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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. BALDWIN).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 4, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TAMMY BALDWIN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Andrew Walton, Capitol Hill Presbyterian Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

In thanks and gratitude we breathe the life-giving spirit of a new day, a day filled with creative potential and possibility.

As on the first day, may this day be "in the beginning." May we see the goodness and abundance of creation. May we embrace the name given to us, Human—from the Earth. May we look into the eternal waters and see in our own reflections the image of the name that cannot be named, the eternal living presence we call by many names. May we see both the human and the divine in ourselves and every other person. May we see the eternal presence of life in all creation.

May the light of the first day be our guiding vision for every day, particularly within the deliberations and decisions among the minds, spirits, and imagination of these Chambers, leading us to see and respect the sacred dignity and worth of everyone and everything, everywhere.

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.

AIG BONUSES

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

Mr. NEAL of Massachusetts. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my disappointment and dismay with AIG's decision to pay \$100 million in bonuses to executives. These are not just any employees but those from the financial products division, the same group that created the flimsy derivatives that caused such a catastrophe for our economy in late 2008.

With taxpayer dollars allowing to keep AIG afloat and ordinary Americans facing 10 percent unemployment, I don't know who would have thought this announcement would be well-re-

ceived by the American people. It may be that these bonuses were legally obligated before the AIG crash, but I'm sure that all the brainpower that created AIG's complicated financial products can figure out a way, as the American people would, to simply say "no."

CONGRATULATING THE MIAMI-DADE COUNTY FIRE RESCUE URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM FOR THEIR EFFORTS IN HAITI

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. My sincerest thanks and congratulations to the Miami-Dade County Fire Rescue Urban Search and Rescue team for their heroic efforts in aiding the relief work in Haiti. Their courage and dedication to helping save lives are examples for us all. Under the leadership of Division Chief Dave Downey, an 80-man team was sent to Haiti 1 day after it was ravaged by a magnitude 7.0 earthquake.

I would like to commend Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, under the direction of Fire Chief Herminio Lorenzo, for their courageous commitment and dedication to saving lives in south Florida and worldwide. As a result of their work in Haiti, lives have been saved and many more individuals have been aided.

Their selfless dedication and sense of mission are testaments to our Nation's highest principle. The team's experience in disaster relief efforts during Hurricane Katrina, in the aftermath of 9/11, and the 1999 earthquake in Turkey, as part of the national Urban Search and Rescue Response System, were invaluable to their rescue efforts in Haiti. Congratulations to all.

□ 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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FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

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

Mr. ARCURI. Last week I joined with several of my colleagues in the Blue Dog and Populist Caucuses to call for a budget plan that is fiscally responsible. As I have said before, along with the President, if the American family has been tasked with tightening its belt, in this time of economic recovery, then so should Congress.

Pay-as-you-go legislation is on the floor today, and I have never been more optimistic about this key piece of legislation being passed and Congress returning to a time where a balanced budget was the goal, not outrageous deficit spending like that which was done under the previous administration.

I have also promised to work with the members of the Populist Caucus to ensure that big banks and Wall Street firms are held accountable for damage they have done to hardworking American families. If it is the fault of these huge banks and firms that we are in this situation, then they should pay to get us out of it.

I am proud to join with both the Blue Dog and Populist Caucuses in promoting fiscal responsibility and a new, responsible way forward for this country's economic future.

DIGGING THE DEEP HOLE OF DEBT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, today we are voting on whether or not to raise the debt limit so the government can borrow more money. Borrowing and spending is out of control.

This is one of my kid's old credit cards. When it reached the spending limit, it meant there was no more room on the credit card for one of my four kids to spend more money. So when it reached the limit, they begged Daddy to raise the limit so they could spend more money. And if I raised the limit, spending always increased until that new limit was reached.

Today we're voting on whether or not to add \$1.9 trillion more to the national credit card limit. So what happens if we say "no" to all the borrowing? We might have to quit spending money. Do the American people really want their government spending and borrowing less money? I think they do.

