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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TONKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE NIGHTMARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, tonight this Congress passed the so-called DREAM Act. Several of us on the floor of the House said that this act would be more accurately referred to as the "affirmative action amnesty act."

The bill is a piece of legislation that the American people should pay close attention to, and they should see whether or not their Representatives

in Congress are, indeed, representing their interests or if they are involved in supporting the interests of the people who are not citizens of this country and who have come here illegally.

□ 2120

Now in this case, this bill would not grant amnesty to all illegal immigrants, but instead, the reason it's called the DREAM Act is because it would legalize the status of several million illegals who are young people in our country. Well, what does several million new citizens—or should we say legal residents—of our country mean to the well-being of the American people? Yes, we understand that several million young illegals now made legal in their status would certainly be their dream, but what does it do to other Americans? What is the effect? Is it a dream or a nightmare? The American people need to look and see who voted for what and who is representing whose interests here.

I want to note that illegal immigration is probably one of the greatest threats to the well-being of my constituents, and they understand that. And I would think that people throughout our country understand that the quality of our education is going down, the quality of America's health care is going down, our personal security—meaning the security of our neighborhoods and our families—is going down as the criminal justice system is put under incredible strains by this massive flow of illegals into our country.

By legalizing the status of 2 million younger illegal immigrants, what we are doing is making sure that those people who are considering coming to our country illegally will certainly bring their children—all of them—with them, realizing that the chances are that if the American people see that someone's here illegally and is a young person, we now have set the precedent that we will legalize their status sometime in the future.

What we are really talking about is encouraging a massive flow of illegals into our country bringing their children with them. And what will that do to the education system of our country? What will that do to the health care requirements that people now are finding that their own health care facilities are overcrowded and that the budgets for providing health care to the less fortunate are being strained to the breaking point throughout the country?

This bill was done at the expense of the American people. The young people who they are helping, the young people who supposedly would be assisted in getting a college education if they go to school, they're going to have their status legalized. Yes, those people may be helped, but it is being done directly at the expense of the American people.

This is about as bad as it gets when we have Members of Congress that, instead of considering what this will do, what their actions will do in harm to

their own constituents, have decided just to, yes, side with those people—who are wonderful people overseas. There is no doubt about most of the young people we are talking about, and most of the illegal immigrants coming into our country are wonderful people, but their well-being—we are not being selfish by suggesting that at a time of unemployment, a time when the budgets for all of our own programs are being strained to the breaking point, that we have to take care of our own people before we encourage other people to come here illegally.

I am proud that our country has a very liberal and open policy for immigration. We allow more legal immigrants into our country than any other country of the world. In fact, all of the other countries of the world combined do not permit the legal immigration into their societies as we permit into America. But if we don't watch out for our people, if we do not carefully look at this issue and try to say what is good for our people, our people will be severely damaged, and that will be the product of the DREAM Act. It will be the Nightmare Act of the American people.

Perhaps the worst element of this is this bill—and I know there are many people who are suggesting that that's not true, but it is true that this bill will provide an affirmative action status for those illegals who have been legalized who happen to come from a minority background. Now, most illegal immigrants who come here are Hispanics or some other minority. Thus, if their status is legalized, all of a sudden all of the laws that give preference to minorities in the United States, all of these preferences are provided to these people who were illegal just a few days ago.

We are not providing equality. What we're providing is that illegals now will take their spot at the head of the line when it comes to job training, when it comes to education and being accepted at universities. In terms of all of these types of programs in which racial preferences have been written into the law, these illegals will now have a status ahead of U.S. citizens. This is about as bad as it gets.

This Congress is supposed to represent the interests of the American people. In this case, the interests of the American people were betrayed with a misplaced value system being focused on the plight of, yes, some very deserving young people—several million of them—who are here illegally. I would hope that the American people take a look closely at this vote and realize what it signifies.

There are many people struggling right now in our country. Our social programs are strained to the breaking point. And yes, what happens when you legalize the status of several million young people and you make sure that these young people, many of whom are of a minority status, that they then receive the preferences written into our

law for our own minority citizens? It will cause great damage to our country and to the very most vulnerable Americans that we are supposed to be representing.

So tonight I would ask the American people to look closely at the vote of their Member of Congress. Was their Member of Congress representing them? Was their Member of Congress representing, and with all good intentions, but representing the interests of someone else? I would say that the illegal immigration issue is an issue that reflects that dichotomy more in our country than any of the other major issues that we face as a people.

So tonight the choice is stark, and the people here have cast their vote. It is now time for the American people to hold us accountable; if we are representing their interests and the interests of the less fortunate people in our society or whether or not we are giving away scarce resources and putting our own people in jeopardy in order to perhaps attract as voters, or whatever, illegal immigrants who are coming to our society and thus attracting even more illegals to come here. And of course, now after they come here, they will make sure that they bring their entire family. And once, by the way, a young person is legalized, that young person, through family unification laws and programs, will be able to then start the action necessary to bring even more and more illegals into our country to have their status changed.

