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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. TSONGAS).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 9, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable NIKI TSONGAS 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:

As a parent encourages a child or a mentor calls forth the hidden potential of an intern, Lord our God, may You bless all who work as the 111th Congress, especially new Members.

Remove fear and confusion, which only inhibit good judgment and leadership. Strengthen the resolve and compassion of all Members, that they may serve Your people with renewed clarity of vision and refined purpose that will soon unify this Nation in self-discipline and confidence.

For You reward the just and their deeds, both 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. POE) come

forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE 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.

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.

A NEW DIRECTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. KUCINICH. In Gaza the United Nations gave the Israeli Army the coordinates of a U.N. school, and the school was then hit by Israeli tank fire, killing about 40.

The U.N. put flags on emergency vehicles, coordinating the movements of those vehicles with the Israeli military, and the vehicles came under attack, killing emergency workers.

The Israeli Army evacuated 100 Palestinians to a shelter, and then bombed the shelter, killing 30 people.

Emergency workers have been blocked by the Israeli Army from reaching hundreds of injured persons.

Today's Washington Post: "100 survivors rescued in Gaza from ruins blocked by Israelis. Relief agencies fear more are trapped, days after neighborhood was shelled."

Today the U.S. Congress is going to be asked to pass a resolution supporting Israel's actions in Gaza. I'm hopeful that we don't support the inhumanity that has been repeatedly expressed by the Israeli Army.

The U.S. abstained from a U.N. call for a cease-fire. We must take a new direction in the Middle East, and that new direction must be mindful of the inhumane conditions in Gaza.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DENNIS BARNEY

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

Mr. FLAKE. Madam Speaker, every so often a community is blessed with a giant of a man, a man whose imprint and influence will be felt for generations to come. Such is the case with Dennis Barney, who passed away this week at the far too young age of 62.

Countless organizations like the United Way, the Boy Scouts, the Boys and Girls Club, the United Food Bank and the Arizona Interfaith Movement have profited from his generosity. Thousands of students, families and individuals have benefited from his kindness, his example and his inspired counsel.

Still, it was within the walls of his own home that his most important work was accomplished. Along with his wife, Ann, he raised a remarkable family of 10 children who will surely carry on his great legacy.

May every community in every State across this great land be so blessed as to know such a giant of a man as Dennis Barney.

OIL COMPANIES REDUCING EXPLORATION

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, remember the "Drill here, Drill Now" rallying cry we heard nonstop on this floor? Even when the lights were off and Congress was in recess, the other

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.



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side stood here in the dark, with their charts and graphs, blaming Democrats for high gas prices.

If only we would allow drilling in the Outer Continental Shelf, they said, the oil companies would expand exploration and produce oil in record amounts. Well, we opened up the OCS for the first time in 20 years, and now the oil companies are free to explore and drill without restriction.

But the oil companies are reducing exploration. That's right. We opened up the OCS to the oil companies and they responded by cutting back on exploration.

Where is the outrage from my colleagues on the other side?

Congress did its part. So when gas prices inevitably go back up, I hope they will focus their "Drill Baby Drill" chants directly on the oil companies.

IRAN IS THE WORLD THREAT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Israel and Hamas are at war. But make no mistake about it, it's the little fellow from Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and his radical religious cronies of hate that are the ones that are behind this troubling turmoil in the lands of the Middle East.

For years Iran has supported the twin tribes of terror, Hamas and Hezbollah, by supplying arms and equipment and training. In 2006 Iran used the hired guns of Hezbollah in Lebanon to war with Israel.

Hamas has proudly proclaimed that it's had its soldiers of terror trained in Iran. Now Hamas is firing long-range Iranian missiles from Gaza into civilian areas of Israel. And the bandit group, Hezbollah, is getting blamed for new missile attacks into northern Israel.

As the nations of the world, especially Egypt, attempt to broker a cease-fire between Hamas and Israel, they would do well to deal with the real culprit in this war, Iran.

Until the world recognizes that President Ahmadinejad is determined to destroy Israel by any means necessary, there will never be peace in the Middle East. Iran has made its intentions clear to the world. World leaders need to make it clear to Iran that murder in the name of hate, will not be tolerated on the world stage.

