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House of Representatives

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

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We come to the end of a week where we have given thanks for the heroism of our astronauts. They answered the call to service of their Nation, and of their race, to leave the comfort of home to expand the horizons of us all.

We have honored as well the elders of both the Senate and this people's House, two men who have served together over a century in this most noble work of representing the people of the United States.

Now we approach a week during which all Americans will gather to remember who we are: a Nation generously blessed not only by You, our God, but by courageous ancestors, faithful allies, and the best good wishes of people everywhere who long for freedom, who would glory in the difficult work of participative government and who do not enjoy the bounty we are privileged to possess.

Bless the Members of this assembly and us all, that we would be worthy of the call we have been given as Americans. Help us all to be truly thankful and appreciative and appropriately generous in our response.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

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 Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas 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 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NOT SO FAST WITH THE CONFETTI

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this week marked the passage of an important milestone in American history. But don't just break out the confetti and the fireworks so quickly.

According to the Treasury Department, our national debt just passed \$15 trillion for the first time in history. Mr. Speaker, here is what \$15 trillion looks like. That seems like a lot of money to me. That totals over \$48,000 for every man, woman, and child across the fruited plain.

Now, how did we get here? Through unchecked, excessive spending by the Federal Government.

This addiction to spending somebody else's money has got to stop. We must be bold and cut unnecessary spending. Tough times call for tough actions, and we must even do more.

Congress must pass the balanced budget amendment. Force the government to balance its books just like Americans are supposed to do. We keep digging ourselves into the dark abyss of debt. Maybe we should quit digging before we reach Greece or the bottomless pit of bankruptcy.

And that's just the way it is.

FOREIGN AID

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, of all the extreme statements we've heard coming out of the Republican Presidential debates in recent weeks, perhaps none is more alarming than the idea that we should "cut foreign aid to zero"—even for steadfast U.S. allies, even for critical global health and antiterrorism efforts.

We might dismiss this ridiculous assertion as a "hail Mary" from a candidate desperate to revive his flagging chances, were it not for the fact that it drew heavy applause from the Republican voters in the audience and eager agreement from the rest of the Republican field, including the presumptive frontrunner.

Is this the state of today's Republican Party, the party of internationalists such as Teddy Roosevelt, Dwight Eisenhower, and Ronald Reagan? "Cut foreign aid to zero?"

Foreign aid has always been an easy target for demagogues, especially during difficult economic times, but the reality is that it is one of the most cost-effective investments our Nation makes. For about 1 percent of our annual budget, it strengthens key allies such as Israel, the Palestine Authority, Afghanistan, and Egypt; it promotes economic development that benefits American companies and creates jobs back home; it helps us respond to humanitarian disasters and supports democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Suggestions that we should "start at zero" and ask our allies to come to us hat in hand are simply preposterous.

□ 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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SOCIAL SECURITY IDENTITY THEFT

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, since 1980 Social Security has been required to publicly put deceased Americans' personal information into a so-called death master file which was meant to help prevent payment and benefit fraud. Nearly anyone can get this information, including identity thieves.

Identity theft affects not only swindled businesses and American taxpayers, but grieving families whose suffering is made worse when they learn that someone has been preying on the death of their loved ones. Criminals are exploiting this information in order to profit off deceased children by applying for tax refunds. That's just wrong.

Every year, Social Security puts about 14,000 Americans in this death file who aren't even dead. Any of us could be put on that list by mistake—a mistake that can result in severe financial hardship and emotional heartache.

Americans deserve better. So today I'm introducing the Keeping IDs Safe Act to stop the sale of the death master file immediately. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

HONORING ROBERT "SHANE" WILSON

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in great sadness to recognize fallen Doraville police detective, Corporal Robert "Shane" Wilson, a citizen of great distinction in my district, who gave his life on behalf of the people who live there.

Responding to a home invasion on November 14, he was tragically involved in a head-on collision with a drunk driver. He was off duty at the time, responding.

An 8-year veteran, Officer Wilson was just 27 years old. He was a member of the SWAT team. He served his community courageously and honorably and was very well liked and respected by his colleagues and fellow officers.

