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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BASS of New Hampshire).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 29, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHARLES F. BASS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

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

We ask today that You bless the Members of the people's House to be the best and most faithful servants of the people they serve.

May they be filled with gratitude at the opportunity they have to serve in this place. We thank You for the abilities they have been given to do their work and to contribute to the common good. May they use their talents as good stewards of Your many gifts and thereby be true servants of justice and partners in peace.

Give each Member clarity of thought and purity of motive so that they may render their service as their best selves.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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 pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. HARTZLER 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

VOICE OF TEXAS, KARINA GARDUNO

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, I visited Hargrave High School in Huffman, Texas. Students at this school come from hardworking, rural, lower-middle class families. I met with 400 seniors, and almost every one of them had a job. I was impressed by their intelligent questions about government and the state of this country.

One student, Karina Garduno, asked me this:

Why should those of us that work hard have to sacrifice our tax dollars for free handouts to potheads and others that are too lazy to work? This has nothing to do with being black, brown or white, because I'm Hispanic. They should be made to try harder to find work and submit to drug testing to qualify for this money.

Mr. Speaker, Karina and several other students remember the concept many people have forgotten—personal responsibility. The American Dream means that if you work hard, you can do anything in this country. And it's the individual, not the Federal Government, who controls our future. Young people must know that hard work still pays off because it is the American way.

And that's just the way it is.

A BALANCED DEFICIT-REDUCING BUDGET

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

Mr. CARNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a 10-year, \$4 trillion deficit-reduction plan that is both balanced and comprehensive. In the Congress today, there is now broad support in both parties from both Chambers to reduce the deficit by \$4 trillion over 10 years. That's the goal set by the President's deficit reduction commission.

Today, we will consider a number of budget proposals for fiscal year 2013. None of them is perfect, but it is critical that we come together behind a reasonable 10-year, \$4 trillion framework and start working on the details. Time is running out to fix this critical problem.

I believe the Van Hollen and the Cooper-LaTourette proposals are both frameworks that deserve support and consideration. Both of them are balanced and fair. They include revenue increases and spending cuts, and they don't undermine the fragile economic recovery in the short term.

Progress is difficult, and today's budget votes are only the first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on this difficult task.

□ 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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ENERGY PRICES

(Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, when President Obama was inaugurated in January 2009, the average nationwide price for a gallon of gasoline was \$1.84. The 2012 March nationwide average has been \$3.89 or higher, reflecting a 110 percent increase. Keep in mind that every penny increase in the price of gasoline costs the U.S. economy \$1 billion and American consumers \$4 million per day.

Now, last week, Secretary of Energy Steven Chu, while testifying in front of a House committee, was asked to grade his performance on American gasoline prices. He graded himself an "A"—an "A," America—when the price at the pump for American families has gone up over 110 percent.

I'm sorry, Secretary Chu, America doesn't grade on a curve. We give your performance and the performance of the administration's handling of energy in America the grade of "F."

FISCAL YEAR 2013 BUDGET

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, we all have our own ideas on how we should balance the budget, but missing in today's debate is a bipartisan approach to solve our Nation's fiscal problems. No one party has the answers. We can do this not through a Republican- nor a Democratic-proposed budget, unless we are willing to demonstrate bipartisanship.

That's why I'm opposing both the Republican and the Democratic proposals. These are not an answer to our Nation's fiscal problems. Instead, the Simpson-Bowles approach reflected in the Cooper-LaTourette substitute is the preferred approach that we need to follow.

Last night's votes and today's votes will once again demonstrate that the Congress is tone deaf. It's time to put our economy back on a path to fiscal sustainability and pass the Simpson-Bowles measure that last night fell far short. I suggest we cut \$4 trillion from the deficit over 10 years with spending cuts and tax reform to ensure solvency of entitlements such as Medicare and Social Security. It's time that we act in a bipartisan fashion.

OBAMACARE DESERVES AN "F" GRADE

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

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, last week marked the 2-year anniversary of the President's health care law's going into effect, and as a former teacher, I think it's important that we look at

and see how it makes the grade. I believe that if you compare it to the matrix of its failed promises that it deserves an "F."

They said that it would create jobs. It didn't. In fact, CBO says 800,000 people will lose their jobs because of it.

They said it would lower costs. It hasn't. Premiums have increased by over \$2,000 per individual.

They said that Americans would be able to keep their own plan and their own doctor. The administration's own estimates say that over 20 million Americans could lose employer-sponsored health care as a result of it.

Is it constitutional? I believe it's not. It's time to have grade A health insurance here in America, one that increases accessibility and affordability. That's what House Republicans are advancing, and that's what Americans deserve.

□ 0910

HAPPY 100TH ANNIVERSARY TO THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHICAGO

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, for 100 years, women in the Chicago area have been improving the world around them through the Junior League of Chicago. This summer, the Junior League will mark its centennial anniversary, and I join the current and past volunteers of this wonderful organization in celebrating its many contributions. In fact, from 1976 to 1978, I served as president of the Junior League and am eternally grateful for the opportunity this great organization gave me to work with the Head Start program in Chicago. It was the beginning of many wonderful and fulfilling years of public service.

Mr. Speaker, since Lucy McCormick Blair Linn founded the organization in 1912, the Junior League of Chicago has contributed more than 10 million hours of volunteer service. They have treated scarlet fever, funded epilepsy research, and launched what later became the Chicago Children's Museum. These are just a few of the examples over 100 years of service.

Today, I applaud the Junior League and wish its volunteers another 100 years of success.

A BUDGET FULL OF ENERGY

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, today, House Republicans will stand up to business as usual in Washington and vote for a budget that will help our economy grow, guarantee the promise of Medicare for everyone, and put forth a true all-of-the-above energy strategy in America.

Now, compare this to President Obama's budget, one filled with more

of his failed tax-and-spend policies, one in which he called for over \$45 billion in new taxes on energy production. With prices surging at the pump—more than doubling since President Obama took office—it's unconscionable that he would want to further burden America's small businesses and families who are already struggling.

America sits on top of the largest amount of total recoverable energy resources in the world, including oil, natural gas, and coal. That's 1.3 trillion barrels of oil equivalent. Just imagine if we developed them as part of a real all-of-the-above strategy. Job creation would surge, gas prices would fall, and America would be one step closer to energy independence.

HOMES FOR HEROES ACT

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to say thank you to the many persons who supported the Homes for Heroes Act that passed the day before yesterday. This is an important piece of legislation that will place a person in HUD whose sole responsibility it is to monitor homelessness among our veterans. We believe that in solving the homelessness problem, we can also solve a lot of other problems that they have.

I would like to thank all of the persons on the committee, especially my chairman of the committee, Mr. BACHUS; my ranking member, Mr. FRANK; Ms. WATERS, who has helped me for years with this legislation. I would like to thank Mrs. BIGGERT and Mr. GUTIERREZ, the chair and ranking member of the subcommittee. I would also thank Mr. CANTOR, because I did have a chance to visit with him about this, and he helped to promote this legislation. Ms. PELOSI, of course, is a big supporter of our veterans, as is the case with Mr. HOYER.

Also, one additional person that was very helpful, Mr. HENSARLING. He and I had a great conversation about this, and he was very supportive and mentioned it in open mic at one of our hearings. So I thank everyone. Our veterans are better served.

God bless the United States of America and thank God for our veterans.

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EXTENSION ACT OF 2012

Mr. WEBSTER. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 600 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 600

Resolved, That upon the adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider in the House the bill (H.R. 4281) to provide an extension of Federal-aid highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety, transit, and