave up looking for work out of frustration with the lack of employment prospects, and today 13.9 percent of Americans, or more than 21 million of our neighbors, have either given up looking for a job or are working in a job that is no longer full time. These workers are underemployed.

These numbers are a stark reminder of how important it is for us to get these people back to work, and that is why we need to pass the economic recovery package today without delay.

Madam Speaker, we have an opportunity to create or save 3.5 million jobs. Let's do the right thing and get these people back to work.

THE JOBS BILL HAS TURNED INTO A SPENDING BILL

(Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, a couple of months ago, the talk from congressional leadership was to produce legislation that was about providing jobs for America's families and small businesses, with lots of opportunities for our needed investments.

Sadly, what was supposed to be a jobs bill has turned into a spending bill that is going to provide about a \$7.70 tax break for workers while adding \$9,400 of debt, plus or minus some, with interest, for each family that is going to have to be paid by our children and grandchildren. I think if you have got one person working in that family, it is going to take a few years of saving up all those tax credits in order to pay for this bill.

Plus, unfortunately, we still never got guarantees that the billions of dollars worth of automobiles, buses, furniture, computers, and everything else here even has to be made in the United States of America. I am not very happy about that, and I don't think Americans should be, either.

RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, we just can't ignore the facts. The facts are, we lost 600,000 jobs last month and the prior month and the prior month, and some 3.6 million jobs last year. Banks have failed. We have had a real contraction in the economy. My friends on the Republican side of the aisle, their position is, "Just say no. We like the status quo."

We can't afford the status quo anymore, ladies and gentlemen. We must act. This is a time for bold action, and in the Recovery and Reinvestment Act

we will maintain or create somewhere between 3 million and 4 million jobs in the construction industry and the energy industry; we will maintain jobs of teachers and firefighters and policemen. We will pass this bill today in the House of Representatives, and I am glad, because in Colorado we need this effort, we need these jobs, and so does the rest of the Nation.

KEEP OUR COMMITMENT TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. COLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to ask that we all uphold the honor of the House and keep our commitment to the American people.

Less than 3 days ago, my good friend and colleague, Mr. LEWIS of California, asked this House to instruct our conferees not to record their approval of the conference agreement on the stimulus bill until the text of that agreement had been made available in an electronic, searchable, and downloadable form for at least 48 hours. That motion passed unanimously.

Essentially, we gave our word, the word of the people's House, to all Americans, guaranteeing them that they would have ample opportunity to review this proposed legislation.

This bill was filed last night. It is over 1,000 pages long. And, with the exception of omnibus legislation, it is the largest spending bill this House has ever considered. Madam Speaker, I must confess, I haven't had time to read the legislation; my staff hasn't had time to read the legislation; I doubt my colleagues have had time to read the legislation; and, most importantly, the American people have had no time to read the legislation.

So now, less than 10 hours since we could first see this 1,000-page bill, we are poised to break our commitment to the American people and to pass this legislation with little or no time to even read it.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

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

Mr. INSLEE. Madam Speaker, one of the attributes of this economic recovery plan is it is not based on yesterday; it is based on tomorrow.

It is not your grandmother's recovery plan where we just built asphalt and concrete; it is built on the new high-tech green collar jobs that can truly give us a prolonged burst of economic recovery. And that is why, when I vote for this today, I am going to be proud that we are launching a new Apollo clean energy project to give this country the thousands of green collar jobs, to start selling high-tech clean energy products to China, to start

making lithium ion batteries so that we can make electric cars right here in America and start selling them across the world. And I hope some of my brethren across the aisle will not vote against research so we can find a way to burn coal cleanly, against research to make electric cars more affordable to Americans, against research to make our houses more efficient.

This is a plan to start an economic energy revolution. We should pass it and be proud of it today.

VOTE "NO" ON THE STIMULUS BILL

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

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, buried in the stimulus bill that we will be voting on today is a provision that will gut the welfare reform measures that the Congress passed in 1996. The legislation will move us down a path that will take us away from welfare reform that required work, training, and education in exchange for benefits, back to the old system that says to single young women that, as long as you don't get married, don't get a job, and keep having children, that we will continue to subsidize you at taxpayers' expense.

The old system that this legislation moves us to kept generations of American families in poverty, and I urge a "no" vote on the stimulus bill.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1, AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT OF 2009

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 168 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 168

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 1) making supplemental appropriations for job preservation and creation, infrastructure investment, energy efficiency and science, assistance to the unemployed, and State and local fiscal stabilization, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2009, and for other purposes. All points of order against consideration of the conference report are waived except those arising under clause 9 of rule XXI. The conference report shall be considered as read. All points of order against the conference report are waived. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the conference report to its adoption without intervening motion except: (1) 90 minutes of debate and (2) one motion to recommit if applicable.

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I make a point of order against the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his point of order.