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No. 175

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

November 16, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KENNY MARCHANT 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.

NEW ROUTE FOR STALLED KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, in today's Reuters report, "Secretary of State Hillary Clinton Wednesday urged claimants to the South China Sea not to resort to intimidation to push their cause in the potentially oil-rich waters, an indirect reference to China ahead of a regional leaders' summit."

Why are we concerned about crude oil in dangerous places of the world? It is because we do not have North Amer-

ican energy security, hence the whole Keystone XL pipeline debate.

And we have good news on that front. Two days ago, from Lincoln, Nebraska, another Reuters article says, "Nebraska and TransCanada agreed on Monday to find a new route for the stalled Keystone XL pipeline that would steer clear of environmentally sensitive lands in the State."

Why is that important? Energy security, expediting the permitting process, 20,000 new jobs immediately, private capital, Caterpillar mining trucks, Marathon Oil refinery.

If you live in the Midwest States of Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, this oil goes directly to refineries and that, which decreases our reliance on imported crude oil and makes us safe and secure and it creates jobs.

Keystone XL is a no-brainer. This administration needs to get off the dime and move this process.

BAKED GOODS, PIZZA, AND SODA

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Last December, an item caught my eye in the Harper's Index: the rank of baked goods, pizza, and soda as sources of calories for American children—drum roll, please—number one, number two, number three. That's how our children get most of their calories; first from baked goods, then from pizza, then from soda. No wonder we have a national epidemic of obesity for our children with lifetime health care consequences, starting with diabetes and then heart disease. It's why the military is concerned that only one in four young people qualify for military service, with obesity being a major factor in that disqualification.

I salute First Lady Michelle Obama in her efforts to spotlight healthy eat-

ing, to help families give their children more nutritious choices. But we should start with what we are feeding the 31.6 million children in our schools. The administration has taken some small but important steps with the Federal partnership of this largest food program in the country to refine what the standards are for delivering this important service to our children.

Well, the battle has taken a new turn, where Congress is poised to intervene to make sure that pizza continues to count as a vegetable and that we protect more French fries on the tray. Overturning this simple, commonsense adjustment for rules—which food nutrition experts and child advocates strongly support—is going to be buried in the Agriculture appropriations bill coming forward. The people who defend inflicting this on our children site issues of cost, waste, and nutrition. Well, you don't need calorie-laden pizza crust to deliver nutrients, and waste is not a product of giving people healthy choices.

I invite anybody to come with me, visit Abernethy School in Portland, Oregon, where parents, students, and faculty have combined to have an innovative food program where kids grow food themselves. They prepare it. They study it. They're healthier and happier. Come to the University of Portland, where Bon Appetit, an innovative food service supplier by providing more choices and healthier choices, has cut food waste 70 percent.

But the cost argument is the most bogus. We're talking arguably about perhaps as much as 14 cents a meal, less than \$1.4 billion for a year. That is less than Congress has decided that it will pay Brazilian cotton farmers because we don't have the gumption to

□ 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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end illegal cotton subsidies to American farmers. We could produce \$25 billion to \$30 billion in savings from direct payments, usually to large agribusiness interests; or, if we stop the obscene process of giving more to crop insurance agents than to farmers, reform crop insurance, we could yield another \$8 billion to \$12 billion. This is entirely within our capacity. If the House goes along with this travesty, shame on us.

The need to protect our children's health has never been clearer. The costs have never been more manageable. Indeed, this will more than pay for itself in savings for lifetime costs of health care. It will damage people's health and shorten lives. The "ketchup as vegetable" debacle of the Reagan era will look tame and sane by comparison. I strongly urge the House to reject this ill-advised initiative.

PASS THE BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. LANCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, as of November 14, 2011, the United States national debt is \$14.973 trillion, according to the Department of the Treasury. With pending security auctions this month, it is inevitable that the national debt will reach the unprecedented level of \$15 trillion in the coming weeks. When the national debt reaches \$15 trillion, it means the U.S. debt-to-GDP ratio will reach 99.7 percent, and our debt will equal \$47,900 for every living American.

Since President Obama took office in 2009, the debt has gone up by \$4.3 trillion. In the last 50 years, the Federal Government has only managed to balance its budget five times, most recently with President Clinton, a Democrat, and Republican control of the United States House of Representatives and Senate.

Washington now borrows approximately 40 percent of every dollar it spends. Foreign investors hold half of our Nation's public debt and one-third of overall debt, not only from China, but from Japan, Great Britain, Saudi Arabia, and other places as well.