He was a loving husband, father, brother, and son from a family steeped in law enforcement. In his off hours he loved to play drums and piano, and he composed music and always had a smile on his face.

All Georgians are affected by this tragedy, but our thoughts and prayers go out especially to his family, friends, and colleagues. Robert "Shane" Wilson was one of the best, and he'll be greatly missed.

JOB

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, when the liberal Democrat extremists took control of the Congress in 2007, the unemployment rate was 4.6 percent, and when Republicans took back control of the House in January of 2011, the unemployment rate had jumped to 9 percent. Under liberal Democrat control, 6.9 million Americans became unemployed. So now we have 13.9 million unemployed Americans who have been ignored by the liberals in Washington.

Higher taxes, record spending, and bigger government have failed to create jobs or boost economic growth. Put simply, this economy is growing too slowly to replace the millions of jobs lost. GDP growth in the first quarter of 2011 fell to 1.8 percent; in the second quarter it was 1.3 percent.

The failure of the President's run-away spending, deficits and debt is being felt by every family struggling to put food on the table and pay their mortgage.

Instead of expanding the size of government, Republicans in Washington are committed to a pro-growth economic agenda that will put America back to work. And I urge people to go to America's job creators, jobs.gov, to see the plan Republicans have to create jobs. We've passed over 20 bills that have gone to the Senate, and no action is being taken on them.

□ 0910

KENYAN INCURSION INTO SOMALIA

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to support and urge us to support the Kenyan military that has gone into Somalia to set up a corridor of safety for the Somali people and to help push back and fight against Al-Shabaab.

Al-Shabaab is a terrorist organization in Somalia. And because of the general chaos in Somalia, Mr. Speaker, Al-Shabaab has been able to do two very bad things. One is, because of the instability they create, they have caused massive refugee problems into Kenya, which is why the Kenyan military had to go into Somalia to try to stop that bleeding. But they also have created chaos in the Red Sea through piracy, and have sponsored terrorism in other African nations like Uganda. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, they are an attractive nuisance to every bad guy who wants to come and have a safe haven for terrorism. And they attract international terrorists to Somalia, which further destabilizes that nation.

After 20 years of chaos, the Somali people deserve some stability, and the Kenyan troops that are there are helping to bring that. The United States

and the intelligence community need to step up and help offer sustenance and support for those Kenyan troops, Mr. Speaker.

Let me say that this is the time to step up and help the Kenyan community help our country and the rest of the world.

MIDDLE CLASS CHALLENGES CONGRESS

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, America's middle class, her determined, hard-working middle class, is challenging Congress. Will Congress respond to our middle class?

We in the middle class are growing increasingly aware of the statistics that the wealth concentrated in the top 1 percent has grown exponentially—275 percent. Over the same timeframe, America's middle class has seen its wealth flatline, and if it's grown, something diminished like 15 to 20 percent. That is unsustainable. America's middle class knows it.

They know that we need to invest in our middle class, empower the purchasing power, raise our children, invest in their education and higher education, invest in health care, invest in public safety, invest in job creation and job retention, invest in research that equals jobs. That is the commitment that they're asking for.

They know it's within the grasp of Congress to fix it. They know increasingly the American Dream is growing outside their grasp. We need to go to work, provide jobs, the dignity of work for our middle class. We need to solve the problems of America through the eyes of our middle class.

WHO WILL CARE FOR THE CAREGIVERS?

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

Ms. RICHARDSON. November is National Caregivers Month. All across America, there are thousands of Americans who need help. They need help to stand, to sit, to put on their shoes, to go to the rest room, and even some to take their last breath. And there are those who are sitting by the bedside of those people, we call them in-home health care workers, who oftentimes in this country barely make even a minimum wage themselves, and if they needed the very care that they were providing, they could probably not afford it.

As this Congress decides and looks at the joint committee's decisions and proposals before us, let's not go against those working people, thousands of people who don't even have enough to take care of their own families.

The decisions can be done better, but they certainly should not be on the