

that they have paid into and have been promised and are able to enjoy their retirement after working hard in their careers.

That is why I will continue to fight to protect the dignity of America's seniors and protect them against the devastating effects of the Republican budget proposal.

REPUBLICAN 2012 BUDGET PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 1½ minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

As we're about to close this part of the legislative morning expressions of belief, I would just like to say that for decades, so many people have said that we can't tell the difference between Democrats and Republicans. Well, I think that is over, that the Republicans, in their Ryan-projected budget, have made it abundantly clear that there is a big difference.

All Americans—Democrats, Republicans, and independents—know that we have a tremendous deficit, that the interest is just blocking out programs that we have to support. While it's abundantly clear that there is an emergency that we have to deal with, the Republicans' method of doing this, through the Ryan budget, is to look for the most vulnerable people that we have—the poor that are sick, the older people that are sick, our young people that are trying to get an education.

It seems to me if we take a look at the alternative, in investing now for the future of this great country of ours, to make certain that education is a part of what we're doing, investing in our infrastructure so that as we pay off the debt we are still investing for the future, this is what the Democratic Party is all about. And, Madam Speaker, I truly believe this is what America is all about.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HASTINGS of Washington) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

Rev. Arthur Cavitt, St. Charles Lwanga Center, St. Louis, Missouri, offered the following prayer:

In times like these, we need the Almighty Good Shepherd to be with us.

Lead us, Lord, through valleys and shadows onwards to straight paths. In times like these, we need the God of the breakthrough to give us the ability to see transforming possibilities.

Guide us, Lord, through the challenges of our modern lives where sometimes hope is juxtaposed with despair. Grant that this august body will continue to move towards the common good, mindful of the inherent dignity that You, God, have placed within us.

Grant that our hearts will resound blessed are we among nations. Blessed are we who dwell in this place and claim the potential for more love, peace, and inclusion for all people to partake of the fruits of this magnificent land.

Shepherd us, Lord. The promise of Your goodness and compassion sustains our work and sustains our offering of thanksgiving this hour and evermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WOODALL 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.

WELCOMING REV. ARTHUR CAVITT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. CLAY) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor our guest chaplain, one of my

outstanding constituents, Father Arthur Cavitt.

Father Art, as he is known in St. Louis, is a leader in religious outreach and educational development efforts within the African American Catholic community. His St. Charles Lwanga Center, located in North St. Louis City, offers Bible study, pastoral care, and conducts an outstanding youth ministry.

Father Art's spiritual leadership, through his center and as an educator at Cardinal Ritter College Preparatory, is reaching thousands of young people, changing lives, and helping to reclaim neighborhoods that have seen far too much violence, intolerance and pain.

Father Art is bringing the church's message of love, truth, tolerance, and mutual understanding to those in our community who need it most. I am very honored to salute him today as our special guest.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

THE VICTIMS OF CRIMES ACT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Victims of Crimes Act, or VOCA, as it's called, is a wonderful idea that requires convicted criminals to pay into a fund that is used by crime victims. It is the idea that criminals pay for the system they have created. They pay rent on the courthouse, so to speak, by putting money in a fund that goes to these victims. This VOCA fund is about \$6 billion. This is not taxpayer money. It is money that belongs to victims. But Federal bureaucrats seem to want to rob this fund and pay for other Federal programs.

We cannot allow this money to be taken from victims of violent crime. This money should be placed in a lockbox so it is only used by crime victims and victim services.

During this National Crime Victims Week, our Nation must constantly be sensitive to the needs of people who have been robbed, assaulted, and harmed by criminals. We as a nation are judged not by the way we treat the rich, the powerful, and the famous, but by the way we treat the innocent, the children, the elderly, and victims of crime. And that's just the way it is.

SPEECHLESS

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend my remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

□ 1110

H.R. 25—THE FAIR TAX

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Tax Day. I am sure there are some folks out there who haven't quite filled out all of their forms yet, who haven't quite finished up all of that paperwork yet, but it doesn't have to be that way. There are alternatives to change the Tax Code in this country, and one of those alternatives is the Fair Tax, H.R. 25, which was introduced in this House.

The Fair Tax, H.R. 25, is the only bill in Congress to eliminate the incentive that American companies have to move American jobs overseas. The Fair Tax is the only bill in Congress to change the Tax Code so that those jobs that have moved overseas and so that those dollars that have gone overseas have an incentive to return. The Fair Tax is the only bill in Congress that abolishes the payroll tax—that 15.3 percent FICA tax, which is the highest tax that 80 percent of working American families pay.