□ 1010

Admiral Mullen, the recently retired chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has rightly called the national debt "the single biggest threat to our national security."

While we have made significant strides in reducing the cost of government over the last few months, much more needs to be done. The primary focus of this Congress and our new leadership has been to restore fiscal sanity and fiscal restraint to the Federal Government. We must remember that the money in the Treasury is not our money but it is the people's money, and we are charged with being good stewards of that money.

There is only one way to ensure that future Congresses and Presidents, re-

gardless of party, are unable to return to the reckless, out-of-control spending of the past, and that is to pass a balanced budget amendment to the United States Constitution. This week, Congress will vote on a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution for the first time in 16 years.

In 1995, following passage by the House of Representatives, the United States Senate came within one vote of sending a version of the balanced budget amendment to the States for ratification. Since then, our total national debt has almost tripled. Today's proposal is nearly identical with the one that passed the House of Representatives with 72 Democratic votes in 1995.

Amending our Constitution should not be taken lightly. I will support the balanced budget amendment because I believe it is the right thing to do to help get our Nation's fiscal house in order. I would have preferred that the balanced budget amendment include a spending cap, but we need Democratic Members to achieve the necessary two-thirds majority required for a constitutional amendment to be sent to the States for ratification. That is why the amendment we will be considering almost mirrors the 1995 text.

Before coming to Congress, I served in the New Jersey State Legislature, where I successfully sought reforms to ensure that our State government was responsible with the people's money. In 2008, the people of New Jersey passed by State constitutional amendment to require voter approval for all issuance of State borrowing. I am proud to be able to do my part here in Washington as well. Most States, including New Jersey, are required to balance their State budgets. If the Federal Government continues to spend what it does not have, the balanced budget amendment would provide a much needed safeguard to restrict future spending.

As someone who tries to be a student of American history, I know that a balanced budget amendment is not a new idea. Thomas Jefferson was a strong proponent of the idea. He said: "I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to the Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government." He was referring to a balanced budget amendment. Those were wise words when spoken, and they are wise words today.

Passing a balanced budget amendment would also help move us closer to much needed economic certainty that our Nation desperately needs to boost the economy and help create jobs.

When I was a boy and a young man, the fundamental issue confronting the Nation was the threat of the Soviet Union and international communism, the focus of evil in the modern world, as President Reagan said.

The fundamental issue confronting the Nation in the 21st century is fiscal responsibility. Will our children live in a diminished America? Will the promise of America that each generation

does better than the generation before it continue to exist? Will we continue to lead the world, or will leadership pass to China or India or to some other place?

This is the great issue confronting the people of the United States, and it is the great issue confronting us here in Congress. Let us get our fiscal house in order. Let's pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

HONORING LANCE CORPORAL NICKOLAS DANIELS

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I rise with a heavy heart to honor and recognize Marine Lance Corporal Nickolas Daniels. Lance Corporal Daniels of Elmwood Park, Illinois, was tragically killed November 5 at the age of 25 while on patrol in the Helmand province of Afghanistan.

I want to pass on my deepest condolences to Nick's family and those who knew him and share with them the thanks of a grateful Nation.

Nick attended Elmwood Elementary School and graduated from St. Patrick High School in 2004, where he was an all-conference linebacker in football.

Mr. Daniels, after going back to St. Pat's to coach football, joined the Marines in 2010 to help achieve his goal of one day becoming a police officer. Nick was well known and respected throughout the St. Pat's community. He was a very funny, lighthearted person who would do anything for those around him. Not only was Nick a dedicated coach, but, most importantly, he was a loving son and grandson, an incredible mentor to his younger sister and brothers, and a loving and devoted fiancé. I've been told that Nick poured his heart into everything he did and always wanted to make sure that his friends and family were taken care of.

A decorated marine receiving multiple citations and a role model in his community, Nickolas Daniels was, and will remain, a shining example of the best this country has to offer.

We can never repay Nick or his family for what they have given to this country, but his sacrifice will forever be remembered by those he fought to protect.

As I thought about what to say today, I realized the inadequacy of words in any such effort. I was reminded that this feeling was shared by an American President who attempted to console a family that had lost five sons in battle during the Civil War, but he captured the essence of the loss as he wrote:

"I feel how weak and fruitless must be any word of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I cannot refrain from tendering you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save.