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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. WEBSTER).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 21, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DANIEL WEBSTER 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.

CONGRESSIONAL FOSTER YOUTH SHADOW DAY

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

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

First and foremost, let me say that my heart goes out to all of those in Oklahoma who experienced a terrible tragedy yesterday, and I know I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that they get everything that they need to recover.

On another note, I rise today to celebrate the second annual Congressional Foster Youth Shadow Day. Today, we

are joined in the Halls of the U.S. Capitol by over 50 foster youth and alumni from across the country. They've been paired with Members of Congress as job shadows to get a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of the House of Representatives. The young leaders will attend hearings, join meetings, and participate in media interviews.

As we welcome these young leaders and recognize National Foster Care Month throughout the month of May, we are reminded that foster youth far too often experience traumatic incidences of abuse and neglect and are separated from their homes and siblings. Yet, even in the face of these challenges, the resiliency of foster youth remains strong.

The young foster youth here today are no different. They were selected to participate in Congressional Foster Youth Shadow Day based on their leadership and commitment to improving the lives of foster youth and families across the Nation.

Today, I'm honored to recognize and celebrate an incredible young woman with whom I have the privilege of sharing my morning. Marcelina Valenzuela is 24 years old and grew up in Los Angeles. She spent 7 years in the California foster care system. She entered foster care at birth due to drug addiction of her mother. She left foster care at age 4 only to return at age 15 because of ongoing neglect and abuse. Like far too many foster youth, she struggled with her education, sibling separation, and mental health because of the constant moving and upheaval while in foster care. Yet she was able to overcome these obstacles.

Now Marcelina actively works with organizations such as FosterClub, the National Foster Youth Action Network, and Foster Care Alumni of America to improve and reform the foster care system so that younger generations may not have to repeat the

struggles and challenges that she faced.

Today, Marcelina has custody of her two younger sisters, ages 14 and 16. She's only 24. Her ultimate goal is to finish school and then build a career around improving the foster care system. In fact, she hopes to open up her own nonprofit that focuses on helping youth coming out of the juvenile justice system.

In honor of Marcelina's courage and tenacity, let us commit to doing what we can to ensure that 400,000-plus foster youth across the country have the opportunities, love, and families they deserve. As a first step, I invite my colleagues to join the Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth and to cosponsor the bipartisan resolution in recognition of May as National Foster Care Month.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. I am back on the floor again to talk about the failed policy in Afghanistan.

This poster beside me, Mr. Speaker, is a cartoon that I got from the paper, and it says, "CIA ATM." Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago, The New York Times broke an article, a story that the CIA, over the last 10 years, has been giving hundreds of millions of dollars to Karzai, and I want to quote what Karzai said in that article. Karzai said he was assured that the CIA would continue delivering bags of cash—bags of cash—going to Karzai, the corrupt leader, in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, what really makes this cartoon sad is in the background is an American soldier, and what he is thinking as Karzai is taking his cash money away from the CIA ATM machine, the soldier is thinking, "I'd like

□ 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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to make a quick withdrawal from here.”

I hope that during the debate in July on the appropriations bill dealing with the Defense Department that we will start passing amendments that say we need to stop this out-of-control spending in Afghanistan with very little accountability.

I am one that agrees with my party and some of the Democrats that we need to hold hearings on Benghazi and the Internal Revenue Service. But I have written to the leadership of the Armed Services Committee and the subcommittee chairmen asking for a hearing on this out-of-control waste in Afghanistan. Not only did the CIA acknowledge that they have been giving tens of millions of dollars in cash to Karzai for 10 years, but, Mr. Speaker, we are also authorizing \$8 billion a month to go to Afghanistan. We are holding no hearings on the waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan.

I hope that after we get through the appropriations process that we will start holding hearings. It's not fair to the American people that we borrow money from China to send to Karzai in Afghanistan. And, Mr. Speaker, we all know that Karzai is not going to survive. The Taliban, whom we are fighting, who are killing Americans today, will be the future leaders of Afghanistan. Every expert that I've spoken to, military and nonmilitary, has said that the Taliban, which primarily is made up of Pashtuns—that's the largest tribe of Afghanistan—in time, they will be the leaders of Afghanistan.

It is time for this Congress to wake up and join the American people. Seventy-five percent of the American people say, We want out of Afghanistan. We want to bring our troops home. We want to stop wasting money.

So, Mr. Speaker, before I close, I would also like to reiterate this cartoon. It's Karzai standing at a CIA ATM machine. He's got bags of cash down at his feet, and the little guy has a credit card that he's going to put into the machine, like we all do here in America to get money from our own accounts. But he's not getting it from his own account; he's getting it from the CIA account. And then I see this poor soldier standing behind him who's saying, “I'd like to make a quick withdrawal from here.”

