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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. TONKO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 23, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable PAUL TONKO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

HONORING SYLVIA UNZUETA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, in just a few weeks we will be celebrating Women's History Month; and to kick that off, I would like to recognize an individual who is a shining example of the difference that one person can make.

Sylvia Unzueta's life is a testament to how adversity can motivate one to not only better oneself but also to serve the greater sisterhood.

Born in Cuba, Sylvia came to the United States in 1961 at the age of 13

through the Peter Pan program. Not only did she leave behind all that she knew, but Sylvia did not see her parents again until she was 26 years old. The experience of arriving in the United States alone at such a young age instilled in Sylvia a sense of duty to others in need.

Acknowledging the sacrifice that her parents had made in order to send her to the United States to escape Castro's tyranny, Sylvia pursued a higher education here in the United States. She attained a master's degree in public administration from the Kennedy School at Harvard University.

After completing her education, Sylvia poured herself into serving her community, especially helping young and vulnerable women and children be able to reach their full potential. During the Mariel boatlift, she helped those Cubans who, just like her so many years before, had come to escape tyranny and build a new life here in America.

Sylvia has worked with the Federal Government and with the University of Miami on issues facing unaccompanied children who come to our great country. She served as an assistant city manager for the City of Miami and later as acting director for Miami-Dade Parks.

One of Sylvia's greatest passions is her belief in citizenship diplomacy as a key to closer and even more meaningful relationships among people, nations, and cultures. To that end, Sylvia has chaired the Miami-Dade County's sister-city relationship with the city of Santa Cruz de Tenerife in Spain.

Furthering her efforts to support women, she helped create the annual In the Company of Women awards ceremony during her tenure with Miami-Dade County. This ceremony has helped to recognize the accomplishments of so many inspirational women from my South Florida community. Her service was profiled in a book enti-

tled "A Woman's Place is Everywhere," which was co-written by Olympic champion Jackie Joyner-Kersey.

One would think that, with so much accomplished, Sylvia would take some time off for herself, but she has soldiered on, offering her help where it is needed most. After Haiti was devastated by this most recent terrible earthquake, Sylvia has devoted her time to help. Her work with Haiti began years ago, actually, when she became involved in the welfare of displaced Haitian children who were living in the Dominican Republic.

Sylvia's life has been and will continue to be a source of inspiration for South Florida, for our Nation, and, indeed, for women throughout the world. Our community is a better place because of Sylvia Unzueta. Felicidades, mi amiga. Congratulations, my friend.

DIGGING OUT FROM THE RECESSION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as the mid-Atlantic region continues to dig out from historic winter snowstorms, it reminds us of our efforts to continue to dig out of the Great Recession. The snow finally stopped falling, yet it has taken us a long time to get back to normal. Thousands of people waited in subfreezing temperatures for days for their power to be restored; thousands more waited days for their streets to be plowed. Despite best efforts, the recovery has taken time. Our economic recovery also takes time.

The Great Recession of 2007 has officially lasted for 19 months. It was the longest recession since the Great Depression. Seven hundred forty-one thousand Americans lost their jobs in January of 2008. In the first quarter of 2009, GDP tumbled an astonishing 5.4

□ 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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percent. By March, the Dow Jones Industrial Average had plummeted more than 53 percent. Unemployment rose to 10.2 percent, a 26-year high.

Without immediate action, Mr. Speaker, the economy was on the brink of falling into a devastating depression. With more than 700,000 Americans losing their jobs every month when we took office, we had to act immediately, and we did.

The Great Recession lasted 2 years, and a full recovery will take time. But we made significant improvements in all areas of the economy, and we are in recovery now. Second quarter GDP in 2009 slipped 0.7 percent. The following quarter saw a return to economic growth of 2.2 percent. And in the fourth quarter of 2009, GDP exceeded expectations and registered an outstanding 5.7 percent growth, a swing of more than 11 percent in just 9 months.

The manufacturing industry grew in January 2010 for the sixth consecutive month and, according to the Institute for Supply Management, is at its highest level since August of 2004. Retail spending, a critical component of recovery, increased 0.5 percent in January. The stock market has increased almost 60 percent since its March low, beginning to restore 401(k)s and college funds.

Mark Zandi, a Republican economist from Moody's and former economic adviser to Senator JOHN MCCAIN during his presidential campaign, said, "I don't think it's an accident that the economy has gone out of recession and into recovery at the same time that the stimulus is providing its maximum economic impact."

Mr. Speaker, our job is not finished, but our efforts have saved the economy from complete collapse and half-restored growth.

