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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. HARPER).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
May 9, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable GREGG HARPER 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.

### STUDENT LOAN DEBT

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, right now, families across this country are sitting around their kitchen tables trying to figure out how they can send their kids to college. They're talking about how to finance a college education when the cost of that is rising faster than the cost of health care.

Parents are making some very difficult decisions. Should we refinance our homes and dwindle our retirement? How much money can we borrow? How

much can we ask our kids to borrow in order to put this financial package together? And for the first time, many of these parents are considering the unthinkable: maybe they can't afford to send their kids to college.

Meanwhile, in 52 days, if Congress does not act, a very bad situation will get worse. On July 1, the interest rates on the Stafford student loans will double from 3.4 to 6.8 percent. Vermont students, American students and parents need action from Congress and need it now.

Over the past few weeks, I've been asking Vermonters to share their real-world stories, and I'd like to tell a few.

Katie from West Glover graduated with \$36,000 in student loan debt. And it's a tough economy. She's had a hard time finding a job, so she took an internship so she can keep advancing her career. She works 5 to 6 days a week making 25 bucks a day. She's essentially providing well-educated, cheap labor, but she doesn't have a choice. She doesn't regret her decision to go to school, but she's getting extremely apprehensive about her ability to get this financial albatross off her back.

Sue from Newport has \$125,000 in debt. She also has some medical problems which limit the kind of work that she can do, but she does work and has a full-time job. But student loan payments are \$600 a month, making it very difficult for her to pay her other bills, and she has no savings and no retirement.

Peter, a parent from Calais, Vermont, he always believed that he could send his son to college. Now he's not sure that he can. His son has done his part, graduating from high school with honors, and he's been accepted to a number of very good institutions. But with tuition costs at those schools ranging from \$30,000 to \$56,000 a year, Peter from Calais is just not sure that their family is going to be able to make this work out.

Julie from Huntington, Vermont. She grew up in a single-parent home, living below the poverty line, but she was told that if she worked hard in school, studied, she could achieve a great future. She did her part. She also was taught, by the way, that she should avoid debt at all costs. She is pursuing college but working three jobs while she's going to school full-time. And she's still piling up debt. She was taught to believe that if she worked hard and applied herself she could achieve great things. Now working three jobs, piling up debt, "Is there a way out?" is the question she's asking.

Mr. Speaker, this is more than about extending the low interest on the Stafford loans. It's really about whether we're going to have a pathway for people trying to climb into the middle class to get there and for people in the middle class to stay there. How much more burden can we impose on folks who want a future for their families, for their kids? It is absolutely unconscionable, in this world that we're in, to double student interest rates from 3.4 to 6.8 percent.

It is time for Congress to stand up for the middle class, for those folks from Vermont and around the country who are trying to do the best for themselves and for their country.

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND NATIONAL SECURITY

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

Mr. CONNOLLY of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, climate deniers have buried their heads so deep in the sand they can't hear the Secretary of Defense warning us about the risk of climate change.

Last week, Secretary Panetta gave a speech about the impact of climate change on national security. He said,

□ 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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"The area of climate change has a dramatic impact on national security. Rising sea levels, severe droughts, the melting of the polar caps, and devastating natural disasters all raise demand for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief." And he might have added, and threaten military bases, especially naval bases, all around the world.

Americans are experiencing that severe weather already, including record-breaking droughts in the South and Southwest and unprecedented tornadic activity in the South and the Midwest.

Severe weather manifestations of climate change have a direct impact on our armed services and national security. Secretary Panetta focused on the geopolitical risks of increased flooding, drought, famine, and hurricanes. These troubling events create new demands for humanitarian intervention but can also destabilize political regimes and enable the rise of extreme elements.

Congress may be fiddling while Texas and wildfire regions of the mountain west burn, but the armed services are responding aggressively to the threat of climate change.

The Navy is leading the effort to boost production of biofuels and to protect the military and taxpayers against rising oil prices. The Department of Defense consumes some 350,000 barrels of oil every day. Each \$10 increase in a barrel of oil costs our Department of Defense and the taxpayers \$1.3 billion every year. By creating a supply of biofuels, the Navy's protecting taxpayer interests from volatile oil prices, while reducing greenhouse gas pollution associated with fossil fuels. The Navy also is reducing its own dependence on Middle Eastern oil, since it makes no sense for the DOD to be providing business to governments that support terrorism.

The Army and the Air Force have also made groundbreaking investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, reducing global warming pollution while strengthening our national security posture. At Fort Detrick, for example, and other installations, the Army is deploying energy efficient retrofits and renewable energy generation to achieve net zero energy consumption, meaning that the bases produce as much energy as they consume. These efforts reduce global warming pollution and protect critical facilities from a cyberattack on the grid.

The Army's implemented numerous energy savings performance contracts at other bases, including in my district at Fort Belvoir, to reduce energy consumption and associated greenhouse gas pollution. By reducing the \$24.5 billion every year that Federal agencies spend on electricity consumption, these efforts protect taxpayers.

