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No. 59

House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 24, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN ABNEY CULBERSON 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 1:50 p.m.

MEL WORTMAN

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

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to note the passing of a constituent and friend of mine who was a true friend and one of the great leaders of the city of Bremerton, Washington.

Mel Wortman died last month at the age of 91, and he was remembered this past weekend at a service in Bremerton by his family and friends for his wit and for his many enduring personal relationships he developed over decades of working at the Puget Sound Naval

Shipyard in Bremerton, and during the years of service to many organizations in our community.

I knew Mel for most of my life. He was a graduate of my mother's high school, and he always joked that he never would have graduated if she hadn't helped him through math class. He was also a great friend of my father, and they were often enjoying their favorite past time, fishing for trout out on Kitsap Lake. In fact, they had a secret formula that I was hoping Mel would have passed on to me.

Mel served in the Navy in World War II before taking a job at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, eventually rising to be superintendent of Shop 31, which was the machine shop.

Mel's personal advice to me ranged from pointers he gave me when I played sports with his sons, Dave and Gary, to the suggestions he offered when I was running for Congress, and later, as a member of the Defense Appropriation Subcommittee, on important things we could do to make the shipyard in Bremerton function better.

Mr. Speaker, Mel Wortman was one of the remaining members of this Greatest Generation of Americans who selflessly served in World War II and then returned home to raise families and pursue their careers without asking for thanks.

I think it is appropriate once again for us in the House of Representatives to express our thanks to those great Americans as we note the passing of one of their finest, Mel Wortman.

I submit for the RECORD Mel Wortman's obituary as it was published in the Kitsap Sun, noting his wife Jane and the many members of his family who have lost a great patriarch.

OBITUARY PUBLISHED IN THE KITSAP SUN,
BREMERTON, WASHINGTON

Melvin David Wortman
July 4, 1920 to March 19, 2012
Veteran

Mel Wortman died at his home on March 19, 2012 surrounded by his family. Mel did a

stint in the Navy during World War II and was a longtime resident who retired from PSNS after working his way up to Superintendent of Shop 31. Well known in Kitsap County, Mel was said to be the go-to-guy in Democratic politics and he headed up numerous political campaigns. Mel had a passion for sports and we're just sure he and son Gary are shooting some hoops in heaven. Mel was a Washington State Park Commissioner for 12 years and prided himself on visiting all of the parks in his beloved state.

Mel loved to share details of his family with anyone who would listen. Jane, his patient and loving wife listened to his stories and jokes for the past 72 years and continues to make her home in Bremerton. The Wortman's oldest son, Dave lives in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho with his wife Chrissy. Son Gary, who was an NBA Scout, is deceased.

Their daughter, Janna and her husband Bob reside in Arizona, while their other son Steve and his wife Cindy live in Tacoma.

Mel was proud of his 11 Grandchildren and 16 'Greats' who filled his life with tremendous joy in his later years. A memorial service will be held for Mel at the Bremerton Elks Lodge on April 22 at 1:00 p.m.

Born on July 4, Mel lived a life dedicated to being a great American, he made a difference in the lives of all who knew him. In lieu of flowers, Jane requests that donations be made to Hospice of Kitsap County at 570 Lebo Blvd. Bremerton, WA 98310.

TAXMAGEDDON, JANUARY 1, 2013

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, last week, April 17, was Tax Day, when all hardworking Americans must file their taxes with the Internal Revenue Service. Ironically enough, April 17 was also Tax Freedom Day, the day when Americans earn just about enough earned income to pay off the tax bill for all Federal, State, and local taxes. The first 111 days of the year, everything you and I, and all Americans earn went to fund the United States Federal Government, the same government that wasted \$800,000 on a GSA conference with mind readers, commemorative coins, and bike building

□ 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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exercises, and the same government that thought giving half a billion dollars to Solyndra was a good idea.

In 1900, Americans paid about 5.9 percent of their income in taxes, and Tax Freedom Day came about 22 days into the year. It is a far cry, my colleagues, from what we have to endure in taxes today.

If you think 111 days to reach Tax Freedom Day is excessive, just wait till next year. We are on the cusp of a tax Armageddon. I like to call it a Taxmageddon. It's scheduled to hit on January 1, 2013. It will be the largest tax increase in memory, possibly ever, a \$494 billion tax increase in 1 year.

