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No. 135

## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
September 13, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 5, 2011, 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 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### HONORING AMERICA'S FIRST RESPONDERS ABROAD

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this weekend, we honored those killed by the attack on America on 9/11—10 years ago. Many of those that were killed and gave their lives were first responders. And after the smoke cleared that day from Ground Zero, from the Pentagon down the street, and that special field in Pennsylvania, America went after Islamic terrorists who would murder in the name of religion.

The wars against our enemies have taken us to the desert of the gun and the valley of the sun in Afghanistan and then off to Iraq. I've been to Afghanistan and to Iraq, as many Members have. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that our military that is there representing us is the finest military that has ever existed in the history of this country.

Afghanistan is a land that seems to be cursed by God. It is a hard land. And in Afghanistan, on August 6, 2011, specially trained United States military were headed to root out the Taliban and help our Army Rangers who needed their support. The CH-47 Chinook helicopter they were in was shot down in the Wardak province of Afghanistan. Thirty Americans gave their lives that day, as well as eight loyal Afghans. They were our first responders abroad who go where the timid are not found and the weak of soul are never seen. Here are their names, Mr. Speaker, and their photographs.

The first one here, David Carter, Chief Warrant Officer of the United States Army National Guard, Colorado.

Next is Heath Robinson, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Michigan.

Next to him, Mr. Speaker, is Alexander Bennett, Sergeant, United States Army Reserve, Washington.

Next to him is Kraig Vickers, Senior Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Hawaii.

Number five on this top line here is Jared Day, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Utah.

And the last one on the first row is Jonas Kelsall, Lieutenant Commander, United States Navy SEAL, Louisiana.

I continue with the second row:

Jon Tumilson, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Iowa.

Next to him is Michael Strange, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Pennsylvania.

Aaron Vaughn, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Florida.

Patrick Hamburger, Staff Sergeant, United States Army National Guard, Nebraska.

Next to him is John Faas, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Minnesota.

And the last one on the second row is Matthew Mason, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Missouri.

I continue with the third row of our warriors:

Robert Reeves, a person known by members of my staff, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Louisiana.

Next to him is Stephen Mills, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, from the great State of Texas.

Next to him is Louis Langlais, Master Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, California.

Next, Christopher Campbell, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, North Carolina.

The next warrior is Darrik Benson, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, California.

And the last one on this row is Jason Workman, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Utah.

I continue, Mr. Speaker, and I hope you can see these photographs:

Jesse Pittman, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, California.

Next is Nicholas Spehar, Petty Officer 2nd Class, United States Navy SEAL, Minnesota.

Andrew Harvell, Staff Sergeant, United States Air Force, California.

Daniel Zerbe, Tech Sergeant, United States Air Force, Pennsylvania.

John Brown, Tech Sergeant, United States Air Force, Florida.

Kevin Houston, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Massachusetts.

And the last row, Mr. Speaker:

□ 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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Bryan Nichols, Chief Warrant Officer, United States Army National Guard, Kansas.

Spencer Duncan, Specialist, United States Army Reserve, Kansas.

Nicholas Null, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, West Virginia.

Thomas Ratzlaff, Senior Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Arkansas.

Brian Bill, Chief Petty Officer, United States Navy SEAL, Connecticut.

And John Douangdara, Petty Officer 1st Class, United States Navy SEAL, Nebraska.

Mr. Speaker, these are the men who gave their lives so that others could live. And while we mourn the lives they gave for the rest of us, we should thank the good Lord that such men as these lived—the Americans, the American breed, the rare breed, the finest we have.

And that's just the way it is.

#### REBUILDING AND RENEWING AMERICA

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, there has been much talk about jobs and economic recovery—sadly, more talk than action.

Today's consideration of extending the Surface Transportation Act and the FAA Authorization, both of which have expired, is a positive development. It puts a little more certainty for our partners in the State and local government. It avoids disastrous revenue losses. It's a positive signal of cooperation, with Chairs MICA and BOXER working with Majority Leader REID and Speaker BOEHNER. And it leaves important policies intact.

The 1991 ISTEA framework has proven effective in meeting transportation needs and providing economic activity. But now let's concentrate on what we do need.

We need more money, not less. Certainly we must reject the 30 percent transportation cut that is called for in the Republican budget, or a 34 percent reduction that's called for in the Transportation appropriations bill that is being considered. We need longer-term legislation, not shorter. Three months for aviation, 6 months for transportation is better than what we've been putting up with, but certainly not what our partners deserve.