In today's fiscal climate, the Secretary of Defense is aware that the Federal Government needs to make better use of limited resources. He recognizes that investing in clean energy will reduce the Department of De-

fense's oil dependence and lower its fuel costs to free up resources for other priorities and to reduce the burden on taxpayers.

I'm surprised by the resistance of a few Members who wrap themselves in the mantle of fiscal responsibility, even while opposing the Defense Department's efforts to save money on energy costs.

□ 1010

The DOD's success in this area is actually a model for other agencies to follow.

There used to be a bipartisan consensus here, and we should address the threats posed by climate change. John Warner, who served as the Secretary of the Navy in a Republican administration before serving as the Republican Senator from my home State of Virginia for 30 years, introduced the first bill to address global warming which came to the Senate floor. Since his retirement in 2008, he has been a leading advocate for reductions in global warming pollution in order to improve our national security. Sadly, the House Republican leadership would take America in the opposite direction by blocking the Clean Air Act enforcement of carbon pollution limits and by reversing energy efficiency standards for lights and appliances.

As the impacts of climate change become more apparent with each passing season, we should heed Secretary Panetta's warning and take action to control the pollution, which endangers our warfighters abroad and threatens communities here at home.

[The Cutting Edge News, May 4, 2012]

PANETTA WARNS CLIMATE CHANGE HAVING 'DRAMATIC IMPACT' ON NATIONAL SECURITY

(By Carlo Munoz)

Climate change has had a direct effect on national security, Defense Secretary Leon Panetta said this week.

Panetta told an audience at the Environmental Defense Fund that climate change has raised the need for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, hitting national security in the process.

"The area of climate change has a dramatic impact on national security," Panetta said. "Rising sea levels, severe droughts, the melting of the polar caps, the more frequent and devastating natural disasters all raise demand for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief."

Panetta spoke to the Environmental Defense Fund on Tuesday at an event honoring the Defense Department for advancing clean-energy initiatives.

In recent years, the Defense Department and the services have spearheaded a number of alternative-energy initiatives and seemingly embraced environmentally friendly practices on the battlefield.

President Obama effectively put the Pentagon at the forefront of an ambitious alternative energy strategy during the State of the Union speech in January. The Navy and Air Force have already spent billions to integrate biofuels into their fleets of fighter jets and warships.

Marine Corps combat units in Afghanistan are using mobile solar panels to recharge batteries for their night vision and communications in the field. Solar power is also helping to run a number of Marine Corps combat outposts in the country.

But the Pentagon's adoption of environmentally sensitive practices was driven more by the department's dire fiscal situation than politics, Panetta said on Tuesday. DOD spent roughly \$15 billion to fuel its fighters, tanks and ships in 2012, the Defense chief said. The Pentagon spends \$50 million on fuel each month to keep combat operations in Afghanistan going, Panetta added. As oil prices continue to skyrocket, the department "now [faces] a shortfall exceeding \$3 billion of higher-than-expected fuel costs this year," according to Panetta.

In order to dig its way out of that financial hole, DOD has no choice but to look to alternative fuel technologies. Pentagon officials plan to invest more than \$1 billion into developing those technologies in fiscal 2013, he said. However, Republicans on Capitol Hill have taken issue with that decision, arguing the department will be sacrificing needed much-needed combat systems in favor of alternative energy work. In March, Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) claimed the Navy's ongoing biofuels work was devolving into another "Solyndra situation."

During a March 13 hearing of the Senate Armed Services Committee, McCain compared the now-bankrupt solar-energy company, into which the White House sank \$535 million in loan guarantees, to Navy-led efforts in alternative energy. Rep. Randy Forbes (R-Va.), a member of the House Armed Services subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces, took Navy Secretary Ray Mabus to task in February over the service's plans. "Shouldn't we refocus our priorities and make those things our priorities instead of advancing a biofuels market?" Forbes asked at the time. Before Mabus could respond, the Virginia Republican took a clear shot at the secretary: "You're not the secretary of the Energy. You're the secretary of the Navy."

#### OFFERING CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY OF JUNIOR SEAU, NFL GREAT AND SON OF AMERICAN SAMOA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with deep sympathy in order to offer my condolences to the family and friends of a beloved son, father, brother, uncle, leader, an NFL great, and a son of American Samoa, Junior Seau, whose life ended tragically on the morning of May 2, 2012, in Oceanside, California.

It is a very sad time for, not only the national sports world, but also for our Polynesian community. We have lost a Samoan brother who was an icon in football and a pioneer for many of our Polynesian sons who are in the National Football League. A beautiful life has come to a tragic end, yet we remember Junior as a young man full of life, a charismatic leader able to light up any room, a devoted son and father and community leader. We remember the strength of this unique individual, a true Samoan warrior.

Junior was born Tiaina Baul Seau, Jr., on January 19, 1969, in San Diego, California, to American Samoan parents Mr. Tiaina Seau, Sr., of the village of Aunu'u, and Mrs. Luisa Mauga Seau of the village of Aoa. After Junior was