



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 111th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 156

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2010

No. 96

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Reverend Byron Brought, Calvary United Methodist Church, Annapolis, Maryland, offered the following prayer:

For a few passing years, O God, You have entrusted these Representatives with the gift of authority and leadership. May they do no harm. Keep them free from the temptation of seeking personal gain or glory. Save them from the mediocrity of trivial debate. Guide them in these challenging days.

May there ever be mutual respect and cooperation among them. Remind them that they are servants of the people, and through their actions may the people be served, the poor lifted up, and Your creation respected. Give them the grace and the wisdom to discern what is right, and give them the courage to do it. May justice and peace flourish throughout this good land.

In Your Holy Name we pray. 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 North Carolina (Ms. Foxx) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX 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 with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 725. An act to protect Indian arts and crafts through the improvement of applicable criminal proceedings, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1508. An act to amend the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) in order to prevent the loss of billions in taxpayer dollars.

WELCOMING REVEREND BYRON BROUGHT

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. SARBANES) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure and honor to welcome Reverend Byron Brought to Congress this morning. Reverend Brought is retiring this month after serving the Maryland community for more than 40 years as a spiritual leader and mentor.

Since 1992, Reverend Brought has served as Senior Pastor at Calvary United Methodist Church in Annapolis, Maryland. Prior to his appointment at Calvary, he presided over several United Methodist ministries in the Baltimore-Washington Conference. His many accomplishments include serving on various community councils, including terms as President of the Baltimore-Washington Conference Board of Pensions and the Council on Finance and Administration.

Reverend Brought is the proud husband of Mary Kay, father to two children, and grandfather to soon to be four grandchildren. I ask my colleagues

in the House of Representatives to join with me in congratulating Reverend Brought on a career of dedication and service.

□ 1010

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

INTRODUCING THE SWEEP ACT

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, this week, Congressman GLENN NYE and I introduced the SWEEP Act.

This legislation would require that an independent, bipartisan commission be established to review Federal programs and to make recommendations for those that should be eliminated, consolidated, or have their funding reduced. Most importantly, this bill would require Congress to have an up-or-down vote on the commission's recommendations. There are many programs that have outlived their original purpose. The SWEEP Act will help us to weed out programs that are no longer needed, and that will help our bottom line.

This bill is part of a comprehensive 10-bill package that I'm either cosponsoring or writing to help tackle our national debt. Each of the 10 bills in my plan does one of three things that working families do as they deal with their own finances: They make commonsense spending decisions. They trim the fat. They chip away at their everyday debt.

The SWEEP Act will help trim the fat, and I am proud to help bring this bill to Congress. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor this important bill.

□ 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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BUDGET

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

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, the majority has now finally admitted what we have suspected for months: They have no intention of fulfilling their obligation to draft and pass a Federal budget.

This fiscal irresponsibility on display in Washington is affecting American citizens, and it is further damaging our economy and job growth. It is widely known and, thankfully, widely reported that the reason we won't be seeing a budget this year is to evade calling further attention to an addiction to reckless spending.

The Federal debt has gone up by nearly \$2.4 trillion since January of 2009 and by \$240 billion just since the budget was due back in April of this year. Undoubtedly and correctly, Democrat leaders fear that the public will be shocked at this figure, and will be shocked at the future debt that a budget would show.

So they seek to hide behind a 1-year "deeming motion," but the consequences of their shame shows a lack of fiscal discipline and a lack of responsible economic policy. America needs a reasonable, pro-growth economic policy to promote job growth and business development.

JOBS

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

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, the failed policies of the Bush administration brought our economy to the brink 2 years ago, and while our economy is showing signs of growth, unemployment is still at unacceptable levels.

There are still too many families having to sit down at the table, who are having to decide which bills they can afford to pay each month. There are still families finding themselves with underwater mortgages—many of them losing their homes.

I ask my colleagues: How would you feel if this were your family or a family member you knew?

