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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 7, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER 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 17, 2012, 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.

PAIN AT THE PUMP

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

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Speaker, we've all had to dig a little deeper in our pocketbooks when visiting the gas station lately. Gas has now reached \$4 a gallon in my district. Combined with the stubbornly high unemployment rate in Michigan, I know my constituents are hurting. However, the pain at the pump has sparked more conversations than ever about domestic energy development. Even the harshest of critics are starting to realize that Amer-

ican oil, American gas, and American coal are viable solutions to our energy crisis, with countless numbers of benefits.

The time is ripe for our country to embark on a new chapter in energy production, American energy, an overhaul of this, if you will. Right now we're faced with an abundance of expansion possibilities all there for the taking. New developments in science and technology make this possible. You've probably heard of at least a few terms like "fracking," "3D mapping," and "horizontal drilling." These new practices allow producers to easily extract natural gas, coal, and oil from the ground, all while doing it cheaper, safer, and with less disruption to the landscape above. So why has this administration, contrary to their rhetoric, chosen to obstruct progress, energy independence, and security for our Nation?

House Republicans remain committed to addressing this abundance of energy production and development. That's why we're trying to open up new areas for exploration and development. American energy production is good for the economy because it creates American jobs; it's good for the deficit because of new American royalties; and it's good for our manufacturing because it brings American energy costs down.

If President Obama had chosen to acknowledge this reality 3 years ago, we'd already be seeing more American jobs and cheaper energy. Instead, he has chosen to do little, sometimes even standing in the way of potential growth by letting Big Government be the arbiter of job creation. For proof, just look at the Solyndra fiasco, the rejected Keystone pipeline project, or mounting job-killing EPA regulations.

The private sector, not government, is and will always remain the real job creator for our country. If producers are given more liberty to pursue these

techniques, it could put America in a position to become one of the largest energy producers in the world. And why not? We're America. And that would mean more money, more jobs, greater security, and you can bet, lower energy prices.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, everywhere you go in America, education is a hot-button issue. Everyone has opinions about what should be emphasized, changed, adjusted, where we should spend more, where we should spend it differently. This is a reflection that Americans know what goes on in our schools is very important. That's where we're building America's future for our communities, our economy, for our families.

This deep commitment to our children should extend to one area in schools where we should be building a future that is focusing on the health of these children: physical fitness, their health habits, and importantly, their diet.

When it comes to the health of our children, our legacy is unfortunate. Too many come from families that are food insecure. One-half of American children will, at some point in their life, be on food stamps. Sixty-three percent of American teachers report that each month they buy food for children in their classroom. Over 20 percent of American households are just plain hungry.

Sadly, in my State, those percentages are even worse. Many children who aren't hungry per se, are hungry for the right foods. They consume far too many empty calories. Pizza, soda, and baked goods are the top three sources of calories for our children.

□ 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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Since 1980, childhood obesity has doubled, so that today one in three children is overweight or obese.

One of the most direct ways to attack the problem is in our schools, where over 31 million children receive over five billion meals every year for free and reduced lunches. Actually, they are not just fed lunches anymore. They are increasingly getting school breakfasts and now school dinners. For far too many low-income children, this is frankly the only place that they're going to get the food they need.

We have to attack this problem because food in school is too often high in starch and does not feature fresh fruits and vegetables. Indeed, 40 percent of American children do not get fresh fruits and vegetables every day in school.

Congress held up funding for the new nutritional guidelines. It's time for us to get our act together here in Congress. I would suggest that we might honor this National School Lunch Week and build upon the Hunger-Free Kids Act that we had last Congress. Don't we think we can do more than adding 6 cents per meal to the reimbursement rate? Can't we allocate more than \$40 million for mandatory farm-to-school funding to help promote the use of local fresh fruits and vegetables? Isn't it time to establish stronger national nutritional standards for all foods provided throughout the school day? Maybe even the House would reconsider and pass my amendment to declare that pizza is no longer a vegetable for school-lunch purposes.

We know what to do. I see it in my community in Abernathy School, as well as more than 40 other schools that are providing education and nutrition and gardening, as well as the math, reading, and science skills, that help kids grow, prepare, and learn to appreciate healthy food. This is healthy not just for the kids, but for the local economy; not only strengthening local farms and ranches, it creates more than 1½ other jobs off the farm. There are now over 9,000 school programs nationally that are dealing with providing this vital connection between food, nutrition, and how kids learn.

