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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Rev. Troy Ehlke, Christ Lutheran Church, Charlotte, North Carolina, offered the following prayer:

God of wisdom and truth, we are a Nation standing at the crossroads. It is a place of possibilities; one where pathways beckon us to traverse, yet the unforeseen tenders our steps. Enable us to boldly confront this critical juncture through the hope that rests securely in Your love.

Unite us as one so that care of community precedes self-interest; love of neighbor breeds compassionate action; the common good is a prize to behold rather than a tool to exploit.

Empower the representatives of this great land to respond to today's issues from a posture of hope because blessings abound even under the most arduous of circumstances. We may be facing the crossroads, but we are not alone, for we have You and we have one another. Nothing more do we require. Truly, You are generous, O Lord.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska 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 a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 614. An act to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the Women Airforce Service Pilots ("WASP").

WELCOMING REV. TROY EHLKE

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Mrs. MYRICK) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mrs. MYRICK. I'm honored to introduce Rev. Troy Ehlke, who gave today's opening prayer. He serves as the Pastor of Care and Counseling at Christ Lutheran Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he lives with his wife, Cynthia, and son Julian. It is here that he administers pastoral care to a congregation of nearly 3,000 through direct visitation and facilitation of a large lay ministry group. He is also the director of Adult Education and oversees the Sunday school and the Wednesday evening curriculums.

He received his master's degrees in the fields of theology and divinity from Harvard Divinity School, Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Princeton Theological Seminary. His professional interests center predominantly on the administration of pastoral care and counseling and biblical studies in relationship to community ethics. He has also written two books, and currently is working on his third.

He is a devoted and inspired leader in our community and to those he serves at Christ Lutheran Church. It's a privilege to have him here with us today, and an honor to serve him, his family, and his congregation in the Ninth District of North Carolina.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

EMBARK IN A NEW DIRECTION

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, it was a little over 8 years ago that this country had just had four consecutive budget surpluses. But now, as we find ourselves in the midst of our eighth consecutive budget deficit, Congress and the President are finally making the difficult decisions necessary to right the ship and begin digging our way out of the enormous hole the policies of the past have created.

While we can't change the misguided decisions that doubled the national debt over the past 8 years, we can change course and adopt a more fiscally responsible policy.

Our budget cuts the deficit by two-thirds over the next 4 years. And by reforming our health care system, reducing our dependence on foreign oil, and improving our education system, we are addressing the issues that are driving our long-term deficit.

Madam Speaker, finally we have a Congress and an administration that are willing to put behind us the failed economic policies of the past and embark in a new direction.

CAP-AND-TAX ENERGY PLAN

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

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. A cap-and-tax energy bill is working its way through the House. Democrats and Republicans alike want to make sure that we put caps on emissions to

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reduce pollution in our country, but we need to make sure we find a way of doing this without increasing family electric bills, losing manufacturing jobs, or losing steel jobs.

They say we should trust China that they won't cheat and somehow send cheaper goods over here. But this is the same country that sends us fungus in their diapers, leaded toys, toxic baby bottles, poison dog food, harmful building materials; they dump steel on our shores, hack into our computers, and spy on us. Hardly a country I would trust.

They say that we're going to get 200 tons of steel to build a windmill, and that's true, but it takes 90 tons of steel to build a clean coal power plant. What we ought to be doing is spending our money tearing down our old dirty coal plants, building new ones, and using our massive resources.

Let's use the oil off our shores to fund clean coal technology, build nuclear power plants, get a million more jobs in America, and clean the air in our country. Put a cap on emissions, okay. But let's put a cap on job losses. That's how we help our country.

MEMORIAL DAY AND COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. BACA. As America celebrates Memorial Day next week, let us not forget what this day represents. This is a day of reflection to remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for this country—the men and women who served our country. This includes thousands of immigrants who, although not officially citizens, died defending America's values we all share.

In fact, one of the first U.S. servicemen killed in combat in Iraq was an immigrant, Marine Lance Corporal Jose Gutierrez, only 22 years old.

