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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker.

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.

As the Members of the people's House regather after our biennial elections, may Your spirit of peace descend upon them. As the 112th Congress moves toward a close, may all here attend to the business at hand, providing what is needed for the benefit of our Nation.

May all Members, regardless of the outcome of the election, trust that their future service, be it in the House or not, will be imbued with Your grace. May they be confident that Americans of goodwill are grateful for their service in the past and wish them well into the future.

We ask Your blessing as well on those newly elected who will be joining this assembly for the 113th Congress. May their transition into office be smooth and marked by the civility of democratic change of government, which is the rightful pride of the United States of America.

And finally, we ask Your blessing on America's veterans. May our Nation be faithful to them, providing whatever their needs may be after they gave years of their lives in service rather than personal gain. They are an inspiration to us. We should not forget nor neglect our responsibility to them.

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

SEQUESTRATION IS TARGETING OUR MILITARY

(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, yesterday with Veterans Day, our country celebrated and remembered the brave men and women who have served in our Armed Forces, dedicating their lives to protecting our freedom and keeping American families safe. Unfortunately, sequestration is targeting these honorable individuals and our national security by being implemented unless taxes are increased. Defense spending, according to The Hill newspaper, is 15.1 percent of the budget but is subject to 50 percent of the cuts.

Raising taxes during times of economic uncertainty limits the creation of new jobs. America's small businesses should be encouraged to create jobs. This will reduce the unsustainable deficit. House Republicans were reelected last week on the premise of not voting to raise taxes. I support the legislation of House Armed Services Committee Chairman BUCK MCKEON to stop sequestration and promote peace through strength.

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

THE TRUTH ABOUT BENGHAZI

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

Mr. KUCINICH. We put together a bipartisan congressional coalition to try to stop the war in Libya. That four Americans, including our ambassador, were killed confirmed our worst fears: that American power was being used to open the door for jihadists, creating more instability in the region.

Congress still doesn't know why our people in Libya were left vulnerable. We still don't know why the U.S. military was not sent to their defense. It is of the highest importance that General Petraeus, who led the CIA at the time, be brought before Congress to testify as to what really happened in Benghazi, whether there was a security lapse or whether the administration temporized on security and stood down to mollify violent, disparate groups which have nothing in common with our Nation.

U.S. involvement in Libya is a disaster, compounded by the deaths of four Americans. It is imperative that we find out the truth about Benghazi, wherever it leads, whoever it affects.

THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION CONTINUES TO BLOCK INFORMATION

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, on September 11 of this year, four Americans, including our United States ambassador, were killed in an attack at the Benghazi consulate.

On September 25, I sent a letter to President Obama regarding the numerous inconsistencies voiced by people within his administration and what they were saying following the attack. I have not heard back.

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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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On November 1, I emailed the State Department, requesting they speak with me, for more information. Our office emailed every business day and received no response until November 7. Then, in a scripted response, they refused my request to speak with me. No one, not one person, is willing to talk about the details.

Since they wouldn't talk to me in the privacy of my office, let me just ask them here in a public forum: Why did our ambassador die, and how did our ambassador die? It's been 2 months. You should know. Was it smoke inhalation, or was it some other cause? Was there physical evidence of torture on the ambassador's body as it was returned? And why were the bodies returned to Andrews Air Force Base when protocol dictates they go to Dover for the immediate investigation?

These questions need to be answered. The State Department needs to be forthcoming. The administration needs to be forthcoming.

I pray this Congress will exercise that authority.

THE OUTPOURING OF VOLUNTEERS IN REBUILDING NEW JERSEY

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out to my colleagues that the damage in my district and throughout my State in the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy was nothing less than catastrophic. But I really want to talk about the rebuilding effort today and what we need to do over the long term.

The amount of outpouring, if you will, from volunteers, from just regular people in the district, was just overwhelming. I want to thank FEMA. I want to thank the Red Cross, the Salvation Army, and all the different groups that are out there and continue to be out there today helping with this effort. The outpouring of volunteers from our own district and from New Jersey was just incredible.

Just a few days ago, I remember going to Union Beach, which was one of the towns that was hardest hit, and seeing so many people bring in food and clothing and cleaning supplies. One guy who owns a pizza place brought in a pizza oven and was making pizzas, and another guy brought in a TV so people could watch TV at the center where people come to sign up for FEMA. It was just amazing. It showed the spirit, if you will, of the people that they were willing to do that.

Thank you all again. Obviously, we're going to work on rebuilding, which is certainly the next step here in Congress and elsewhere.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, this being the first day that we've convened since the election, I want to begin by expressing my appreciation to our chaplain, Father Conroy, for his very inspiring and thoughtful prayer.

Mr. Speaker, we are here this week to deal with a very important issue. And I will say that we were all taught as kids, better late than never. We're here because U.S. workers at this point don't have access to 140 million potential consumers for their goods and services. I'm talking about the vote that we're going to have on so-called "Russia Permanent Normal Trade Relations."

Mr. Speaker, Vladimir Putin is not a good guy. Vladimir Putin has inflicted horrendous human rights policies on the people of Russia. We have seen crony capitalism take hold. And that's why it's very important, Mr. Speaker, that the United States of America be at the table as part of the WTO's effort to force Russia to live with the rules-based trading system.

Last year we exported \$11 billion in goods and services to Russia. If we can pass PNTR, we will double that to \$22 billion by 2017.

Mr. Speaker, it's a very important vote. We need to make sure that it's successful this week, and I'm gratified that it's going to be done in a bipartisan way.

□ 1410

EU EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME PROHIBITION

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, a little bit later today the House is going to vote on the European Union Emissions Trading Scheme Prohibition Act. This is a bill that is very important to our civilian and civil aviation operators. It would block them from participating in the European Union's emissions trading scheme.

Now the reason this is important is because of this: according to Bloomberg news, the inclusion of the airline industry in the EU's 2005 cap-and-trade program will cost U.S. airline companies between—get this—\$10.1- and \$39.4 billion from 2012 to 2020. Now who do you think is going to pay that cost? Consumers are going to pay it.

The House has already decided we don't want a cap-and-trade system. We voted against that domestically, so why would we want our airline industry to have to participate in this on an international basis? MIT economists have looked at it and said the new rule will increase costs on passengers flying to Europe, all to subsidize their cap-and-trade systems.

With rising fuel costs and a down economy, we simply cannot afford this. So for these reasons, I urge my col-

leagues to protect American sovereignty to support our domestic aviation industry and vote in favor of H.R. 1956.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE DEMOCRATIC LEADER

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) laid before the House the following communication from the Honorable NANCY PELOSI, Democratic Leader:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

Washington, DC, November 13, 2012.

Hon. JOHN BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House,

U.S. Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR SPEAKER BOEHNER: Pursuant to section 1238(b)(3) of the Floyd D. Spence National Defense Authorization Act of Fiscal Year 2001 (22 U.S.C. 7002), amended by the Division P of the Consolidated Appropriations Resolution, 2003 (22 U.S.C. 6901), I am pleased to reappoint Mr. Michael Wessel of Falls Church, VA, to the United States-China Economic and Security Review Commission.

Thank you for your attention to this appointment.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
House Democratic Leader.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1702

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOMACK) at 5 o'clock and 2 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

EUROPEAN UNION EMISSIONS TRADING SCHEME PROHIBITION ACT OF 2011

Mr. MICA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 1956) to prohibit operators of civil aircraft of the United States from participating in the European Union's emissions trading scheme, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 1956

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,