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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

THE SPEAKER. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

BICYCLING BURNS CALORIES, NOT FOSSIL FUEL

THE SPEAKER. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

MR. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I just returned from a 2-day livability tour, thanks to the courtesy of my colleague, Congresswoman ALLYSON Y. SCHWARTZ, a champion of sustainability. I visited her district in Pennsylvania, where she represents parts of Montgomery County and Philadelphia, where we saw rural landscapes, small townships, suburban communities, dense urban areas, open space, abandoned industrial land, and an aging but vital transit system. Together, they illustrated all the challenges that we face in our efforts to rebuild and renew America.

I have a special interest in their initiative for a trail network, where their vision and hard work was rewarded by millions of dollars from the Obama administration and the economic Recovery Act to help fill in the gaps of an exciting trail expansion for the two-State region, including New Jersey.

Amidst impressive progress on Mayor Michael Nutter's vision to make Philadelphia the greenest city in America, with innovative water projects, creative private sector efforts in green development, township progress on revitalization, and important progress in open space protection, the bicycle session stood out. The increase in rider-

ship in Philadelphia was impressive, and they have undertaken a spectacular program—in all 172 elementary schools to train young cyclists and pedestrians. It certainly got my attention. But so did the challenges they face as cycling advocates. It didn't appear as though the regional planning agency, or PennDOT, placed a high priority on bicycle safety. I hope I'm wrong, especially since bike fatalities doubled last year in Philadelphia, but it would not be unusual if it didn't capture a priority. Nationally, bicycle and pedestrians represent 15 percent of all traffic fatalities but only 3 percent of our spending on safety improvements and education, about one-fifth of the proportionate share that would be warranted. It's especially sad, because the bike and pedestrian victims are more likely to be children and the elderly, more vulnerable populations that should, if anything, command more of our attention.

The cycling community is doing its part to change this unfortunate pattern. As part of its effort to raise awareness, tomorrow in 49 States and 21 nations, there will be Rides of Silence. There will be 274 silent processions riding no more than 12 miles an hour to show respect for the families, friends and neighbors of 700 cyclists killed last year in America alone and as a reminder to law enforcement, to motorists and government officials of both the dangers to and the opportunities for cyclists.

You know, it doesn't have to be this dangerous. Facilities, awareness, training and courtesy can all make cycling safer. I have seen it firsthand. I represent Portland, Oregon, the unofficial American cycling capital. We have had spectacular increases in bike riding. It's doubled in the last 10 years alone, the highest participation in any major American city, but the rate of injuries and death was cut in half.

At a time when more and more Americans want to burn calories, not

fossil fuel like the oil bubbling out in the Gulf, when they want to fight congestion, obesity and save money cycling, let's work not just to make it convenient and fun but safe, especially for our children.

This is Bicycle Month. On Friday, we have Bike to Work Day all across America. Tomorrow, I hope Americans will join us in respecting the Rides of Silence to raise awareness for cycling safety.

RECESS

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPPS). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 38 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BLUMENAUER) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

You alone are the Lord our God, Father of all, Who is over all and works through all and is in all. Each of us has been endowed with great gifts by You, Almighty God, and we receive these gifts according to personal measure.

Let us therefore no longer act as children, wasting time and playing games with one another for our own satisfaction. Allow us not to be tossed about here and there by every kind of story and rumor born of human trickery, so skilled in half-truths.

Rather, Lord, hold us to that greater truth founded on a unified assessment that will provide common ground upon

□ 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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which we can stand together and achieve lasting security; and as a Nation, give You glory 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 his approval thereof.

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ 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.

BP: BANNED PERMANENTLY

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, the initials BP used to stand for British Petroleum. But now it stands for Burying People—or Burying Precious natural resources—under a vast sea of oil. But here's what BP, a serial abuser of our safety, our environment, and our legal system, should really stand for: BP: Banned Permanently.

Today, I ask my colleagues to end any and all Federal oil drilling leases for BP and begin an immediate civil and criminal investigation to examine the existing leases under BP. Almost a month into one of the worst manmade environmental and economic disasters, BP has worked harder to minimize public understanding than to minimize destruction to the Gulf of Mexico. There's plenty of finger-pointing from BP, their \$62 billion in profits, and their multimillion-dollar team of lobbyists. What BP should hear from us, the American people, is simple: BP stands for Banned Permanently.

