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No. 18

Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Thursday, February 7, 2013, at 9:30 a.m.

House of Representatives

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2013

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: God of the Universe, thank You for giving us another day.

As the Democratic Caucus leaves for its retreat, bless each Member with skills and the vision to fashion pathways to bringing about what is needed for the benefit of our Nation.

Bless the Republican Conference, which remains at the Capitol, with the same gifts, consistent with their own defining skills and vision.

In Your wisdom, bless both parties with the grace that is needed to work together to benefit our people. May we all be faithful stewards of the Nation bequeathed to us by our American ancestors.

Please keep all who work for the people's House in good health, that they may faithfully fulfill the great responsibility given them in their service to the work of the Capitol.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done 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 Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WALBERG 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.

A BALANCED BUDGET

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

Mr. WALBERG. Hardworking taxpayers in Michigan and across the country live within their means in large part because they create responsible budgets. It's only natural that they expect the same from their government. A balanced budget is important to those of us who want to protect and save Medicare and Social Security. It's also important to the young workers and families who cannot afford to see their taxes go up. Unfortunately, the Senate and President have repeatedly failed at this basic duty.

Last year, the President sent Congress a budget that never balanced, while the Senate hadn't the courage to even produce a budget in nearly 4

years. However, since the American people entrusted the Republicans with the majority in the House, my colleagues and I have twice passed a responsible budget to address our mounting debt and promote a healthy economy.

Today, we'll also pass the Require a PLAN Act, which would obligate the President to submit a budget that balances within 10 years, or provide a supplemental budget plan identifying when the Federal budget would balance.

We believe there is a better way to tackle our Nation's debt than higher taxes and the President's sequester. Together we can produce solutions that get our debt crisis under control. Our neighbors and our families deserve our best effort.

NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Madam Speaker, tomorrow, February 7, is the 13th National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

We represent 14 percent of the 1.1 million Americans living with HIV, and account for 44 percent of all new infections. My district, the U.S. Virgin Islands, carries a disproportionate burden of this disease.

From 2001 to 2005, the incidence of HIV infection in the territory increased by 19.4 percent, and has increased every year since 1998. In 2008,

□ 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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HRSA estimated the combined HIV infection rate of people living with AIDS in the territory to be 1 percent of our population. And CDC reports that the Virgin Islands has one of the highest newly identified confirmed HIV positivity rates among African Americans in this country.

Most, if not all of us, know someone who is living with HIV or has died from AIDS. Today no one needs to die. Let's talk openly with our partners, family, and friends; let's get educated; let's get tested; and let's reduce stigma and discrimination.

Tomorrow and every day, we will do more than commemorate those we have lost. We will rededicate ourselves to the work ahead. We can beat this disease. We can win this fight. Together, we can end this epidemic.

CONGRATULATING ALLEN HIGH SCHOOL

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Allen High School in my district for a recent victory on December 22. The Allen Eagles won the Texas State Championship with a score of 35-21 against Houston Lamar. Back in 2008, the Allen Eagles clinched their first Class 5A Division I State title, and now in 2012 they've done it again.

After completing their incredible 15-1 season, the Allen Eagles have officially been named to the eighth annual MaxPreps Tour of Champions. In the past nine seasons, Tom Westerberg, head coach of the Eagles, has led his team to two State titles with a record of 102 wins to 16 losses. It comes as no surprise that he was named 2012 Dallas Area Coach of the Year.

The Allen Eagles are known to be a team with heart, and it's now proven they have the heart of a champion. Congratulations, Allen Eagles, on a tremendous season. Way to represent the city of Allen and continuing the storied tradition of great high school football in north Texas. God bless you. I salute you.

INTRODUCING THE GOVERNMENT WASTE REDUCTION ACT

(Mrs. BUSTOS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BUSTOS. Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about the first piece of legislation I am introducing as a Member of Congress.

Like many people across Illinois, I learned at a young age that balancing the family pocketbook and living within our means is a question of values. I want to work together on common-sense solutions that reduce the deficit while preserving the important services on which so many people rely.

