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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. MCCLINTOCK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 14, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TOM MCCLINTOCK 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 3, 2013, 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.

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the looming crisis of climate change. The effects of climate change are diverse, but they all impact American lives and livelihoods, and we are realizing and witnessing these occurrences in real-time.

Extreme weather events like Hurricane Sandy, severe drought, and major flooding are becoming more frequent and growing more intense. Sandy alone caused at least \$50 billion in damages,

killed dozens of Americans, and upended the lives of millions more. But Sandy was only one of 11 separate billion-dollar extreme weather events last year.

And not only are things getting worse each time, but these events are occurring more frequently now than they were even a decade ago. And of course, the cost of all these catastrophes—cost which is borne by the taxpayer—is also escalating.

One of the first actions of this Congress was to enact over \$60 billion in emergency aid for all those impacted by Sandy. Who knows how much the next catastrophe will cost?

Mr. Speaker, we cannot afford to sit back and wait for the next Hurricane Sandy to devastate American lives and property. Especially in these tight economic times, I think we can all agree that reducing the cost of extreme weather events is a good idea. And one of the most effective ways to reduce these costs is to plan ahead. Regardless of what you think about its causes, extreme weather is happening, and because we cannot guarantee that these events will not happen in the future, we can and we must do more to prepare. Imagine the lives, infrastructure, homes, and businesses that could have been saved if we'd better anticipated and prepared for the impacts of these events before they occurred.

By smarter planning and building more resilient infrastructure, we can reduce storm damages, we can lessen economic impacts, and we can save lives. And these mitigation and adaptation measures also create good quality American jobs that can help to grow our economy for the future. It's a win-win that we should all support.

That's why last month I reintroduced two bills that would help our local communities implement these cost-saving measures. One is the Coastal States Climate Change Planning Act, which would provide help for coastal

States who wish to carry out adaptation projects in order to prepare for the impacts of climate change. Another bill is the Water Infrastructure Resiliency and Sustainability Act, supporting States wishing to update their aging storm, waste, and drinking water systems in order to adapt for climate change. These bills would help our local communities to plan and prepare for the impacts of climate change and increased extreme weather. Our communities deserve protections from these potentially devastating events and we have a responsibility to help.

Mr. Speaker, we have a choice. We can continue to spend tens of billions of dollars annually on emergency aid packages that will only grow in size and quantity, or we can spend a fraction of that on planning smarter and building more resilient infrastructure that creates jobs and strengthens our economy for years to come.

I think the choice is clear. Let's choose to protect our coastlines and to fortify our infrastructure. Let's choose to create good American jobs and strengthen our economy. Let's choose to plan ahead to protect lives, to protect property, and the Federal Government itself from the impacts of extreme weather.

I urge my colleagues to join me in taking action on this critical issue and to help our communities to prepare for the impacts of climate change.

TAKE THE PADLOCKS OFF THE WHITE HOUSE DOORS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Saturday was the day that Lanier Middle School students from Houston, Texas, had been looking forward to for a long time. They were going to get to see where the President of the United States lived. This was even more exciting because it was the first time in 5

□ 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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years that Lanier had been successful in scheduling a tour of the White House. Then last week, 2 days before they were set to go on their tour, they got the bad news. They were no longer welcome in the people's house.

Mr. Speaker, I know one of the parents of the kids at Lanier Middle School. Here's what she said:

It's disappointing. But it is particularly disappointing to me because I think it teaches the kids a bad lesson of not keeping your word. I think that's bad for the kids.

Harvin Moore, a trustee from the Houston Independent School District, wrote the White House when he got the bad news, and here's what he said:

Next week, 80 students from Lanier Middle School will be spending their spring break touring our Nation's capital.

They have been planning the trip for a year. They have completed background checks and received confirmation that they would be welcomed to the White House and, as you can imagine, were very excited about that.

Now we find ourselves in the position of having to explain to them that their plans have been abruptly canceled and they will not be welcome at the White House after all.

Frankly, that's a hard thing to do as we don't understand the reason ourselves.

We don't understand why, out of a \$1.6 billion Secret Service budget, the administration believes that 1/100th of 1 percent that is required to fund the White House tours is one of the first things to go.

We don't understand why the administration would choose to cancel the program that touches the public the most, in return for a truly minuscule budget savings.

We don't understand, Mr. President, why you have chosen to disinvite schoolchildren from their White House.

The First Lady has referred to the White House as the "People's House." I agree with her. It is the "People's House—it is our house."