I think that it is time for us in Congress to stop being AWOL, to step forward, be more deeply involved, resist the special interests, and make kids' nutrition a priority.

I think our generation ought to be thinking about what we're feeding kids now, when you think about what kids might be feeding us later.

□ 1010

HONORING OUR TROOPS

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, about 3 years ago I initiated a House resolution, and I was joined by many of my

colleagues on the Democratic side as well as my friends on the Republican side. The resolution called on the Speaker of the House one time a month, at that time, Ms. PELOSI, that she would stand at the Speaker's stand and ask the Members of Congress to remember our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq. I want to give her credit and thanks that she did it for the whole time that she was Speaker of the House.

After my party, the Republican Party became the majority, I wrote Speaker BOEHNER and asked him if he would continue that moment of remembrance of all of our troops in Afghanistan and Iraq, their families, and those who gave their life and those who were wounded.

I regret that I must say the last time we did this was December 16 of 2011. I intend to prepare a letter to Mr. BOEHNER and ask him, himself, not one time do I remember, maybe one time that he was in the Speaker's chair and he said the words of I thank you, those who have served and those who have given so much.

I don't know if it is just because the war is not on the front page, but last week two Army captains from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, who were trying to train the Afghans, were shot point-blank in their forehead and killed. We have lost 40 Americans who have been in Afghanistan trying to train Afghans to be police and soldiers; 40 have been killed by the trainees. And when you factor in the coalition troops trying to train the Afghans, 70 have been killed, including the 40 Americans.

We need to continue this process of remembering those who have given so much to our country because too many times we get so wrapped up with major issues like the debt, the deficit and jobs, and so many important things, but there is nothing more important than those young men and women over there in Afghanistan who are giving their limbs and their life.

I went to Walter Reed about 3 weeks ago and saw three Marines from my district, Camp Lejeune Marine Base. All three have lost both legs.

So I hope when we get back from the next break next week, again I intend to hand deliver a letter to the Speaker of the House, as I did a year ago, and I want the Speaker, himself, to stand at the Speaker's stand and read the words thanking our men and women in uniform for their service to our Nation and remembering the families who have given a child dying for freedom. I intend to follow through on this, and I hope friends on both sides of the aisle will join me in asking the Speaker to continue this recognition of those who have given so much.

With that, I will ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform, to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform; God, in His loving arms, hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Af-

ghanistan and Iraq. I ask God to bless the House and Senate that we will do what is right in the eyes of God for His people here in the United States of America. I will ask God to please bless the President of the United States that he will do what is right in the eyes of God for God's people here in the United States. And three times I will ask, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

SUDAN PEACE, SECURITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, just yesterday the former top U.N. humanitarian official in Sudan, Mukesh Kapila, issued a warning to the world. He said that the Government of Sudan's military is carrying out crimes against humanity in the country's southern Nuba Mountains in the Sudanese state of South Kordofan. He said that these acts remind him of Darfur. Kapila said he saw military planes striking villagers, the destruction of food stocks, and literally a scorched-earth policy. He said the attacks reminded him of what he witnessed in Sudan's Darfur region in 2003 and 2004 when the predominantly Arab government in Khartoum targeted black tribes. Kapila served as the U.N.'s top humanitarian official in Sudan at the time. He said that the world must act now to prevent another Darfur-type situation in the Nuba Mountains.

The people of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, two states inside Sudan along its southern border, are facing a hunger crisis. They haven't been able to plant because the government of President Bashir is bombing them in their fields. Sudan has refused to let humanitarian aid into the region. The United States, the United Nations, and other governments have condemned these attacks against civilians.

My good friend and colleague, Congressman FRANK WOLF, traveled to this border region at the end of February. He interviewed refugees, recorded their stories of terror: bombing from the sky and soldiers burning villages and shooting defenseless civilians; mothers fleeing for their lives with their children, abandoning their homes. I urge my colleagues to go to the Web site of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission and watch the video he has posted there. That's at www.tlhr.house.gov.

We need to speak out, Mr. Speaker. We need to let our government and the world know that people care and that we demand protection for these people from Khartoum's murderous policies.

This is why I and my colleagues, Congressmen FRANK WOLF and MIKE CAPUANO, are introducing today the Sudan Peace, Security and Accountability Act. This bill calls for a comprehensive approach towards Sudan to address and