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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

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

We pray for the gift of wisdom to all with great responsibility in this House for the leadership of our Nation.

May all the Members have the vision of a world where respect and understanding are the marks of civility and where honor and integrity are the marks of one's character.

As Members take time in the coming week for constituency visits, give them the ability to hear the voices of all in their districts so that when they return, they are focused on the important work to be done.

Bless us this day and every day, and may all that is done within these hallowed Halls 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. PAULSEN. 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. PAULSEN. 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. 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The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.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. 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five requests for 1-minute speeches from each side of the aisle.

THE PRESIDENT'S POLICIES ARE FAILING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

(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, earlier this week, a Gallup poll was released which sadly stated that 85 percent of small business owners surveyed were not looking for new employees; 66 percent cite the economic recession, 48 percent blame rising health care costs due to the government health care takeover bill, and 46 percent are worried about new government regulations.

These statistics show that the President's policies are failing America's small business owners. The President continues to support policies that are destroying jobs. According to the National Federation of Independent Business, ObamaCare, alone, will destroy 1.6 million jobs.

Over the past year, House Republicans have passed dozens of pieces of legislation that promote job creation and allow small business owners to gain the confidence to begin hiring again. I urge my colleagues in the liberal-controlled Senate and the President to support these initiatives and help put American families back to work.

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

NO BUDGET, NO PAY

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Every year around this time, the President submits a budget, the House and Senate debate their own budgets and, well, nothing happens. Congress has not adopted a budget in over 1,000 days, and it's been 15 years since Congress passed all of its appropriations bills on time. This is simply unacceptable, and that's why I ask my colleagues to join me and the bipartisan cosponsors of the No Budget, No Pay Act.

This bill is simple. It says that if Congress can't complete its work, if the budget and appropriations bills are not done on time, then congressional pay would cease and Members of Congress would not be paid until those bills are enacted. Members could not receive their lost salaries retroactively. Once pay is withheld, it's gone forever.

Somehow, I think if this bill were law, Members would find a new urgency and finally find a way to get their work done on time.

INFRINGING UPON RELIGIOUS RIGHTS

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address

□ 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 House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. I rise today in support of freedom and liberty, the basic principles our country was founded upon. It's a sad day for America when our President infringes upon our religious rights, a fundamental right protected by the First Amendment.

The President announced he will make a so-called accommodation on the ObamaCare rule requiring religiously affiliated organizations to offer insurance plans that cover contraception.

Even though the President slightly backtracked his attack on religious freedom, he did not go far enough. The new rule still mandates that religious organizations with moral objections will be forced to act against their religious beliefs.

This is not about health care; it's about our rights under the First Amendment. And this is yet another example of why we must repeal ObamaCare in its entirety, adhere to the basic tenets of our Constitution, and stop the administration's severe overreach. The sooner we repeal ObamaCare, the sooner we restore freedom and liberty to all Americans.

SAME SEX IMMIGRATION BENEFITS

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

Mr. WELCH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about two wonderful Vermonters from Dummerston: Frances Herbert and Takako Ueda.

They met in college in Michigan more than 30 years ago. Takako, from Japan, was studying English on a student visa; and after completing school, Takako returned to Japan but stayed in touch with Frances. Eventually, Takako returned to the U.S., and she and Frances married. Quite a love story.

Now Frances and Takako face their biggest challenge yet. Takako is being threatened with deportation. Frances and Takako are a same-sex couple. Their marriage is recognized in Vermont, but it's not recognized under Federal law; and without that recognition, Frances and Takako are not eligible for the same immigration benefits as other married couples.

Madam Speaker, these are good people. They have a good relationship. They're good Vermonters. They deserve better.

□ 0910

HHS RULING

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

Mr. BENISHEK. Madam Speaker, from the 1099 provision, to IPAB, to the

hundreds of billions of dollars in cuts to Medicare, it's clear that President Obama's health care law is bad medicine for America. But the recent ruling by the Department of Health and Human Services is the most egregious example of Federal intrusion to date.

Soon after the ruling was announced, I began hearing from citizens across Michigan's First District. Letters and emails came in by the hundreds, with the vast majority in opposition to the administration's position. It is evident from this correspondence that many northern Michiganders are deservedly upset about the administration's blatant attack on our religious freedom enshrined in the First Amendment.

The opposition to this law is not about access to contraception, as my friends on the other side of the aisle would have you believe. Women and men can already access contraception at very low cost. The debate is over the fact that the administration's new rule strikes at the fundamental beliefs of our democracy.

The concept that the Federal Government can force people to pay for actions that violate the teachings of their faith goes against two centuries of American religious freedom. This action represents the very government overreach that the Framers of our Nation fought against and the reason the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, like most northern Michigan citizens, I see the right to practice one's religion as a fundamental liberty, and I intend to fight this action forever.

GETTING COUNTRY BACK ON TRACK

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, well, we're going to take up legislation which is targeted to fix the reimbursement for doctors, which is absolutely essential to Medicare. This threat should go away forever. We should make a permanent fix and not pretend that we can just keep dragging this on without jeopardizing seniors.

Unemployment, we need to extend that for people who can't find work. They lost their jobs through no fault of their own. They can't find work; we need to help them out.

But borrowing \$100 billion from the Social Security trust fund under the premise that the consumer spending generated will bring about economic recovery and create jobs, that's the Larry Summers principle from the stimulus era. Look, that doesn't work. You want to create jobs, you want to borrow \$100 billion, let's borrow \$100 billion, finance the transportation bill that the Republicans pulled from the floor this week, and put a few million people to work rebuilding the crumbling infrastructure in this country with all made-in-America goods. That

would be an effective way to get this country back on track, not Social Security tax cuts.

HONORING LOCAL WORLD WAR II HERO JOHN TEMAN

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, for most Americans, our busy lives make it difficult to reflect as often as we should upon the incredible sacrifices by those heroes who have answered the call to service throughout our Nation's history.

Today, I would like to take a moment to honor the service of one such hero from my home State of Minnesota. Minnesota native and World War II pilot Lieutenant John Teman flew missions in all the major battles in Europe. He flew through flak on the night before D-day in strategic spots over Europe behind enemy lines, and he repeatedly flew missions dropping supplies to the troops trapped at the Battle of the Bulge.

In recognition of his incredible service, John has been awarded seven Bronze Stars, three Air Medals, the Croix de Guerre twice, and on Wednesday he received France's highest recognition and honor, the Legion of Honor.

Madam Speaker, John epitomizes what it means to be a hero. I'd like to thank him for his service and congratulate him on an honor that's much deserved.

REOPENING AMERICAN CAPITAL MARKETS TO EMERGING GROWTH COMPANIES ACT OF 2011

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

Mr. CARNEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage my colleagues to support bipartisan legislation to create jobs. In December, Congressman STEPHEN FINCHER and I introduced H.R. 3606, the Reopening American Capital Markets to Emerging Growth Companies Act of 2011.

Our legislation will create jobs by making it easier for emerging growth companies to undertake an IPO. On average, 92 percent of a company's growth occurs after they go public. Unfortunately, in recent years the number of companies going public has fallen dramatically. This legislation will reduce the cost of going public for emerging growth companies by phasing in certain costly regulatory requirements.

Last night, our legislation passed out of the Financial Services Committee with a bipartisan vote of 54-1. We have worked hard to craft this legislation in a way that can pass both the House and the Senate and be signed by the President.

Please join me in supporting this bipartisan legislation that will create jobs and grow the economy.