Is this in the interest of the United States? Is this in the interest of the American people? I say no. And I say that the American people need to pay attention and judge us on our vote on this act tonight, the DREAM Act, which is the Nightmare Act.

Let's wake up, America. Your country is being taken from you and given to somebody else.

CONGRESSMAN MITCHELL BIDS FAREWELL TO CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. MITCHELL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MITCHELL. Mr. Speaker, Mo Udall once said that those elected to positions of leadership have a moral obligation to exercise leadership. Since coming to Congress, and throughout my whole career, I have always done what I believed was in the best interests for this district, for our State, and for our country. This is what I was elected to do, to make tough decisions, knowing that some were not always as popular as others; and I would not have changed one thing, not one vote, not one decision.

When I think about what we have accomplished together in Congress over the last 4 years, I know that there are many reasons to be proud. We were able to make college more affordable for millions of young Americans. We were able to invest in clean energy

technology that will clean our environment and set our Nation on a path to energy independence.

□ 2130

We raised the minimum wage for working families across this country. We were able to ensure equal pay for an equal day's work for women. We passed historic health care reform that will benefit millions of Americans, making health care insurance more accessible and affordable for thousands of individuals, families, and small businesses.

But I am most proud of the work we've done to take care of our Nation's veterans. Together, we made it possible for our veterans, active duty, National Guard, and reserve to empower themselves by furthering their education. I was honored to be part of an effort to pass the 21st century GI Bill into law.

We also know that many of our returning veterans and those who served in past generations bear wounds that can't be seen. Too many continue to struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder and are at risk for suicide. Together, we've pushed the VA to provide more mental health assistance to those returning from Iraq and Afghanistan because our veterans deserve the highest attention and respect they have earned when they come home, and we have work to do to bring them all home.

But as much as we've accomplished, there is still more to do. I have always said that you can't be successful unless a lot of other people want you to be. And I have been blessed to have so many people who have been supportive of me. For the better part of close to 40 years, I've held the titles of teacher, councilman, mayor, senator, and Congressman.

And there are a lot of people I want to thank for being with me every step of the way. A special thanks goes to my family: My wife, Marianne; my son, Mark; my daughter, Amy; and my five grandchildren. I also want to thank my staff. They were the most hardworking, talented, and loyal bunch that you would ever find, and I am very grateful for them. Lastly, I want to thank the people of Arizona's Fifth Congressional District for allowing me to represent them in the United States Congress for the past 4 years. It's been an overwhelming honor to have had the opportunity to serve my district.

TAX CUT REPERCUSSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, here in the House and in the Senate and with the President's pen, we make policy for America. We make foreign policy. We make security policy. We make health policy and environmental policy. And we make economic policy. And it's time to take a close look at exactly what the tax cuts for the rich have

done for us for the past 9 years because now we are going to make policy for not just the next 2 years, but I believe for far longer than that.

Let's simply take a look at the 9 lean years that we have experienced under tax cuts for the rich and compare them to the 9 fat years that preceded that. The first thing you'll know, which you can see from this chart here, is that in the 9 previous years before we enacted the Bush tax cuts for the rich, 23 million jobs were created. Since we enacted those tax cuts for the rich, we have lost 2 million jobs in America.

The next chart shows that the average unemployment rate as a result rose from 5.5 percent approximately to well over 6 percent after we enacted the Bush tax cuts. So often I have heard that the Bush tax cuts for the rich will somehow create jobs when the record is directly to the contrary. In fact, it doesn't only affect people who work, it affects everyone.

If you look at the net worth of this country, the net worth of America, the value of all of our schools, our homes, our 401(k)s, our small businesses, our cars, our furnishings, everything that we own in America, according to the Federal Reserve, in the 9 years before we enacted the Bush tax cuts, home values in America rose by 37 percent. In the 9 years after we enacted the Bush tax cuts, our home values in America rose only 13 percent. And as a result of that—because our homes are, for many of us, the most valuable thing that we own—as a result of that, our net worth as a country increased by 93 percent before we enacted the Bush tax cuts and by only 26 percent after we enacted the Bush tax cuts. Now I think that's a very important statistic. We are taking into account the rich and the poor, the black and the white, the male and the female, people all across the country. When we didn't have the Bush tax cuts, our net worth as a country increased by 93 percent. When we did, it increased only by 26 percent.

Now, there's been a lot of discussion lately about the deficit, the debt. If you look at what the effect was on the deficit and on the debt, you will find that in the 9 years before we enacted the Bush tax cuts, we had on average a 2.37 percent surplus in the Federal budget. In those 9 years, we actually had a surplus on the average of 2.3 percent of gross domestic product. And since the Bush tax cuts were enacted, we have had a deficit of 8.5 percent on the average each year.

We all know the dramatic effect that the decline in the economy has had on the poor and on the middle class. But let's take a short moment to look at what effect it actually had on the rich. Before we enacted the Bush tax cuts, the S&P 500 index—the most broad measure of stock market performance in the United States, 500 different companies—the S&P 500 increased in those 9 years by an amazing 285 percent. Now, since more than half of all stocks in America are owned by the top 1 percent, the most wealthy Americans,