Mr. Moore continued in his letter:

One Lanier parent described having to tell her son he was no longer welcome at the White House: The word "sequester" doesn't mean anything to this student. First Lady Michelle Obama said that the White House is our house. Well, it doesn't feel like it anymore.

Mr. Speaker, Lanier students from Texas are not alone. Thousands of students nationwide are gearing up for spring break, and the cherry blossom festival is just a few weeks away. These trips require planning, time, and, yes, even money. Bake sales, car washes, parents taking time off of work were all involved so kids could come to Washington to tour the White House.

But the President, unfortunately, has punished the people for the sake of a few nickels. Perhaps the White House forgot what the First Lady has said, which is posted on the home page of whitehouse.gov:

This is really what the White House is all about. It's the "People's House."

Well, Mr. Speaker, if this is true, the President should take the padlocks off the White House doors, put the welcome mat back on the front porch, because America's kids should not be evicted from their White House.

Mr. Speaker, the open-door philosophy of the White House is a uniquely

American idea where the people of the country can come see where the President of the United States, the most powerful person in the world, actually lives.

□ 1010

This is uniquely American. You go to other countries and, whether they're democracies or not, they don't let you near the home of where the head leader lives. But only in America have we done this.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the President to keep his word. Let the people back in. And as students come to Washington, D.C., they should know that the U.S. Capitol is open for business and that Members of Congress, their staff, and the tour guides at the Capitol Visitor Center will be glad to take them through the Capitol. In fact, earlier this morning, there were about 70 kids from Westchester, New York, seated here before we opened for business, getting a history lesson from one of our Parliamentarians.

Mr. Speaker, the Capitol is open, but neither the White House nor the U.S. Capitol should ever close its doors and ban the people from the people's houses.

And that's just the way it is.

IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise to talk about the important, compelling issue of illegal immigration.

We've heard from the Gang of Eight in the Senate and now the Gang of Eight in the House. When we talk about illegal immigration, as a mayor I know what it did to my city. Aside from the crime and violence, it took a great toll on the economic vitality of the population. Our population grew by 50 percent but our tax base stayed the same. People who are here legally, especially the new American citizens, are looking for jobs. And they are scarce. Twenty-two million Americans are out of work. And now the proposal is to wave the carrot of citizenship to millions more? And when we are talking about giving amnesty to millions—maybe 20 million illegal aliens—how much more scarce will those jobs become?

Mr. Speaker, we have heard these proposals before. In 1986, we said that if we granted amnesty, there would only be about 1.5 million people who would be included. In truth, it turned out to be twice that amount. We were also told that it would never happen again. Our borders would be secure and this problem would never occur again. In truth, it was not true.

So now, 27 years later, our borders still aren't secure and here we are doing this all over again. Well, we got fooled once. By news reports, we are told that there are 11 million illegal

immigrants in this Nation right now. By using 1986 as a yardstick, we can guess that by offering amnesty there might be twice that many.

Mr. Speaker, we were told in 1986 that none of this would happen. But it did. Now we're talking about brand new expenses at a time when we really have no money to spare. This means Social Security, Medicare, unemployment compensation, ObamaCare, welfare, food stamps, you name it. The Heritage Foundation projects that currently illegal immigration today costs us \$55 billion a year, or \$550 billion over 10 years. Illegal immigrants today receive \$55 billion more in government benefits than they pay in taxes, based on the 2010 census. Worse, after so-called "amnesty," the net deficit resulting from illegal immigrants will be \$75 billion a year, or three-quarters of a trillion over 10 years.

We have no guarantee that these new millions of legalized aliens will not be on the public social programs. Nothing in any of these proposals from these "Gangs" or the White House can convince me otherwise. All told, The Heritage Foundation projects that if that's true, it will mean \$2.5 trillion in new costs to the taxpayers over the next 20 years.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that in this time when we are looking for every dollar to save, we should not be giving away the bank at the same time that our borders are not secure and 22 million Americans are out of work. We should be talking about border security first. There should not and cannot be a discussion of amnesty until we secure our borders first.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 15 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Ezekiel Pipher, Heartland Evangelical Free Church, Central City, Nebraska, offered the following prayer:

Our Father in Heaven, by Your sovereign hand, You make all nations, kingdoms, and empires. You raise up their leaders and ordain the rules by which they govern. You alone are righteous in all Your judgments, so it is You that we trust and desire to imitate.

Lord, help the honorable men and women of the House of Representatives