Finally, we need more partnerships with our regional engines of growth at the local level, not a pullback by the Federal Government. We need a full reauthorization, one that is right sized for America's needs. We need to be more ambitious in terms of what we spend. Remember all the expert bipartisan commissions that called for much greater levels of investment 5 years ago. The need has not declined at all.

□ 1010

We can and we should combine these efforts with deficit reduction and economic recovery. This is what happened with Ronald Reagan in 1982, with Bill Clinton in 1993, what was called for by Simpson and Bowles, the coauthors of President Obama's deficit reduction commission.

Make no mistake. Unmet infrastructure needs threaten the health and safety of our communities, our environment, and our global competitiveness. Congress will find a tremendous coalition supporting bold action from the business community, organized labor, contractors, environmentalists, engineers, architects, local government. The list is extensive, broad, and the commitment is deep. Many communities and some States have already stepped up on their own.

It's now time for the Federal Government to be a better partner, reclaiming the legacy of Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, and Eisenhower, back when infrastructure investment was not partisan or particularly controversial, but a national vision that brought us together.

We can begin by passing this legislation later this afternoon. We need to move to a larger and a longer term agenda as we rebuild and renew America, jump-start the economy, and make our families safer, healthier, and more economically secure.

#### AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, like all my colleagues, I was home during the August break, accepting opportunities to speak at civic clubs, at town forums, and I did speak to a couple of military retiree groups.

Every time that I would make the statement that it is time to bring our troops home from Afghanistan—Mr. Speaker, I'm not an excellent speaker, I'm not even a good speaker, but I got applause, strong applause, from every one of those groups that I just named. They agree with me and many of my colleagues, one being on the floor today, JIM MCGOVERN from Massachusetts, that it's time to bring an end to our involvement in Afghanistan.

The amount of loss of lives is just astounding. And I have beside me a poster that depicts the pain of war. This lady and her little girl are accepting a folded flag off the coffin of her husband and the little girl's daddy. And the little girl is looking up like "I don't know what's happening." The wife is crying.

How many more families have to cry? How many children have to say, "I don't know my daddy; I didn't know my daddy because I was so young when he died"?

The President is asking for a jobs program. I think he's doing the right

thing. Yet we're spending \$10 billion a month in Afghanistan to prop up a corrupt leader. It makes no sense. It doesn't make any sense to the American people, and it makes no sense to many of us in the House, both Republican and Democrat.

I understand from the newspapers that there's a conversation now going on between the United States and Afghanistan which would provide so-called "strategic partnership agreement" between the two, America and Afghanistan, and this means that we could keep approximately 35,000 to 40,000 troops past 2014, 2015. This does not make any sense. I hope that this is not true, but I'm afraid that it is true.

And something else that bothers me about this conversation is that it will not be called a treaty because, if it's called a treaty, it has to come to Congress and be approved by Congress. This, again, takes away the voice of the American people, especially on this issue of Afghanistan, when the American people, in large numbers in all the latest polls, are saying get out, get out, get out.

History has proven that Afghanistan will never be anything more than what it is today. Great nations have tried in the past to try to create a national government in Afghanistan, and it never happened. Here we are going to spend \$10 billion a month, \$120 billion a year, to rebuild Afghanistan, and we don't even have the money to rebuild America.

I hope that the Congress will join those of us, again, Mr. MCGOVERN and myself and many others I could name in the House, that want to bring our troops home.

It brings me back to an article written by Andrew Bacevich. He was a Vietnam veteran himself. His son was killed in Iraq. And he wrote an article in the American Conservative about 2 years ago called "To Die for a Mystique," talking about Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that we will continue to bring forward on the floor of the House the issue of Afghanistan. It's not right to those families. It's not right to our military. Many of them have had five, six, seven deployments. They're tired. They're worn out. They've done their job. Bin Laden is dead. Al Qaeda has been moved out of Afghanistan. It is time to bring them home and rebuild America and help our veterans find jobs. I want to thank the President for mentioning that yesterday. We've got to help our veterans find jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to close now as I always do because it comes from my heart. I've signed over 10,374 letters since we went into Iraq. That was a mistake on my part to give President Bush the authority to go into a war that never had to be fought.

So I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God, in His loving arms, to hold the families