Mr. Speaker, I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to hold in His arms those families who've given a child dying for freedom in Iraq and Afghanistan. I ask God to please bless the House and Senate, that we will do what is right in the eyes of God. I ask God to please bless the President, that he will do what is right in the eyes of God. And three times I will ask, God, please, God, please, God, please continue to bless America.

REMEMBERING THE WORDS OF HARVEY MILK

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I, too, along with my colleague from California, Congresswoman BASS, express my sorrow for the victims of the terrible tragedy in Oklahoma, and I stand ready to work with my friends across the aisle to do all we can to alleviate the tragedy.

Mr. Speaker:

Somewhere in Des Moines or San Antonio there is a young gay person who all of a sudden realizes that he or she is gay; knows that if their parents find out they will be tossed out of the house, their classmates will taunt the child, and the Anita Bryants and John Briggs are doing their part on TV. And that child has several options: staying in the closet and suicide.

And then one day that child might open the paper that says, “Homosexual elected in San Francisco,” and there are two new options: the option is to go to California, or stay in San Antonio and fight. Two days after I was elected, I got a phone call and the voice was quite young. It was from Altoona, Pennsylvania. And the person said, “Thanks.”

And you've got to elect gay people, so that thousands upon thousands like that child know that there is hope for a better world; there is hope for a better tomorrow.

Without hope, not only gays, but those who are Blacks, the Asians, the disabled, the seniors, the us's: without hope, the us's give up. I know that you can't live on hope alone, but without it, life is not worth living. And you, and you, and you, and you have got to give them hope.

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Those words, Mr. Speaker, were spoken by Harvey Milk. It is with tremendous honor and gratitude that I enter them into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on his behalf and all of the “us's” in our Nation.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN AND SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, there's good news in our pursuit of a repository to hold our Nation's spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste, although it went largely unreported.

Officials from both the Department of Energy and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission have publicly admitted that neither agency has identified any technical issues that would prevent us from being able to develop a safe repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada. This admission came during a recent hearing before the Energy and Water Appropriations Subcommittee in response to a question from my friend and colleague, Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, the subcommittee chairman.

To stakeholders in the nuclear waste debate, this fact should come as no surprise. Why else would Greg Jaczko, Senator REID's former staffer, abuse his authority as NRC chairman and de-

ceive his Commission colleagues to scuttle publication of the agency's safety review?

If Yucca Mountain were as scientifically flawed as Senator REID says it is, then he would have benefited by having the agency's conclusions released publicly. Instead, Senator REID got a promise from President Obama to shut down the program.

President Obama obliged, with no basis other than the cryptic statements about Yucca Mountain being “unworkable.” Meanwhile, Senator REID's protege, Mr. Jaczko, made sure the NRC's independent technical conclusions never saw the light of day.

These actions have been challenged in court. The State attorneys general for both Washington and South Carolina, together with the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, Aiken County, South Carolina, and Nye County, Nevada, have all alleged that the NRC has violated the Nuclear Waste Policy Act by ceasing its review of the Yucca Mountain license application, which is mandated under the law. The case is currently before the District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals.

When President Obama took office, he said that this administration would “restore scientific integrity in government decisionmaking.”

Shortly after taking office, he issued a Presidential Memorandum stating:

Political officials should not suppress or alter scientific or technological findings and conclusions. If scientific and technological information is developed and used by the Federal Government, it should ordinarily be made available to the public.

Except for information that is properly restricted from disclosure, each agency should make available to the public the scientific and technical findings or conclusions considered or relied upon in policy decisions.

The public must be confident that public officials will not conceal or distort the scientific findings that are relevant to policy choices.

He reaffirmed these statements recently when addressing the National Academies of Science:

In all the sciences, we've got to make sure that we are supporting the idea that they're not subject to politics, that they're not skewed by an agenda, that, as I said before, we make sure that we go where the evidence leads us.

Mr. Speaker, I find it very difficult to reconcile these pronouncements with the Yucca Mountain situation as it stands today. Electricity consumers and taxpayers have invested \$15 billion to find a safe disposal site for our Nation's civilian spent fuel and the nuclear waste left over from the Cold War. After investing 30 years and \$15 billion in Yucca Mountain, they deserve, at a minimum, for the independent nuclear safety regulator, the NRC, to release its conclusions on whether the site is safe or not.

Given the admissions from these DOE and NRC officials, it appears we have found a safe solution to our Nation's nuclear waste problem: Yucca Mountain. The bad news is that this administration would rather play politics