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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Pastor Mark Williamson, Federal Intercessors, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Father God, in a spirit of worship, I pray, ask, and speak forth the fullness of Your blessings for this House of Representatives, its staffers, and all family members. That You bless them to do the work of God in our civil government, reminding them that "Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people."

Bless them with personal wisdom and the governmental order of God. Bless them to realize the answers they all seek are found only in the Bible, and obedience to it.

Bless this House to become a "House of prayer," to always seek Your instructions.

Bless this House with the truth and mercy of God—that "drives out iniquity" and deception.

Bless this House with Your presence. May the goodness of God protect, unite, inspire, and make provision for each Member. May Your will be done in this House, and these United States, as it is in Heaven.

In the Name of the Father, Jesus Your Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CARNAHAN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CARNAHAN 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

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

HONORING TWO AMERICAN PATRIOTS, ICE SPECIAL AGENTS JAIME J. ZAPATA AND VICTOR AVILA

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

Mr. FARENTHOLD. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to express my deepest sorrow about the tragic attack on American law enforcement that happened earlier this week in Mexico.

Tuesday afternoon, two agents from the Immigration and Customs Enforcement were attacked while driving between Mexico City and Monterrey. Today, I honor the sacrifice of Special Agent Jaime J. Zapata, who lost his life in service to our country.

Special Agent Zapata, from Brownsville, Texas, joined ICE in 2006. His brother also serves with ICE.

A second agent, Victor Avila, was injured in the attack and remains in stable condition.

My thoughts and prayers are with both agents and their families.

These two brave men took dangerous assignments, and Agent Zapata made the ultimate sacrifice. They were two of the hundreds of ICE personnel throughout the world, fighting the war on drugs—money laundering, smuggling, and human trafficking.

I have been in contact with law enforcement, and they are working to en-

sure that the perpetrators of this horrible attack are brought to justice.

I offer my deepest condolences to the family of Special Agent Zapata. He died for a just cause, and will be remembered as a man of courage and honor.

HONORING THE LIFE OF MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PLAYER AND MANAGER CHUCK TANNER

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Major League Baseball player and manager Chuck Tanner, who died in his hometown of New Castle, in my district, on February 11 at the age of 82.

After hitting a home run in his first Major League at-bat in 1955, Tanner played eight seasons and later rose through the ranks to manage four Major League teams, including the Pittsburgh Pirates, who acquired him in a 1977 trade. It's in Pittsburgh where he reached the pinnacle of his baseball career, in 1979, when he managed the Pirates to a World Series championship.

Following his retirement from baseball, Tanner returned to New Castle with his late wife, Babs, of 56 years. Chuck became a fixture at the New Castle restaurant that bears his name and where he ate nearly all his meals. Nearby, the Shenango High School baseball field is also named in his honor.

Chuck Tanner spent a lifetime in baseball, and made friends and fans the world over; but it is in New Castle where he will be most fondly remembered and most sorely missed.

□ 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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HOMELAND SECURITY: "THE BORDER IS SECURE" NOT SO FAST

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, according to the Secretary of Homeland Security, our southern border is secure.

Well, not so fast with that pronouncement.

According to the General Accounting Office—those are the people that we pay to actually give us the true facts on such matters—half of the southern border is not under the operational control of the Border Patrol. Forty-four percent is secure; the rest is not. So who operates the other 56 percent? And, further, a mere 15 percent of the border is considered airtight.

Texas is the least secure border of all the Southern States. Our Border Patrol does a fine job but they need some help. The border sheriffs are superior lawmen, but they are overwhelmed with cross-border crime. With 37 percent of the people in Texas border jails being foreign nationals, those sheriffs, like the Border Patrol, are outmanned, out-gunned, and out-financed.

There is a border war going on, and it's time to send the National Guard to the southern border to protect the homeland.

Homeland Security should deal in reality, not myth and propaganda, and realize that over half of the border is the wide open spaces and that it remains porous to the drug bandits.

And that's just the way it is.

THE REPUBLICAN SPENDING PLAN

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, right now Congress' top priority should be creating jobs and lowering the deficit with intelligent spending cuts.

The President's proposed budget is a good starting point, putting us on track to lower the deficit by \$1.1 trillion over 10 years.