The Fair Tax, H.R. 25, is a different way and a better way, and we can make April 15 just another spring day.

PRESERVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation to our generations who built America. That's why we will not allow the Republicans to terminate Medicare with extreme prejudice.

We will not allow them to turn a guarantee for seniors into a voucher program for the insurance industry. We will not allow them to turn Medicare into "Medi-gone." We will not allow them to give us 6,000 reasons to vote against their hair-brained scheme because they want to put \$6,000 worth of more costs on our senior citizens.

This is a noble obligation. It should not be shredded. We should reduce medical inflation, not put this burden on senior citizens. Preserve Medicare and reject the Republican scheme.

OBAMA'S BUDGET GROUNDHOG DAY

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, the White House has presented its sequel budget plan for America, but this sequel looks strangely like the prequel—filled with rhetoric, flat on vision for economic growth, and heavy on new taxes for America's small business owners and job creators.

As a CPA who operated my own practice, I have filed thousands of tax returns for individuals and small busi-

nesses. I have not only met payroll myself, but I have examined the bottom line of businesses that are trying to keep their doors open. The sequel plan offered by the White House will tax those who are trying to expand and invest. It will ultimately cripple job growth and recovery in America.

Chairman PAUL RYAN has presented a plan with a vision for job growth. It supports many of the concepts that as a CPA I have long advocated for, such as simplifying the Tax Code and reducing tax levels for small businesses and families. As a CPA, I know the Ryan plan presents a path to prosperity for America, and I will support it tomorrow.

NATIONAL AUTISM AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize National Autism Awareness Month and to express my support for ongoing efforts across the Nation that are devoted to improving the treatment of those individuals with autism, and their families.

Today, one in 110 children is affected by autism, and my home State of New Jersey has the highest rate of autism in the country. With the help of treatment and support centers, the lives of individuals and families affected by autism are improving every day. I am proud that such a facility exists in my district.

The Center for Autism at The North Ward Center provides the highest quality of care to individuals and families in the greater Newark area. Under one roof, the center offers a seamless and comprehensive range of services for the lifespans of individuals with autism, treating the whole person and the whole family, focusing on strength-based interventions. The center represents a one-stop approach in relieving the burden on already stressed families dealing with autism.

The Center for Autism at The North Ward Center in Newark is only one example of how concentrated care can greatly better the lives of individuals and families affected by autism.

IT IS, PERHAPS, THE END OF THE BEGINNING

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Mr. Speaker, this day marks an historic moment for our country. The rise in Federal spending that has defined the last 3 years has ended.

The bill that we will pass in the House today contains the largest cuts in our budget since the end of World War II. This bill is by no means perfect, and I, like many Americans, want more cuts, and I believe we will get them. These cuts are just the start.

MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

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

Ms. JENKINS. I have the honor and privilege of representing Fort Riley, home of the Big Red One; Fort Leavenworth, host to the Army Command and General Staff College; the 190th Coyotes out at Forbes Field; and nearly 12,000 National Guard and Reserve members.

With this strong military presence comes a large number of military families and children. I rise today in recognition of April as the Month of the Military Child. This is a time for all my colleagues to applaud the strength, sacrifice, heroism, and continued resilience shown by the children of our service men and women.

Kansas is proud to have more than 33,000 children with at least one parent serving in the military, and this month we recognize that when parents serve in the military, their children also serve.

I will continue to do everything I can to support not only our men and women in uniform but their children who sacrifice equally for our country.

RYAN REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, in 1965, when Medicare was passed, only 50 percent of America's seniors could afford to buy health insurance. That was not an accident. It was because the high risk of people over age 65 made that market basically uninsurable.

I'm from Connecticut. We know a little bit about insurance in the State of Connecticut. Looking at the Ryan Republican Medicare plan which would give seniors vouchers to go out and buy insurance, all we're asking for is to repeat history, which is where this country was in 1965.

We must protect a guaranteed benefit for seniors. We learned that lesson throughout the early 1900s through 1965. The Ryan plan takes us back to a time when seniors will be paying massive out-of-pocket costs. The CBO estimates it will triple out-of-pocket costs for seniors. It is the wrong way to go. President Obama's plan that he laid out yesterday, which is a thoughtful, intelligent approach to lower health care costs but protects a guaranteed benefit for seniors, is what this country needs and what our senior citizens need.