

own oil and having a good energy policy; and, finally, tax simplification.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 46 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

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

Bless abundantly the Members of this people's House. During this season of new growth, may Your redemptive power help them to see new ways to productive service, fresh approaches to understanding each other, especially those across the aisle, and renewed commitment to solving the problems facing our Nation.

May they, and may we all, be transformed by Your grace, and better reflect the sense of wonder, even joy, at the opportunities to serve that are ever before us.

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.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LANKFORD) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LANKFORD 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 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

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

Mr. LANKFORD. On April 19, 9:02 a.m. central time, my city will stop for a moment of silence. We'll stop and we'll reflect for 168 seconds. Family and friends will stand on the green grass in the shade of the Survivor Tree and will read the names of all 168 victims of the April 19, 1995, bombing at the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City.

While the State of Oklahoma remembers, I would like to ask the Nation to also pause for a moment and to remember the service, the lives, and the families of those that we will never forget, to thank again the rescue workers that rushed into a building that they had no idea how stable it really was, and to remember again the survivors of that day.

In the days ahead, our community will visit the 3-acre memorial site. Tens of thousands will participate in a memorial marathon. Oklahoma families will again stop, discuss, and remember with their children April 19, 1995. I would like to encourage the Nation to do the same.

REPUBLICAN BUDGET BREAKS PROMISE TO AMERICA'S SENIORS

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. When I entered public service, I promised I would never forget those Americans who built this Nation. They educated my generation, passing on a better, stronger country than they inherited.

Nearly 50 years ago, Congress passed Medicare, and President Lyndon Johnson signed it, with former President Harry Truman and Bess Truman sitting at his side. America promised that if you worked hard, we would not forget you in your golden years. We promised that health care bills would not drag seniors into financial ruin.

The Republican budget breaks that promise. It tells our parents and grandparents to fend for themselves, and it ends the Medicare guarantee. The promise that I made, that this country made, and that I demand this Congress uphold, is that we treat seniors like national treasures and not national burdens. The Republican budget fails that promise to America's seniors.

NEW IRS AGENTS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, last week, the President announced plans to divert \$500 million to the IRS for the purpose of hiring new IRS agents to promote the President's health care government takeover bill. This fact reveals that ObamaCare is not a bill designed to improve the quality of health care but instead raises taxes and creates more burdens for individuals and small businesses, destroying jobs. House Republicans remain committed to fighting for the total repeal of ObamaCare, then to promote commonsense free market health reforms preserving the doctor-patient relationship.

Additionally, I am grateful for the efforts of Tom Von Kaenel, who is in Washington today. Tom is the founder of the Sea2Sea, an organization providing assistance to our military personnel, veterans, and their families by helping them transition back to civilian life. In order to raise awareness for the cause, Tom will spend the next several weeks biking across the United States, duplicating his biking this spring across the United Kingdom.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

THE FUTURE OF MEDICARE

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, on Monday I met in western New York at the Cheektowaga Senior Center, where the discussion centered around the future of Medicare. Prior to the creation of Medicare in 1965, only 50 percent of seniors had health insurance because they were seen by insurance companies as too risky. Today, Medicare is a lifeline to affordable prescription medications and accessible preventative care for seniors across the Nation, including over 100,000 beneficiaries in my district alone.

Now some want to change the program to instead give our seniors a voucher that forces them to go out into the market on their own to try to obtain insurance. Our parents and grandparents deserve better. Medicare provides one of the most important guarantees in our society: the guarantee that if you are an older American and you get sick, you will get the care that you need without going broke. This is an American promise worth fighting to protect.

□ 1210

SUPPORT THE RESTORE ACT

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

Mr. PALAZZO. Mr. Speaker, 2 years ago this Friday, the Deepwater Horizon explosion took the lives of 11 Americans, including four Mississippians, and caused an oil spill of epic proportions. For 86 days, millions of barrels of oil gushed into the waters of the Gulf of Mexico, washed up on gulf coast beaches, and threatened the ecosystems and the economic stability of an entire region of the country.

The images of oil gushing into the Gulf of Mexico, wildlife coated in crude, and tar balls washing up on beaches have long vanished from the national media spotlight, but the spill left lasting effects on the lives of gulf coast residents and businesses.

I ask my colleagues to take a moment this week to pause to remember the lives lost and the millions affected by this tragedy. I urge them to show their support once more to all those affected by the single largest manmade disaster in our history by voting "yes" for today's bill.

Restoring and replenishing the gulf coast is more than just a responsible decision; it's the right thing to do.