I urge my colleagues to join me in demanding that Interior Secretary Salazar tell “Banned Permanently,” they've made their last dollar from the American people.

COURAGEOUS NFIB LAWSUIT

(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. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the National Federation of Independent Business, better known as NFIB, for standing up for small businesses in the State of South Carolina, like OCS Doors of Beaufort, led by Jay Halloway, and the Sunset Grill of West Columbia, established by

Betty Jackson. Employees at small businesses like these all across America are concerned about the impact of the job-killing mandates of the government health care takeover. The NFIB estimates the takeover will kill 1.6 million jobs. The NFIB stood up for small business employees last week when they joined 20 States, including South Carolina, in a lawsuit to overturn this government monstrosity. There are health care alternatives that Congress should consider, like the SWAP Act, which continues to cover preexisting conditions but will repeal the tax hikes and unaffordable mandates on individuals and small business owners.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the Global War on Terrorism.

GULF OIL SPILL

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, nearly 1 month after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill began on April 20, oil continues to flow from the well, poisoning and destroying our water environment. The rig activities were considered to be a low-risk drilling exploration. Such a classification sends chills up my spine, given the countless riskier drilling ventures occurring along the coasts of our great Nation.

While millions of Americans watch the news and see the destruction of the gulf coast, the environment, and the economy of that area, I think of the thoughtless, baseless, cavalier Republican energy chant, “Drill Baby Drill.” It echoes in the ears of the American public and anybody who cares about the gulf coast of the United States. “Drill Baby Drill” was a simplistic response.

We use 25.9 percent of the world's oil. We have 2.2 percent of the world's energy reserves. You don't have to be a math scholar or a Nobel Prize winner to know that won't work. You need to find alternative forms of energy. Use America's great research and brain-power. Harness solar. Harness the wind. Find new ways to help us with our problems with energy and not depend on fossil fuels, not ruin our environment, and not risk the flora and the fauna.

Mr. Speaker, we have to find a new direction to be like America has been in the past: innovative and creative.

CONFRONTING WASHINGTON'S OUT-OF-CONTROL SPENDING

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, we learned last week that the Federal Government ran up an \$82.7 billion deficit in April. That's the largest April deficit in our Nation's history. The Federal Govern-

ment is spending Americans' tax dollars at a record clip, so it's no surprise we're facing this mountain of debt.

But we can fix this problem. House Republicans have engaged the American people with an innovative online tool called YouCut. It's simple. Each week, we're giving Americans an opportunity to vote on a slate of wasteful, outdated, or duplicative Federal programs to cut from the budget. The top vote-getter will be offered up by Republicans for a vote in the House.

So far, hundreds of thousands of concerned citizens from across the country have voted on the YouCut Web site and made it clear they're tired of Washington's one-track spending mentality. YouCut is a first step toward changing the culture of always spending and never saving here in Washington. By itself, it won't solve the problem. But it is engaging our constituents in an important, larger discussion about reining in our skyrocketing debt and out-of-control spending.

MEXICAN MILITARY HELICOPTER INCURSIONS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, U.S. Border Patrol agents have spotted yet another Mexican military helicopter incursion into Texas. That makes three times these helicopters have crossed the border into America this year, that we know of. On Saturday, another Mexican military helicopter was in Texas, hovering near the Roma-Miguel Aleman International Bridge. Two other times this year, Mexican helicopters were photographed in Starr and Zapata Counties in Texas.

These military incursions are becoming routine. What are they doing here? We don't know. Has our government protested this violation of international law? No one is talking. Our own government seems to be blissfully silent about these incursions. That's why I'm asking Homeland Security Secretary Napolitano for some answers.

The Federal Government is MIA on our borders. Our government ought to spend less time protesting States like Arizona, trying to protect their citizens from border violence, and start getting some answers from Mexico about their military helicopters flying into the United States.

And that's just the way it is.

PUTTING AMERICANS FIRST

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, on the Joe Scarborough Show, Richard Haass, Chairman of the Council on Foreign Relations, said China had been investing in its economy over the last 10 years while we have been investing in Iraq and Afghanistan. Mr.