On Memorial Day, immigrant families will also share America's reflection of those who gave their lives. But America must not accept immigrants one moment and reject them the next.

Congress must look past tough political decisions and work on real comprehensive reform for the sake of those immigrants and their families that already gave so much to this country. I urge my colleagues and President Obama to work with the CHC to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

WISE WORDS FROM AMERICAN HISTORY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, "In the situation of this assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth . . . , how has it happened, sir, that we have not once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate our understanding?"

"The longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, how it is probable that an empire can rise without His aid?"

"I therefore beg—that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberation, be held in this assembly every morning before we proceed to business."

Mr. Speaker, with this advice by Benjamin Franklin in 1787, our ancestors knelt in prayer each day before designing and drafting the powerful U.S. Constitution. We continue that wise tradition. Each morning we pray to the Almighty. Then we pledge to the Flag. Then we get on with the people's business.

We would do well to remember the words of the Old Book, "Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain." "Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain."

And that's just the way it is.

VERMONT DAIRY FARMERS

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

Mr. WELCH. I rise today to bring to the attention of my colleagues the ever-worsening plight of dairy farmers in Vermont. Frankly, dairy farmers around the country.

The life of a dairy farmer is hard always. Never easy. Long hours, uncertainty in the markets, competition from factory and farms make it tough for family farmers in Vermont and elsewhere to survive and thrive. It's even tougher these days.

With the cost of production of milk at about \$18 per hundredweight, it's well below the \$11 per hundredweight that farmers are being paid. It's no wonder that so many farmers are having to sell their herds and walk off the land they love.

But dairy is so important to Vermont—economically, culturally, environmentally, and historically. We need to do all we can to help this sector and to help our farmers.

That's why I and 23 of our colleagues are calling on Secretary Vilsack to consider the cost of production when setting milk prices. We need to act now to resolve this crisis. Even more importantly, we need to find a long-term solution that will help create stable and sustainable dairy in this country.

LAKE ALICE SCHOOL

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. I rise today to celebrate a gem of western Nebraska, Lake Alice School. The school

first opened its doors in 1915, and it will bid its farewell on Monday. A farewell will actually be held with an open house at the school, allowing anyone who is or has been associated with the school to reflect on its impact to our community and what it has meant to so many people through the years.

Nearly 7,000 students from Scottsbluff and the surrounding area have passed through the school during its 93 years. I'm proud to have known Lake Alice students, teachers, graduates, and faculty throughout my life. The school provided a quality education and serves as a point of pride for the community.

It will hold a special place in our hearts. I hate to see the doors close, but I know the memories will last forever.

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL FOR SOLDIERS INVOLVED IN BATAAN, CORREGIDOR AND LUZON

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill bestowing a collective Congressional Gold Medal to our soldiers involved in the World War II battles of Bataan, Corregidor, and Luzon.

This bill is particularly important to my State because nearly 2,000 New Mexican soldiers were captured as prisoners of war and subjected to the Bataan Death March of 1942. More New Mexico families per capita were directly affected by this than any other State.

American POWs were forced to endure a tortuous 65-mile, 5-day march in tropical heat, without food or water, followed by 3 years of brutal imprisonment. In the end, one-third of Bataan's 12,000 defenders never returned home.

We must never forget the courage that these veterans demonstrated before any more of our heroes of Bataan, Corregidor, or Luzon pass on. I urge my colleagues to honor them with the Congressional Gold Medal that they have more than earned.

GUANTANAMO BAY

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

Mr. PENCE. On his second day in office, the President announced his plans to close Guantanamo Bay in an effort to improve America's image around the world. But Republicans went to the floor of this House and we went to the airwaves. We even went to the Internet at GOP.gov to inform the American people that Guantanamo Bay holds some of the most dangerous terrorists on the planet; men like Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind behind the September 11th attacks, and Abu Zubaydah, a key facilitator of the 9/11 attacks.