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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 15, 2011.

I hereby appoint the Honorable RENEE ELLMERS 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 OUR NATION'S ENGINEERS DURING NATIONAL ENGINEERS WEEK

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

Mr. LIPINSKI. Madam Speaker, as one of only a handful of engineers in Congress, I am proud again to sponsor a resolution honoring our Nation's engineers during National Engineers Week. This is my seventh year introducing this resolution, and it has a special significance this year.

Next week will mark the 60th anniversary of Engineers Week, and with

nearly half of the practicing engineers in our country eligible to retire over the next few years, the central goal of Engineers Week, attracting new students to engineering careers, has never been more important. That is why educating and inspiring America's youth about engineering and science needs to be a national priority.

Engineers design and build all of our everyday products, such as bridges, airplanes, roads, computers, medical devices, cars and power plants, just to name a few. But engineering is more than that. Engineering is problem solving. We have many problems to solve, from our dependence on foreign oil to our crumbling infrastructure. And as a recent National Academies report explained, while only 4 percent of our Nation's workforce is composed of engineers and scientists, this group disproportionately creates jobs for the other 96 percent.

America's 2.5 million engineers have helped make our country great by solving problems and turning dreams into reality, and America's future depends on them. Unfortunately, oftentimes their contributions, though, go unnoticed. National Engineers Week seeks to fix this problem through events aimed at educating youth and fostering public awareness of the vital contributions made by engineers to our quality of life and our economic prosperity.

Engineers Week promotes recognition among parents, teachers, and students of the importance of STEM education and literacy. This year's theme is "Engineers Make a World of Difference: A Celebration of Engineer Volunteerism." It recognizes the more than 1 million hours annually that America's engineers contribute to public service.

The celebratory events include the Future City Competition, Introduce a Girl to Engineering Day, and Discover Engineering Family Day, which all impart an appreciation of the wonders of

engineering to our children of all backgrounds.

I can attest to my own childhood experiences with science and engineering and how they captivated me. I remember in high school at St. Ignatius my calculus and physics teachers, especially Father Thul and Father Fergus, helped mold my childhood fascination into an interest in engineering. These teachers, together with informal experiences at places like the Museum of Science and Industry and even at Brookfield Zoo, helped motivate me to pursue an undergraduate degree in mechanical engineering from Northwestern University and a degree in engineering economic systems from Stanford. One of the central goals of National Engineers Week is to provide this kind of inspiration for the next generation of students.

During Engineers Week in Chicago I will be attending the Engineers Week celebratory dinner, where they will give the Washington Award to a professor from Purdue University and will be honoring students who have made contributions in engineering through the Future Cities projects.

I would like to encourage all of my colleagues to cosponsor this resolution and go home and find some Engineers Week celebrations that are going on and participate in them in your districts. This is a great opportunity for us to thank the engineers who have contributed so much to our country and inspire that next generation of engineers that our country so terribly needs to solve the problems that face us today.

THE JAILS ARE FULL OF FOREIGN CRIMINALS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I bring you news from the war on our

□ 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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third front, the southern border with Mexico.

Last Saturday, two American teenagers were brutally shot and killed in Mexico in the Mexican border town of Juarez, Mexico. That is right across the Rio Grande River from El Paso, Texas. On Thursday, drug cartels gunned down eight people at a bar in Juarez. On Sunday, Homero Salcido, the head of security and intelligence for the state of Nuevo Leon in Mexico, was shot in the head and his car was set ablaze. Nuevo Leon is close to the U.S. border and once was considered one of the safest towns in all of Mexico. These murders are evidence that the narcoterrorists are continuing to expand their control with our neighbors to the south in Mexico.

There are portions of Mexico that are under the control of the drug bandits, and honest law enforcement is nonexistent. However, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano has said that the situation on the border has been "mischaracterized" by lawmakers for political reasons.

Well, the same can be said of Homeland Security Director Napolitano. She mischaracterizes the border region, claiming it is safe. This is either for political reasons or because she refuses to admit the Federal Government is unwilling or incapable of securing the border.

More than 34,000 people have been murdered in our neighboring country of Mexico since the drug cartels began their reign of terror in 2006. In my opinion, neither the United States nor Mexico has operational control of some border regions. Drugs and people are smuggled into the U.S. and guns and money are smuggled to the south into Mexico.

And this is just not a Mexican problem. For example, 27 percent of the inmates in United States prisons are not U.S. citizens: 17.5 percent are from the nation of Mexico, and a whopping 37 percent of Texas border jails contain foreign nationals. If the border is so secure, Ms. Napolitano, how come so many thousands of illegals are pouring into our country committing serious crimes and filling up our prisons? How can any reasonable person say our borders are secure when 27 percent of America's prisons are the home to foreign nationals? They wouldn't be in prison if they didn't cross the border in the first place.

