



United States  
of America

# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 155

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 28, 2009

No. 17

## 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,  
January 28, 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: Lord God, architect of the universe and advocate for us all, each day is a blessing.

When we rise from sleep, activities of the day stir the mind. Having a job to fulfill sets us into routine as a people with purpose.

Daily work, O Lord, invites us to demonstrate responsibility and manifests our participation in Your creative power. Mind and body together become engaged in productivity, sustenance, or service beyond ourselves.

Because we believe human work bestows a special dignity upon a person and is a way to achieve a just society, we know how important it is for us to pray for the unemployed and their families.

Bless the work of Congress today. May this chosen labor be creative, prove responsible, have lasting results, and give You glory 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 Ohio (Mr. DRIEHAUS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DRIEHAUS 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 from each side of the aisle.

### IT'S TIME TO START LOOKING OUT FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND PASS H.R. 1

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

Mr. KUCINICH. A 93-year-old man freezes to death in his home because he can't pay the electric bill. A family of seven perishes in a murder-suicide over financial- and job-related matters. A 90-year-old woman tries to kill herself when the sheriff arrives to take her house. And a 75-year-old woman is buried today after predatory lenders drove her to suicide.

More and more Americans are being driven to desperation over losing their jobs and their homes. This economy is literally killing people. The banks get a \$700 billion bailout as they continue to kick people out of their homes. We must get help directly to the American people.

There are good reasons to question the \$825 billion stimulus, but there's no good reason to oppose it. Not when every crooked interest in this country has been in a long parade at the public trough while factories are shut, jobs are lost, and homes are foreclosed. Congress must act today for the people. We must come back again and again with more comprehensive jobs programs to rebuild infrastructure, fund education including preschool, and create universal health care. We must gain control of our money system and stop taxpayers from being robbed by the banks. The banks already have \$700 billion and are looking for another trillion.

It's time we started to look out for number one, the American people, and pass H.R. 1 for the American people and get the American people back some of their money.

### JUST PLANE STUPID—CITIGROUP IS ENJOYING SPENDING TAXPAYER MONEY

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, the big fat cat executives of Citigroup are busy spending taxpayer bailout money on a brand new luxury jet.

That's right, Madam Speaker. Citigroup claimed it was on the brink of financial disaster, then demanded and took \$45 billion from the taxpayers through government giveaways. Now they're buying a new \$50 million jet. And did I mention this swanky jet is made in France?

Madam Speaker, the arrogance and ignorance of the "Big Banking Boys Gang" is astonishing. While average Americans are hunkering down worried about their jobs, food, clothes, and mortgage payments, these irresponsible executives are blowing millions on high-dollar toys.

It's about time the elites in the financial industry quit acting like

□ 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.

H605

they're entitled to special perks. Americans shouldn't be forced to pay for CEO bonuses and luxury corporate jets for the rich and famous robber barons.

But you see, Madam Speaker, they must need that jet to fly to New York Mets games because Citigroup is spending \$400 million to plaster its name on its new stadium, Citi Field.

And that's just the way it is.

#### CITIGROUP AND THEIR \$50 MILLION FRENCH-BUILT CORPORATE JET

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, Citigroup did take more than \$45 billion in taxpayer-funded rescue money. And imagine the shock and outrage that I and many other Americans felt when we heard this week that Citigroup was buying a \$50 million French-built corporate jet.

Is there no shame? America is in the midst of a recession, with the highest unemployment in 16 years and the highest foreclosure rate in more than three decades. People all over the country are losing their jobs, their homes, their small businesses. And in the midst of all this, a company that the taxpayers are bailing out with our tax dollars is buying a plush corporate jet.

I voted to rescue the banks, reluctantly, for one reason and one reason only: to free up credit so that small businesses and individuals could have access to loans for essentials such as college tuition and home mortgages and the economy could keep running. A new private jet is not what I voted for.