And that's just the way it is.

OUR ECONOMY IS IN A SHAMBLES

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. After 8 years of disastrous Bush-led trickle-down deregulation, anything-goes economic policies, our economy is in a shambles. Unemployment, foreclosures, they're skyrocketing.

We need to rebuild the foundations of our economy, putting Americans back

to work and putting our economy on a path to recovery.

I congratulate the President-elect with his sense of urgency. Shovel-ready infrastructure projects, he's put that on everybody's mind. That's excellent, tremendous public support. Unfortunately, the package is a little short on infrastructure and shovel-ready, and very long on tax cuts, the same policies that failed us during the Bush years. Five times as much for tax cuts.

Will \$8 a pay period additional in their take-home put Americans back to work? It's good for Americans. They're suffering. But will that rebuild our economy, put people back to work?

Will a look back for the banks so they can get tax benefits, they can reclaim taxes they paid in the past, while taking TARP money and not telling us what they do with it, will that put Americans back to work?

We need more investment in infrastructure and less emphasis on the tax cuts.

RECOGNIZING SOUTH CAROLINA JAG CORPS

(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, I rise today to recognize the South Carolina National Guard. In 2008 they achieved the highest number of judge advocate generals serving in the Nation, according to Scott Bell, National Guard historian. This significant milestone is a tribute to the South Carolina Bar and to the professional leadership of Colonel Barry Bernstein, state judge advocate for the South Carolina National Guard. Twenty-four of the State's 27 JAGs have been awarded Global War on Terrorism campaign medals.

As a former staff judge advocate, I understand and appreciate and know firsthand the work that our JAG Corps has done to provide legal counsel to our military leadership and to our brave men and women in uniform. There is an important part of the defense of American families by defeating terrorists overseas. I saw this when I visited the 218th Brigade JAG during quarterly visits in the last year at Camp Phoenix in Afghanistan.

I commend Colonel Bernstein and Adjutant General Stan Spears for their leadership and all the members of the South Carolina JAG Corps on this achievement.

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

ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN WILL INVEST IN AMERICA'S FUTURE AND CREATE JOBS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, the deepening effects of the economic crisis

have made their way to the kitchen table of every American home, leaving families worried about their financial future. That's why we need immediate passage of an economic recovery plan to avoid a deeper economic downturn and restore jobs. In addition to giving the economy a short-term boost, we must spur economic growth and competitiveness for the long-term stability of this country.

This economic recovery package is an opportunity to invest in tomorrow by making major changes to our Nation's approach to energy, health care, education and infrastructure. Addressing our Nation's infrastructure challenge will create jobs in the troubled construction and manufacturing sectors, while helping to spur long-term economic growth. Highway projects could create 630,000 jobs, while green school construction and maintenance and repair initiatives for schools could create 250,000 jobs.

Madam Speaker, we must work quickly and in strong bipartisan fashion to create and save 3 million jobs.

CONSUMER AUTO RELIEF ACT

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Consumer Auto Relief Act, or CAR Act, a bill that I plan to introduce later today. This bill will provide a variety of incentives to the purchasers of new cars, and will incentivize lenders to loan the money to finance these new automobile purchases.

This legislation is about giving American consumers much needed tax relief. It's about stimulating consumer credit markets. It's about restoring consumer confidence. It's about jump-starting our stalled economy, and it should be a part of the new economic stimulus package.

I ask the House to support this bill.

LILLY LEDBETTER FAIR PAY ACT AND THE PAYCHECK FAIRNESS ACT

(Ms. TSONGAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TSONGAS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for two important bills that we will consider later today. The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and the Paycheck Fairness Act both advance the fight to ensure equal pay for women in the workforce.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women make 78 cents for every dollar earned for similar work by their male counterparts. This form of discrimination is unacceptable, and it not just a women's issue, it is a family issue. The Institute of Women's Policy Research found that this wage disparity will cost an individual woman anywhere from \$400,000 to \$2 million over a lifetime in