But instead of focusing on a bipartisan approach, the Republican spending bill includes cuts that will destroy jobs—and I say destroy jobs—and kick hundreds of thousands of children to the curb; 55,000 fewer teachers in the classroom; 1,300 fewer police officers on our streets; 200,000 kids kicked out of Head Start—while many Republicans live in their Capitol offices.

If the Republicans are serious about cutting the deficit, then why were they so happy to support the tax cuts for the wealthiest few Americans?

Today's debate is about the haves and the have-nots. Unfortunately, the have-nots, once again, are getting the short end of the stick.

Let us put aside this misguided bill and work together on a reasonable budget to put America's families first.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF AGENT ZAPATA, U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT SPECIAL AGENT

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express our deepest sorrow about a terrible attack against two agents from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement while they were driving between Mexico City and Monterrey, Mexico.

Special Agent Jaime Zapata tragically lost his life in his service to our country. Special Agent Zapata joined ICE in 2006, and he was most recently detailed to ICE's attach office in Mexico City.

We also send our thoughts and prayers to the second agent, Victor Avila, who was injured in the attack and who remains in stable condition. We pray for him to have a speedy recovery.

Honorable agents like these two men have our Nation at the forefront of their minds each and every day. They work day in and day out on our borders, protecting our Nation's citizens, and we take pride in the dedication that they have.

We are blessed to have brave men and women who work in the service of our Nation every day. Their work can never be underestimated. Our deepest condolences go out to the families of these brave men, of these great American patriots.

□ 0910

AMERICANS WANT JOBS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in strong opposition to the Republican spending plan that would hurt Missouri families that I represent and make it harder for police to keep our neighborhoods safe.

In St. Louis, we learned yesterday that a \$4.6 million budget shortfall for our city's police department might not be covered, which would cost the city 65 active duty officers. Now, some in Congress are talking about slashing critical programs like the COPS program and pulling over 1,300 police officers off the streets.

I'm in favor of a vigorous debate here on cutting red tape and finding commonsense solutions to our Nation's challenges, but eliminating the essential police officers from our streets would put families at risk. Americans still want this Congress to take up a jobs agenda. Instead, we're debating what's been called ideologically driven cuts that kill jobs.

We live in an era of divided government and shared responsibility for America's future. I look forward to working with members of both parties

to make tough choices before us and to finally be able to take up the jobs agenda that our constituents need.

THE DE FACTO DRILLING MORATORIUM IS DESTROYING OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, last week written across America's newspapers were headlines of how Egyptians stood up to what they viewed as a restrictive and arbitrary government.

Perhaps those protests should serve as a wake-up call for us all, if for no other reason than for where they took place. You see, just east of Cairo is the Suez Canal and SuMed pipeline, which combined carry nearly 5 million barrels of oil a day to countries around the world. Egypt's future remains uncertain, and because of the restrictive and arbitrary anti-drilling policies imposed by President Obama, so does the future for thousands of families in south Mississippi. By refusing to issue new drilling permits this administration continues to impose a de facto moratorium on U.S.-based companies, which is having a devastating effect on gulf coast families.

Having worked on an offshore platform, I know firsthand the impact those jobs have on a local economy. Without drilling in the gulf, many small businesses will suffer as more jobs are lost and the effect of those lost wages trickle throughout the economy.

Mr. Speaker, you don't ground the entire airline industry when there's an airplane crash. Now is the time for this administration to do what's right for the American people by allowing further offshore exploration and reducing our reliance on foreign sources of oil.

OPPOSING REPUBLICAN CR SPENDING CUTS

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

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak out against the Republicans' dangerous spending cuts. Our commitment to reducing our deficit must not come at the expense of our Nation's future and the security of our communities. The Republican spending bill is irresponsible and reckless, and the proposal would eliminate jobs at a time when we need to create them the most.

It would have cut funding for 1,300 police officers through the COPS hiring program, and it will eliminate 2,400 jobs for firefighters through the SAFER program. By cutting transportation funding, this bill eliminates 3,427 jobs in New Jersey alone. It rescinds \$2.5 billion for high-speed rail and makes deep cuts to the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which protects outdoor recreational spaces. Additionally, this bill cuts millions from housing programs that help families pay their rent.