Thankfully, pressure from Congress and the White House has forced Citigroup to cancel the purchase of this plane. But the incident is a glaring example of the blatant lack of accountability from banks seeking rescue money. It needs to stop. And I look forward to working with the new Treasury Secretary to correct this oversight and make it clear that explicit restrictions are placed on any rescue money used by the banks.

#### ECONOMIC STIMULUS

(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, there are 11 million unemployed Americans receiving a notice that says they owe taxes on their unemployment benefits and they'll have a huge bill due on April 15. After this scary realization, these folks will get on their phones or their computers to ask us where we think they are going to get the money to pay the additional tax.

As this Congress works to find ways to kick-start the economy, I propose we not kick these folks when they're

down and we eliminate the tax on unemployment insurance benefits for 2008 and 2009.

This economic stimulus ought to do this. The 1099 statements that are showing up in mailboxes to notify my constituents that they owe Federal taxes on their unemployment is just ridiculous. I'd want to be able to tell my constituents we're going to do something about this problem.

Let's go back to the drawing board and come together to really help the unemployed.

At this time I'd also want to say thank you and God bless to Kathleen Black, who is going from my staff to the Senate, one of the best tax persons in the Congress.

#### CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK

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

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to join students and families and educators across the country to mark this very important week, Catholic Schools Week.

For thousands of children in the United States, including my own, Catholic schools are laying the foundation for bright and successful futures while calling young people to service and fostering values that strengthen our families and our communities.

I want to congratulate three people in particular: Father Andrew Umberg, pastor of St. William Parish in Cincinnati; Lisa Driggers, a teacher at St. James School in Green Township; and Tim Otten, principal of Elder High School, my alma mater, who have all been honored this year by the National Catholic Education Association. This week we recognize them and other Catholic educators for their important contributions not only to education but to their community and to their country.

#### THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT: A MASSIVE GOVERNMENT-SPENDING BILL THAT WILL PLUNGE THE NATION DEEPER INTO DEBT

(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, the American people are hurting and our economy is in recession.

Congress is right to take action to stimulate the economy, but the American people know that we cannot borrow and spend our way back to prosperity. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is a massive and wasteful government spending bill that will not stimulate our economy but will recklessly plunge our Nation deeper and deeper into debt.

The deficit for the next 2 years is already projected to be \$2 trillion. If deficit spending were an effective eco-

nomical stimulus, then the economy would be on the verge of a recovery. But it isn't.

Congress can accelerate the process of economic recovery by passing legislation that will improve the incentives that drive economic activity. Lowering tax rates will create the incentives for individuals and businesses to save, to work, to invest their money.

Madam Speaker, the American people are hurting and they deserve a better proposal than this.

#### THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT WILL REVITALIZE THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I just listened to my friend from Colorado expound upon the problems of deficit spending. Well, he's absolutely right about the deficit spending from the Republican administration and Congress. They piled up debt with tax cuts for people who didn't need it, a reckless war in Iraq on a credit card.

This package that's coming before us today is actually doing something for the American people, investing in infrastructure and energy. It is looking to a plan for the recovery of the economy, using new technology and new ways of doing business, getting more value out of our investment.

I am pleased that the President reached out to the other side of the aisle even as their leaders were saying before the meeting they were against his package. But I am pleased, while he reached out, he was unwavering in his commitment that our package is going to focus on the people who need help the most, revitalizing the economy, and moving us forward.

I look forward to the passage today of this legislation and further refinement as we move it through Congress with our new administration.

#### DTV TRANSITION

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the digital television delay bill that the House will be voting on under suspension today.

The bill needlessly delays the DTV transition date of February 17 and undermines the government's credibility with consumers and broadcasters who have prepared for the transition, as well as the private industry that is relying on the spectrum that they purchased to be available.

The bill also facilitates the need for \$650 million in the stimulus to be spent on the converter box coupon program but ironically does not get a single person off the coupon waiting list.

Finally, the bill prevents spectrum from being cleared for first responders and emergency communications.