A full jobs recovery will also take time. Monthly job growth during the economic boom in the late 1990s was 231,000. The 2000s saw much worse job conditions. Through the 8 years of the Bush administration, annual job growth was the worst since World War II, averaging just 0.2 percent, less than half of the next lowest administration. We had our work cut out for us from the start, but we acted decisively and created the conditions for job growth. Job losses that were 741,000 when we started here, by November of 2009, we had in fact created 64,000 jobs net. As a consequence of declining job losses, the unemployment rate has begun to fall from 10.2 percent to 9.7 percent today.

It will take time to fully dig out of this economic morass. Therefore, it is critical we maintain the course and allow our efforts to continue their positive effect.

Mr. Speaker, the mid-Atlantic region suffered a second serious winter storm within the same week. For those who hadn't fully dug out from the first record blizzard, the additional snowfall was a daunting and dangerous challenge. The same holds true for our economy. But, unlike the weather, we

can have an impact. Americans have always been persevering. If we stay the careful course that has led to the beginnings of our recovery, we can avoid the dangers of a double-dip recession. We can and will maintain our economic recovery until every American has a chance to return to work.

RECOGNIZING THE 1-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, as we have said many times recently, we are acknowledging and recognizing the 1-year anniversary of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. It is interesting on these anniversaries that we have considerable discussions about whether the act, or any other act, was successful or not.

Just watching Sunday morning's national talk shows was a very interesting experience, because we had on one show Governor Granholm from Michigan and Governor Barbour from Mississippi, and you would have believed that the two of them came from different planets or at least that they were talking about two very different pieces of legislation.

Jennifer Granholm talked about tens of thousands of jobs being created in Michigan, beginning the foundation, setting the foundation for a new explosion of battery technologies and energy technologies. Governor Barbour on the other hand said, "Well, we got a few jobs, we've paved a few roads, but it really wasn't that good of a program."

My own Senator and my constituent, Senator MCCONNELL, was on another talk show saying, "Yeah, the governors like it. It funds a lot of government jobs." Well, I am going to get to that in a minute, because those government jobs are not just government jobs. Those are not bureaucrats. Those are teachers, those are firefighters, those are police officers. Those are people who are providing critical public services to our constituents. But let's talk about where we were a year ago.

My colleague from Virginia just talked about a lot of the data reflecting what the situation was in the economy several years ago and last year when the Recovery Act went into effect. But let's talk about what we were trying to do then, because this wasn't just about creating jobs. As all the economists have said, we faced a considerable gap in demand in the economy, as much as \$1 trillion a year. That is the capacity of the economy versus the demand for goods and services. And when you have that kind of gap, if you have too many people working and too little demand, people get laid off. That is what has happened in our economy. Nobody else was filling that gap, so economists across the

spectrum said government has to be the spender of last resort. We have to fill that gap because consumers aren't spending.

So what did we do? We not only put in programs that would create jobs through infrastructure spending and investment, but we also said we need to make sure that people have their unemployment benefits, because unemployment benefits are spent; they go directly into the economy as quickly as possible.

We wanted to give tax cuts. Many of our Republican colleagues asked us to do that, so 95 percent of the American people have received a tax cut. Now, a lot of them don't know it. As a matter of fact, I understand there is a poll now of Tea Party supporters in which only 2 percent say they actually think the taxes have decreased in the last year; 95 percent don't. But, in fact, virtually 95 percent of those people have received a tax cut.

But let's talk about just the experience in my own congressional district in my own State. As Senator MCCONNELL said, it is only helping support a few government jobs. Well, in fact, in my district, because of the first-time homebuyers credit, sales of homes in Louisville have had four successive months of gains, substantial gains. Because of stimulus fund investment, GE's Appliance Park is bringing 400 jobs back from China to help build a new energy-efficient water heater in Louisville, Kentucky. Those aren't government jobs, but private sector jobs.

□ 1045

The stimulus moneys helped retain 600 teachers in Jefferson County Public Schools. We have a new maintenance facility being built at our public transit company; 80 new construction jobs building this energy-efficient facility. Stimulus funds provided a billion dollars to shore up our KCHIP program. That is health insurance for children. We had funding for career training for 500 at-risk young people. We had \$26 million for remodeling and renovating schools.

Now, Senator MCCONNELL may think those aren't jobs, but I don't think those schools are renovating themselves. There are people working to renovate those schools, as well as building a new Beechmont Fire Station, \$2.2 million. Those are human beings working because of the Recovery Act.

In all just in my district we have served more than 4,000 people. According to local government, which is tracking the funds very carefully, we have created 1,800 jobs just in Louisville, Kentucky, and we have, again, provided numerous public services both in Louisville and throughout the State.

Now, we have a long way to go. The Recovery Act was not a cure-all. We can have our doubts and our differences about whether it has succeeded as well as it might have, but the fact is there