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House of Representatives

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

PRAYER

Reverend Doug Tanner, Faith and Politics Institute, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we ask Your blessing this day on the work of this House, and on the hearts and minds of its Members.

At this time of year when nights grow long and temperatures fall, guard us, we pray, against seeing those with whom we agree as bearers of light and warmth and those with whom we disagree as harbingers of darkness and cold. Awaken instead an awareness that dark places of ego and arrogance reside in each of us, as do light places of compassion and camaraderie. Save us from shallowness. Guide us toward depth of soul and strength of spirit. Remind us there are better angels in our nature to carry us toward the land of liberty and justice for all, if we will but open ourselves to their wisdom.

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 Texas (Mr. SAM JOHNSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SAM JOHNSON 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment bills of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 4387. An act to designate the Federal building located at 100 North Palafox Street in Pensacola, Florida, as the "Winston E. Arnov Federal Building".

H.R. 5651. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at 515 9th Street in Rapid City, South Dakota, as the "Andrew W. Bogue Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

H.R. 5706. An Act to designate the building occupied by the Government Printing Office located at 31451 East United Avenue in Pueblo, Colorado, as the "Frank Evans Government Printing Office Building".

H.R. 5773. An Act to designate the Federal building located at 6401 Security Boulevard in Baltimore, Maryland, commonly known as the Social Security Administration Operations Building, as the "Robert M. Ball Federal Building".

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 987. An Act to protect girls in developing countries through the prevention of child marriage, and for other purposes.

S. 3998. An Act to extend the Child Safety Pilot Program.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

ADOPTION TAX CREDIT

(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, there is a great debate over the January 1 tax increases of over \$2,000 annually per family. I strongly believe we need to extend tax relief for

all Americans to create jobs, and I hope that the bipartisan issue of the adoption tax credit is also quickly extended.

While extremely rewarding, the adoption process may be expensive, often pricing out hardworking individuals and couples. To help keep the dream of parenting alive, Congress originally passed, and President Clinton signed, a \$5,000 tax credit per adoptive family. A great success, this credit was later increased to \$10,000. Today, however, we are facing a looming deadline that threatens this financial incentive and compromises the ability of average American families to adopt.

I urge Speaker PELOSI to immediately schedule a vote on H.R. 213, the Adoption Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2009, before the adjournment of the 111th Congress. When it comes to the adoption process, lawmakers should work to advance the dream of a family.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

ROADWAY SAFETY

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

Mr. WALZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about roadway safety and infrastructure and the role it plays in saving lives and growing our economy.

Every year, approximately 34,000 men, women, and children die on our Nation's roadways. Although this number has decreased dramatically over recent years, we still have a long way to go.

One of the major factors in that decrease was a program this body created in the last transportation authorization bill called the Highway Safety Improvement Program. This common-sense program seeks to reduce traffic fatalities and serious injuries by making improvements to infrastructure

□ 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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such as road signs, guardrails, rumble strips, and other safety measures.

According to a study commissioned by the American Traffic Safety Services Association, for every \$1 million invested in roadway safety, we save seven lives. Taking away the tragedy of all of those lost lives, that number, in terms of economic benefit, is \$42 million saved by saving these lives—a 42 to 1 return on our money is pretty darn good.

I applaud Chairman OBERSTAR and Ranking Member MICA for including the Highway Safety Improvement Program in their current reauthorization draft. This program saves lives, puts people to work, and strengthens America's transportation system.

I urge my colleagues to work diligently to pass a new multiyear transportation bill.

□ 1020

TAX HIKES

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it's just a few days till all taxpaying Americans will be hit with the largest tax hike in history in the wake of the longest recession since the Great Depression. Given this country's economic condition, I think a huge tax hike is exactly what we don't need. We ought to be creating jobs, boosting the economy.

Apparently, the Democrats think a \$3.8 trillion tax hike is the answer. I say make the tax rates permanent and let's get this economy moving again with new jobs and investment. Empower small businesses to grow, hire, and expand. They can add more employees, buy more equipment, and rent bigger spaces. We ought to support them by stopping the largest tax hike in history.

If we want Americans to prosper, they want, need, and deserve better than the Democrats' massive tax increases.