The bill I'm introducing today does just that. It is called the Government

Waste Reduction Act. This bill moves forward on recommendations the Government Accountability Office made that would reduce duplication in government, save taxpayer money, enhance revenue, and root out waste.

It establishes the independent Government Waste Reduction Board, tasked with recommending legislative proposals that implement these cost-cutting measures and sending them to Congress.

For example, the Federal Government has 47 job training programs, 44 of which overlap. Simply consolidating programs that overlap can save tens of billions of dollars, while not impacting program quality.

Commonsense proposals to cut waste out of government already exist, but they are meaningless and save nothing unless we implement them. My bill will serve as a starting point to lower our deficits by tens of billions of dollars in a responsible, commonsense way that protects the middle class.

MOX IS A NATIONAL ASSET

(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. Madam Speaker, yesterday I sent a letter to the President to encourage him to support the MOX project, the Mixed Oxide Fuel Fabrication Facility, located in Aiken, Barnwell, and Allendale Counties of South Carolina.

This facility at the Savannah River plays a vital role in allowing the United States to fulfill our international nonproliferation obligations by turning nuclear bombs into energy. The President has always supported this facility, which was initiated in the Clinton administration.

The facility is over 50 percent completed and promotes our national security. Today's letter is supported by Members from both sides of the aisle, which proves this issue is not partisan politics, but one of grave national security concern. It is my hope, as customers are identified, that the project will be completed, which supports environmental cleanup efforts at the Savannah River site.

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

□ 0910

NATIONAL BLACK HIV/AIDS AWARENESS DAY

(Ms. LEE of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LEE of California. I rise as founding cochair of the bipartisan Congressional Black HIV/AIDS Caucus to mark National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day. Tomorrow, individuals and organizations across the Nation, including in my own 13th Congressional

District of California, will organize and advocate for HIV testing and treatment.

In the United States, African Americans remain disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS. This is especially true for young gay and bisexual men of color. While African American teenagers represent 15 percent of teenagers in the United States, they accounted for 69 percent of all cases reported among teenagers in 2010. The same is true for African American women, who accounted for 68 percent of all new HIV cases among women.

Despite the progress we've made in recent years, this Congress has already made unconscionable budget cuts to critical programs that many families and communities rely on. A new analysis by the Foundation for AIDS Research and the National Minority AIDS Council shows, if budget sequestration were to take effect, communities of color would be disproportionately impacted, including more than 6,500 individuals who immediately lose access to HIV treatment.

We must reject these cuts and expand effective prevention, care, and treatment programs so that we can once and for all stamp HIV and AIDS off the face of the Earth.

HONORING FORMER ARMY STAFF SERGEANT CLINTON ROMESHA

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

Mr. CRAMER. Madam Speaker, as inadequate as words are in expressing our gratitude to our American heroes who wear the uniform of our armed services, I rise to do my best to pay tribute to one very special soldier from North Dakota.

Former Army Staff Sergeant Clinton Romesha will be presented with the Medal of Honor next Monday by President Obama for "acts of gallantry and intrepidity," becoming only the fourth living recipient for actions in Afghanistan or Iraq. With the help of an assistant gunner, he took out a machine-gun team before sustaining shrapnel from a grenade. The citation recalls his acts of heroism this way:

Undeterred by his injuries, Staff Sergeant Romesha continued to fight, and upon the arrival of another soldier to aid him and his assistant gunner, he again rushed through the exposed avenue to assemble additional soldiers. With complete disregard for his own safety, he completely exposed himself to heavy enemy fire as he moved confidently about the battlefield engaging and destroying multiple enemy targets.

This young husband and father not only fought the enemy after sustaining his own wounds, he organized air attacks and provided cover while three of his wounded comrades could get to aid, then pushed on to retrieve the bodies of fallen soldiers.

Madam Speaker, I'm honored to serve in this prestigious assembly, always aware I do so because people like