There is more. Jose Oswaldo Reyes Alfaro, an illegal immigrant from El Salvador, went on a killing rampage in Manassas on Wednesday. He shot and killed three people and injured another. Alfaro had been ordered to be deported in 2002, but he just never left the country. These murders could have been prevented if our border security plan, Ms. Napolitano, was working.

An 8-year-old girl in Fairfax, Virginia, was raped by an illegal in her own home. Her rapist was Salvador Portillo-Saravia, a known criminal who was living in the United States illegally.

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In 2003, Portillo-Saravia, an MS-13 gang member, was arrested and deported to El Salvador. But since we have open borders, the child rapist was able to sneak back into the United States unnoticed and under the radar. He was even arrested in November of 2010, but rather than be held in jail for deportation, he was released back on the streets because no one was able to check his illegal status. And 1 month later, Salvador Portillo-Saravia raped an innocent 8-year-old girl in her own home.

This disgusting crime could have been prevented if we secured our borders, deported illegals that were in this country, and kept them from returning. Tell the parents of this 8-year-old girl, Madam Secretary, that our border crisis is just "mischaracterized." Our system is flawed and Homeland Security better understand that it is the duty of the Federal Government to protect the people of this Nation and quit making excuses.

It's way past time to put more National Guard troops on the border. I have introduced legislation to put 10,000 National Guard troops on the southern border to be paid for by the Federal Government but supervised by the four State Governors. We protect the borders of other nations. It's about time we protect our own.

Meanwhile, it appears Homeland Security is living in never-never land or blissfully unaware of the real world on the southern border—or mischaracterizes the situation for political reasons.

And that's just the way it is.

THE BUDGET: OUR PRIORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise today with great concern about the future of our country. And that's because in the past few days we've seen the valley between the hardworking middle class and the rich continue to grow wider and wider. It's a matter of priorities, Madam Speaker, and right now we can see very clearly where my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have placed their priorities. It's not in the well-being of our workforce, not in the effectiveness of our classrooms, and not in the safety of our neighborhoods. No, Madam Speaker. The priorities of the majority party are not with the people who have worked hard all their lives to earn a decent wage, buy a decent home, put their kids through school, and do what they can to keep their families and communities strong. The priorities of my Republican colleagues lay with America's most successful—the hedge fund managers, Wall Street financiers, and investment bankers. That's why they worked so hard to give those folks another tax

break at the end of last year under the guise of extending unemployment benefits for many people who lost jobs through no fault of their own.

But, my friends, you see, the rich didn't need another tax break—not now; not when their taxes are the lowest they've been since 1950, and a tax cut that added \$800 billion to our deficit over the next decade. In addition to that, as part of the Recovery Act, Congress enacted the largest tax cut in American history and Democrats provided additional tax rebates for businesses that provide their employees with health insurance.

Amidst these tremendous tax breaks for the past 2 years, the Republicans are moving forward with a dangerous spending bill, one that continues to give rewards to the rich and literally guts the initiatives most meaningful to middle class families. Simply put, the Republicans' spending bill is irresponsible and tone deaf to the needs of a healing Nation. It cuts jobs, threatens American innovation, and diminishes investments in rebuilding America. It makes devastating cuts to education—reducing Pell Grants by \$800 per student and kicking more than 200,000 children out of Head Start. It reduces the competitiveness of our workforce by slashing \$1.6 billion in job training and cutting \$120 million in alternative youth training that sends kids to work in construction and other trades—critical skills that will help us make things again in America and put us on better footing to compete with the rest of the world.

It derails \$2.5 million in funding for high-speed trains, canceling 76 projects in 40 States, at the loss of 25,000 jobs focused on rebuilding America; and, at the same time, reduces our domestic security by eliminating 1,330 police officers and 2,400 firefighters, making our communities less safe.

The work of reducing our deficit and controlling spending will be hard, to be sure. The fact of the matter is that we have to cut spending. But we have to do it responsibly. We cannot cut what makes us competitive and what helps us to innovate, to succeed in the global economy, and ultimately to create jobs. The President's budget makes some serious cuts to good programs—some I strongly object to. But as we work to cut spending, we have to be sure that it's not at the expense of continuing to support initiatives that create jobs, educate our children, and keep our communities safe. We have to be serious and smart about how we address America's budget challenges.

This week, we will begin debate here in this Chamber on this budget challenge. I've heard from many of my constituents about the concerns that they have related to the Federal budget for this year. It's those conversations and the families I've met all across Rhode Island during the course of my campaign that I've got on my mind. I know what their priorities are. I've seen the circumstances and I understand the