IN SUPPORT OF MIDDLE CLASS TAX CUTS

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

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to provide tax cuts for 98 percent of all Americans—on earnings up to \$250,000. But as you just heard and as you are going to hear throughout the day, the Republicans don't want to have that tax cut for 98 percent of the people, saving them some \$2,000. They want them for millionaires and billionaires, those guys who don't need it. That's where they are going to focus their efforts, to block tax cuts for those in the middle income ranges. That's their whole purpose from this point on, is to block any action in this House or in the Senate.

The Republicans want to take care of those people who can already take care of themselves, take care of themselves very well, by giving tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires; while Democrats are going to look out for middle income earners and we are going to fight hard today to make sure there are tax cuts for those earning up to \$250,000.

Now, those tax cuts are for everybody, even the super giant wealthy, but only up to their first \$250,000 in earnings. We will work hard today to make sure the middle income earners are protected.

POLICE CHIEF HERMILA GARCIA IN MEOQUI, MEXICO MURDERED

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Chief of Police Hermila Garcia is the latest victim in the land of lawless days in Mexico. Chief Garcia was at her job only 51 days when she was brutally murdered by drug cartel assassins. In a brazen ambush, they shot Chief Garcia seven times when she was headed off to work.

So many police chiefs have been murdered in Mexico that no one wants the job. Trained officers are refusing promotions, leaving untrained citizens to run the police department. In the border town of El Vergel, two housewives are the top cops in town. In Chihuahua, the new police chief is a 20-year-old student.

There is a border war going on, and the violence will only get worse on both sides of the line of lawlessness. The rule of law is being stolen by the hand of the gun. We must help our neighbors in Mexico and also secure our border with armed National Guard troops. Otherwise, this wind brewing from the south will bring America the whirlwind.

And that's just the way it is.

PERMANENT TAX CUTS TO MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES

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

Mr. CROWLEY. Today, the House will vote to provide permanent tax cuts to middle class American families. That means no more marriage penalty, lower taxes on family incomes, tax cuts to make college more affordable, and expand small businesses, creating jobs. All for middle class families who earn \$250,000 or less.

But the Republicans are expected to vote "no." Why? Because they say we need to provide tax cuts to the richest 1 percent in America. That's right. The Republican Party will add another \$700 billion to the deficit to assist the richest 1 percent—like Trouble, Leona Helmsley's dog, who inherited \$12 million.

Under the Republican plan, if Trouble doesn't get a tax break, no one else should. No tax cuts for hardworking families. No tax cuts for those living day by day, trying to make ends meet.

My colleagues, adding another \$700 billion to our deficit, that's trouble. Trouble for middle class families, trouble to taxpayers, and trouble to our children and our grandchildren who will be saddled with that debt.

It's clear to me, Mr. Speaker, under Republican rule tax policy will go to the dogs.

PASS A BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

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

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, as our national debt climbs to \$14 trillion, on its way to \$20 trillion, I commend the President for taking on this new Debt Commission. But the bottom line is for the last 50 years, we've balanced the budget five times out of 50. If you look at 49 out of 50 Governors, they have to balance the budget. If I look at what happens in Florida, they had a \$70 billion budget 4 years ago. They've got a \$60 billion budget today. But they have to balance their budget. They've got to make the tough choices.

That's why my first week here I introduced a constitutional balanced budget amendment that says simply, we don't spend more than we take in. Small businesses, families, they've got to make the tough choices every day. We don't need to. Why? Because we have the capacity to borrow. That's got to change. Otherwise, we're going to bankrupt America.

We need a constitutional balanced budget amendment today.

PASS THE DREAM ACT

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

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the DREAM Act. The lives of hundreds of thousands of de facto Americans hang in the balance. The DREAM Act would provide a route for young people who were brought here, who know no other country, to take on the full rights and responsibilities as Americans.

The DREAM Act is not only a human rights issue, it's an economic issue and it's a competitiveness issue. These young people are some of our very best Americans. And it's not an American value to force the sins of the father upon the son.

These young people were brought here when they were 2 years old, 3 years old. It can't be argued that they violated the law of their own volition. They know no other country. To senselessly deport them to a country where they don't know anybody and frequently don't speak the language