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No. 162

House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 17, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MAC THORNBERRY 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 would now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

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 1 minute 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. THORNBERRY) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

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

Lord, the people's House returns as a community in Connecticut begins to lay their little ones to rest. Bless the families of all whose lives were so terribly cut short with peace and consolation. Help them, and help us all, to have hope in a time of great desolation. "The souls of the just are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them."

We ask Your blessing, O Lord, upon the Members of this assembly, and most especially upon the leadership. It is on their shoulders the most important negotiations of our time have been placed. Give them wisdom, grace, insight, and courage to forge an agreement that allows us all to move forward toward an encouraging future.

May all that is done this day 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.

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

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

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

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. ALTMIRE 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.

TRIBUTE TO ALBERT E. BRUMLEY AND THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF "I'LL FLY AWAY"

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

Mr. WOMACK. Mr. Speaker, just a few weeks before we bid farewell to 2012, I rise today to acknowledge a noteworthy anniversary celebrated just a few weeks ago—the 80th anniversary of the Hartford Music Company's famous song, "I'll Fly Away."

This staple of gospel music was written by the legendary Albert E. Brumley and has been recorded more than 5,000 times by celebrated performers from Aretha Franklin and Kanye West to the Boston Pops and the Blind Boys of Alabama. The song is published in most major church hymnals, and its distinctive melody frequents funerals, gospel concerts, and community singings around America.

So, Mr. Speaker, on this milestone anniversary of the publication of this national treasure in song, let us reflect on the chorus, just as Brumley wrote a few decades ago:

I'll fly away old glory,
I'll fly away.
When I die,
Hallelujah by and by,
I'll fly away.

□ 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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LET US ESTABLISH A CULTURE OF PEACE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. We are locked into a cultural matrix of thinking which produces violence, and we are shocked when its heartbreaking effects emerge. It's "us versus them" thinking, this evocation of enemies, whoever they are.

On a global level, this type of thinking justifies war and brings the slaughter of innocence. Nationally, it sows seeds for murder. Yet war abroad and violence at home are not inevitable. We have it within our power to re-create America today. Are we not the land of the free, the home of the brave? Is there not something uniquely American which gives us the ability to transcend our woes and to seek a more perfect Union?

Even at the darkest moments, we Americans can stand bravely for our freedom. Mindful of our inherent unity, we must break the "us versus them" mindset and move beyond survival mode to security through cooperation.

Let us create an organized, structured approach to become architects of a new culture of peace in our homes, our schools, and our workplaces. This is what the Department of Peace is about. Let us establish an America where national security and peace at home includes jobs, housing, physical and mental health care, education, retirement security for all.

We're the land of the free, the home of the brave. Freedom and bravery, courage and democracy, they are our birthright, our inheritance, our destiny.

MEDICAL DEVICE TAX

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, in 15 days, a misguided tax on America's medical device industry is scheduled to go into effect. The \$30 billion medical device tax will negatively impact an industry that employs over 400,000 people in America, including many in my congressional district, and one industry in the country that has a net surplus with foreign trade.

In June, the House overwhelmingly passed legislation to repeal this ill-advised tax policy. Now, 18 Democratic Senators have sent a letter to Majority Leader REID asking to delay the medical device tax before it can take effect at the start of the new year, providing that there is broad bipartisan and bicameral support to do away with the tax.

With just 2 weeks to go until the tax is scheduled to take effect, the medical technology industry has received little guidance about how to comply with the tax, causing significant uncertainty and confusion.

As discussions on the fiscal cliff and our Nation's economic future progress, a delay in the implementation of the medical device tax should strongly be considered.

PROTECTING AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise, as many others have, to offer my deepest condolences to the children, families, and community of Newtown, Connecticut. They are enduring a terrible tragedy in the Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings. But merely to offer condolence feels meaningless to me unless we also act to save other children and families and communities from a repetition of this same terrible tragedy.

We in Congress must take action to keep assault weapons and high-capacity clips out of the hands of those who are so dangerous or deranged or deluded that they can snuff out the lives of innocents on a whim. I understand there is a constitutional right to bear arms—I know the lawyers here will debate the fine points of that constitutional protection—but if our talk does not take guns out of the hands of people who would murder children, then our condolences today are just empty words.

We owe it to those who died. We owe it to children still alive. We must protect our families from this gun violence.

□ 1410

RIGHT TO WORK FOR LESS

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

Mr. CURSON of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, the Michigan legislature shamefully passed so-called right-to-work bills in a lame-duck session that insult all Michigan workers without public hearing or listening to the voice of a single citizen. Even more shamefully, Governor Rick Snyder signed the bills into law after clearly stating repeatedly that such legislation was not on his agenda and that right-to-work laws are too divisive to consider.

The final drafts of the bipartisan Michigan labor laws that were in place prior to these despicable acts were crafted by Republican Governor George Romney and State Senator Sander Levin. They served Michigan well, creating a vibrant economy that raised the tide that brought up all ships. Small business thrived, middle class thrived. Good jobs with good benefits spawned world-class hospitals and everything else that comes with a strong economy.

Governor Snyder and his lame-duck Republicans' weak explanations at-

tempting to justify their acts are simply cover. No citizens' group has asked to ram this legislation through, nor have any business groups. The deep-pocketed special interest groups whose only goal is to destroy unions and other labor organizations drove the puppets that created these divisive laws.

Right-to-work-for-less laws are bad for workers, bad for Michigan and bad for America.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bills were signed by the Speaker on Thursday, December 13, 2012:

H.R. 2838, to authorize appropriations for the Coast Guard for fiscal years 2013 through 2014, and for other purposes;

S. 1998, to obtain an unqualified audit opinion, and improve financial accountability and management at the Department of Homeland Security;

S. 3542, to authorize the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to modify screening requirements for checked baggage arriving from preclearance airports, and for other purposes.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 13, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 13, 2012 at 4:14 p.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 3313.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 14, 2012.

Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on December 14, 2012 at 11:32 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2045.