We need to make sure that hard-working Americans are able to come home with a sense of pride after a day's work, not with a sense of fear about bills they can't afford. Too many of our families are struggling to make ends meet. Let's build a momentum of job creation as with the HomeStar, the HIRE Act, and the Small Business Lending Fund Act, which provide incentives for growth and innovation.

America deserves better from their government. I am committed to making sure that happens, but Republicans and Democrats must come together for the betterment of this country.

MORE MEDDLING BY MEXICO

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Mexico has joined a lawsuit against Arizona's new illegal immigration enforcement law.

In its legal brief, Mexico says the Arizona law is unconstitutional. That's right. The foreign country of Mexico is lecturing us on our Constitution.

I guess President Calderon, like our Attorney General, hasn't read Arizona's law either, because the Arizona law is constitutional. President Calderon just doesn't want the law enforced. He wants open borders so illegals can illegally come to America.

By the way, hypocritical Mexico enforces its own immigration laws, but it doesn't want us to do the same. President Calderon should not meddle in U.S. affairs.

If the Feds join the lawsuit against Arizona, it will be Mexico and the U.S. Government vs. Arizona. Ironically, Mexico and the U.S. Government together will be arguing against border security and public safety while Arizona will be arguing for the basic right to protect its citizens.

Isn't there something wrong with that concept?

And that's just the way it is.

GOOD NEWS FOR THE ECONOMY OF SOUTHEASTERN CONNECTICUT

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Madam Speaker, this past Monday, southeastern Connecticut received blockbuster news when it was announced that Electric Boat will be acquiring 700,000 square feet of office space from Pfizer pharmaceutical company. This is space from which Pfizer was going to be departing as part of its global reorganization. EB's decision to come in and acquire this space is huge, and it is good news for the economy of southeastern Connecticut.

It is not happening in a vacuum. This space is needed because the workforce is growing. There are new jobs in southeastern Connecticut because this Congress recognized that our submarine fleet, which had been underfunded under the prior administration, was running into end dates for the Ohio class submarine program.

We have invested, over the last 3 years, in growing the workforce and in research, development, and engineering. These new jobs will ensure that we will have a submarine fleet well into the later stages of the 21st century. It will provide stability for the economy of southeastern Connecticut, and it will maintain that Groton, Connecticut, will become and will remain the submarine capital of the world.

IN PRAISE OF DON MOSS, THE WORLD'S HARDEST-WORKING VOLUNTEER

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Don Moss of Pilot Mountain, North Carolina, who is a dedicated volunteer at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center.

Why is Mr. Moss so special? Because, over the past three decades, he has racked up 47,000 volunteer hours at the hospital—a Guinness World Record.

Mr. Moss currently donates 48 hours of his time each week to the hospital—working 12 hours a day and serving up a healthy dose of good cheer and plain old helpfulness. He has a well-deserved reputation for looking out for patients and for his humor and humility.

North Carolina is, indeed, blessed to be the home of people like Mr. Moss. His service to the community and his staggering number of volunteer hours illustrate a true spirit of selfless generosity to those in need.

I congratulate Mr. Moss on his record-breaking time of service, and I hope that others will be inspired by his example to invest their time and abilities in their communities.

CONGRATULATING PRESIDENT-ELECT OF COLOMBIA, JUAN MANUEL SANTOS

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

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the orderly and peaceful election that took place in Colombia. I congratulate the President-elect of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos, and I commend the people of Colombia for their relentless dedication to the democratic process that was shown through this election.

In an increasingly volatile region, Colombia has continued on the path towards reform while combating drug trafficking and terrorism, efforts which have had a positive effect on Colombian and American national security. Additionally, Colombia has made remarkable progress on other fronts, emerging as an important growth market and as a leading center for Latin American business.

In the face of hostility towards U.S. interests and values, Colombia has consistently proven itself to be an important friend, a reliable partner, and a champion for democracy. The positive bilateral relationship between the United States and Colombia has been based on many common strategic and ideological interests, reaffirming Colombia's position as an important ally and as a longtime friend of the United States.

Again, I congratulate President-elect Juan Manuel Santos on his victory. I look forward to a continued partnership between our two nations.