When we talk about taxes, we usually project the increase or decrease in revenue over a 10-year budget horizon. But this \$494 billion tax increase isn't over a 10-year budget window; it is an immediate massive tax increase in 1 year.

Where do these tax increases come from? There are a number of tax provisions that are set to expire at the end of this year. Unless action is taken to extend these provisions or make them permanent, it will lead to an unheard of tax increase in January.

About one-third of the tax increases will come from the expiration of the Bush tax cuts from 2001 and 2003. These tax cuts reduced the marginal rates for all Americans and expanded the child tax credit, reduced the marriage penalty, and increased the tax breaks for education costs. The majority of the tax benefits in these tax cuts were targeted towards the middle and lower income tax folks.

About a quarter of the tax increases will come from the expiration of temporary payroll tax cuts that were created just 2 years ago.

Another quarter of the tax increases will come from the expiration of the alternative minimum tax. With all of this talk about creating the Buffett rule, the President seems to forget that we already have the Buffett rule in the AMT. The AMT was created in 1969 to ensure that 155 high-income households paying zero Federal income taxes would pay income taxes. Unfortunately, it was never indexed to inflation. So more and more Americans become entangled in the AMT, and today the AMT threatens to hit most Americans in the middle class and is regularly patched to protect taxpayers, but never repealed. Unless it is dealt with, it will impact millions of middle class taxpayers.

In 2013, we get a brand new tax, courtesy of ObamaCare. There will be a 3.8 percent tax on wages and salaries over \$250,000 and investment income over that same amount. While this seems like it won't affect most people, this tax can apply to unearned income, like capital gains from selling your home, which will affect middle class families when they sell property. Like the AMT tax penalty, this tax is not indexed to inflation, which means that more and more Americans will be affected by this tax over time.

We'll also see the return of the Death Tax to its pre-Bush levels, when the maximum rate can be 55 percent of your estate. I believe there should be no taxation without respiration; that is, you have to be breathing. It is wrong to tax a business or a family farm when it's transferred from parent to child. This tax has hurt family farms and family businesses where children have been forced to sell the business or farm because they could not afford to pay the Death Tax.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke has referred to all these expiring tax provisions as a "massive fiscal cliff."

When we talk about taxes, we usually project the increases over 10 years, but this is going to be immediate in the year 2013, January 1.

There has been a failure of leadership from the White House. The President's budget is full of election-year gimmicks and unwillingness to try to address the upcoming Taxmageddon. Instead, the President doubles-down on his election year rhetoric, he doesn't address expiring taxes, and instead proposes a slew of new taxes on American companies.

You do not raise taxes during a recession. Raising taxes will halt what little economic growth we had over the last 3 years and return us to the days of double-digit unemployment.

SAN JACINTO DAY

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commemorate the 176th anniversary of the Battle of San Jacinto. Last Saturday, the State of Texas celebrated April 21, 1836, when Texas forces led by General Sam Houston dealt a decisive blow to General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna.

Several weeks after the signing of the Texas Declaration of Independence in March 1836, roughly 900 members of the Texas Army overpowered a much larger Mexican Army in a surprise attack.

Texas soldiers ran and shouted, "Remember the Alamo" and "Remember Goliad." Some 700 Mexican soldiers were killed and 730 captured, while only 9 Texans died. General Santa Anna was captured the following day. He signed the peace treaties that ordered the Mexican Army to leave Texas, paving the way for the Republic of Texas to become an independent country and later a State in our great country.

The battle was memorialized along Buffalo Bayou and San Jacinto River with the San Jacinto Monument in east Harris County. It is in our congressional district.

God bless Texas and God bless the United States of America.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

Reverend Joel Osteen, Lakewood Church, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Father, we thank You that You show Your goodness and Your favor to the United States of America and to those who govern it. We ask that You bless this House of Representatives and each Member who serves in it. Help these lawmakers to search their hearts so that they may serve with dignity and honor and that through them our Nation will achieve the destiny that You have set before us. Give them wisdom as they make good decisions, courage that they will hold fast to Your truth, and compassion that all should prosper from their laws.

We receive Your presence here today. Father, we pray that these lawmakers will remain mindful of You and that they will honor You in everything they do here.

In Jesus' name we pray. 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 gentleman from the Northern Mariana Islands (Mr. SABLON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SABLON 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND JOEL OSTEEEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 1 minute.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great amount of privilege today to welcome two humble