HONORING SERGEANT DENNIS WEICHEL

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Sergeant Dennis Weichel, Jr., of the Rhode Island National Guard. Last month, while serving our country in Afghanistan, Sergeant Weichel saved a young Afghan child who had crawled underneath a moving armored vehicle in order to collect a brass shell casing. Responding quickly, Sergeant Weichel moved the child to safety, even though doing so placed him in the path of the same armored vehicle and took his life. Sergeant Weichel is an American hero who gave his life to protect a child he did not even know.

Rhode Islanders are often reminded that we come from the smallest State in the Union, but today, Sergeant Dennis Weichel's actions have touched our entire Nation and are an example of the sacrifices made every day by our brave men and women in uniform.

My thoughts and prayers go out to his mother, Linda; his father Dennis, Sr.; his fiancée, Ashley; and his three children.

THE SMALL BUSINESS TAX CUT ACT

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

Mr. BROWN of Georgia. I rise today in strong support of H.R. 9, the Small Business Tax Cut Act.

In my home State of Georgia, there are more than 150,000 small businesses which employ over 1.5 million people. These are the folks that tell me every

day when I come home that a tax break would allow them to hire more employees. Consider this: between 2005 and 2008, more than 130,000 new jobs were created by small businesses in Georgia. But under the current administration, in just 1 short year, Georgia's small businesses have had to let go nearly all of those jobs. That's a crushing 120,000 people out of work because of the Obama administration's policies.

Democrats somehow think that they can solve our unemployment crisis by raising taxes. But job creators know that the only way that they can put people back to work is if they have more money to hire folks. That's why I support H.R. 9 and also why I introduced my JOBS Act, H.R. 660, which would lower taxes for everybody. I urge my colleagues to support both bills.

REMOVING THE PEOPLE'S MUJAHEDIN ORGANIZATION OF IRAN FROM THE FOREIGN TERRORIST ORGANIZATION LIST

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

Mr. SIREs. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge that the MEK be removed from the U.S. Department of State's list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Since its listing in 1997, the MEK has denounced violence and provided valuable intelligence on the Iranian regime, yet they remain on our terrorist list.

Even important allies acknowledge that the MEK no longer poses a terrorist threat. In 2009, the United Kingdom and the European Union removed the group from their lists. The unjust listing has been considered by the U.S. courts, but the Department of State continues to drag its feet regarding the delisting.

In July 2010, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit criticized the Department of State's designation of the MEK as a terrorist organization since the group's due process rights had been violated, and the Department of State has yet to provide specific information demonstrating why the group is a terrorist threat today.

The battle over delisting the MEK has gone on far too long with far too little evidence. I urge my colleagues to follow me in calling for the immediate delisting of the MEK by the Department of State.

STUDENT LOAN DEBT

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

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, last week, one of our colleagues who represents a portion of my alma mater, Wake Forest University, stated that she has "little tolerance" for those who graduate with high student loan debt, based on her personal experience of working her way through school.

I want to share my personal experience. I come from a military family of six children. My father served nearly 30 years. My parents, like many across this country, couldn't afford to pay for all of my college education. But they knew that a college education was our way to achieve the American Dream. And so I had to take out student loans in addition to scholarships and work. I took out nearly \$100,000 in student loans from undergraduate school to graduate school, and I borrowed that. I only paid off my last student loan payment 1 month before my primary election in 2008. I was struggling as a single mother and meeting my other responsibilities, but I was thrilled when I made that last payment.

Contrary to what's been said about those who take out student loans to finance their education, I'm glad the Federal Government now directly issues all student loans rather than through private banks.

Comments that disparage college students and would deprive middle class families like mine to live their American Dream are just out of touch with what's happening across this country and minimize the lengths to which Americans seek higher education to better themselves and their families.

The rungs of the ladders of opportunity must be stable and available to all of us—the Federal student loan program, Pell Grants, work study, private scholarships, and, yes, work all provide the package that so many of our students need for college success.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET AND WOMEN'S HEALTH

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Let's talk about who wins and loses in the Ryan Republican budget. If you're a millionaire hedge fund manager, this budget is made for you. You get an average tax cut—cut—of \$394,000. If you're a senior citizen woman living on a median income of \$22,000, sorry, you're out of luck.

The Republican budget repeals ObamaCare so you pay more for prescription drugs and preventive services. It takes away your Medicare guarantee and increases your costs. It changes Medicaid to a block grant, meaning you may be on your own if you need long-term care services. And the Republican budget even cuts the Older Americans Act services like Meals on Wheels.

Older women and men shouldn't have to sacrifice so that millionaire hedge fund managers can become even richer. Under the Democratic budget, they don't have to.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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