This is my congressional voting card. I will be using this card to vote against more debt on the American people. When you find yourself in a financial hole, stop digging.

Don't borrow more money and buy a backhoe and dig a deeper hole of debt. And that's just the way it is.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN JOHNNY

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Yucca Mountain Johnny and the people of the State of Nevada, I want to thank the President for putting the kibosh on the Yucca Mountain project, which would have shipped 77,000 tons of toxic nuclear radioactive waste across 43 States to be buried in a hole in the Nevada desert, where we have groundwater problems, seismic activity, volcanic activity, no radiation standards, no way to safely transport the waste, and no canister that currently exists that could store the waste without corroding.

The President came to Nevada 20 times during the campaign and pledged to stop Yucca Mountain. This week, he honored his pledge. The people of the State of Nevada are grateful that he ended this expensive, dangerous, foolish project.

On behalf of Yucca Mountain Johnny, and myself, we thank you, Mr. President. Way to go.

CASH FOR COURTROOMS

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

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Remember September 11, 2001? Two planes hit the World Trade Center. One plane crashed into the Pentagon and another was stopped from hitting its targets in Washington by the brave action of its passengers. All together, thousands died—civilians and soldiers—in that terrorist attack of war.

Now, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the self-professed mastermind of this act, and his four co-conspirators are to be tried for this act. But the administration wants to take them out of the detention facility at the Navy base Guantanamo and try them in a civilian court, not a military court. To sweeten the deal, the administration is offering \$200 million in a cash for courtrooms deal.

No amount of Federal funds can compensate for the risk this trial would place on the people of New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, or any other State that would seem to have jurisdiction. This unnecessarily jeopardizes the safety of the citizens, the jurors, and the judges in those communities.

Mohammed and his coconspirators should be tried not in a civilian court for the terrorist acts of war. The American people get it. They want them to be judged by a military court. Why doesn't Washington get it, too?

POPULIST CAUCUS BLUEPRINT ON RECOVERY

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I rise today as a founding member of the Populist Caucus to urge my colleagues to support the plan to create jobs and rein in Wall Street. We must end these big corporate bonuses to executives at financial firms that were bailed out by the taxpayers.

Just yesterday, it was reported that AIG is spending another \$100 million in bonuses. The people who helped to get us into this mess should not be rewarded while their companies still owe money to the American people.

That is why the Populist Caucus is supporting H.R. 4426, the Wall Street Bonus Tax Act. This bill would tax the bonuses of the bailed-out companies to help small businesses by providing direct lending and other financial assistance.

In addition, the Populist Caucus is supporting H.R. 4191, the Let Wall Street Pay for Restoration of Main Street Act. This bill would create a small transaction fee on certain trades—not the small trades of individual investors or retirement accounts—and it would use those funds to support job creation and to pay down the debt.

Madam Speaker, Wall Street has gone right back to their old ways, but small businesses and families are still suffering. Wall Street must now help small businesses and workers. These bills would help, and I urge my colleagues to support them.

FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, recently the Economist Magazine had an article in which they said it was time for the President to get tough, and in it, it pointed to the fact that he needed to be serious about the trade issue. It congratulated him for not taking a step backward toward protectionism. But the fact of the matter is, by doing nothing, we are taking a step backward.

Now I'm glad to see that the Secretary of Commerce, Mr. Locke, is today launching an initiative which will encourage greater trade. Well, it's wonderful to say that we need to focus on a small business, 21st century, export-oriented trade policy, but the fact is the only way that we can do that is if we pry open new markets for union and nonunion workers in the United States of America at companies like Caterpillar, Whirlpool, and other companies. We can do that by doing what the President failed to do in his State of the Union message after making a great statement about trade, and that is: send up the agreements that are pending that have been signed for Panama, Colombia, and South Korea. The votes are here if we could have that on the floor of the House ASAP so that we create good American jobs.