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House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. FOXX).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

September 9, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable VIRGINIA FOXX to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving God, we give You thanks for giving us another day. As the tensions of violence continue to mount, we turn to You, Lord God, as our hope and salvation.

Critical moments in the life of any person or any nation, as well as momentous undertakings, O Lord, bring us to our knees before You. We humbly seek Your guidance and rely on Your faithfulness.

Be with us in the days ahead. Bless the Members of the people's House, all who work here, and our guests. Listen to our heartfelt prayers.

We seem to be entering a passageway of darkness which may fill us with fear and anxiety. Bring us safely to the light at the end of the tunnel. Help all Members of this assembly attend to the voices of wisdom and of the American people as matters of great import and danger are considered in these coming days.

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 her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. HOLDING. Madam 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. HOLDING. Madam 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The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.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 North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HOLDING 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.

PRESIDENT'S POLICY DEEPLY UNSERIOUS

(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, over the past month, I have traveled by bus and car across all five counties I represent in the Second District of South Carolina, where I found my constituents agree with Charles Krauthammer in his column

yesterday in The State newspaper of Columbia, South Carolina.

Mr. Krauthammer is recognized for his extraordinary insight and has identified the President's policy as "stunning zigzag, following months of hesitation, ambivalence, contradiction, and studied delay"; the President "having yet done nothing but hesitate, threaten, retract, and wander . . . claiming . . . not his own red line but the world's . . . a transparent attempt at offloading responsibility."

"There's no strategy, no purpose here other than helping Obama escape self-inflicted humiliation.

"This is deeply unserious."

The White House announced April 25 that Syria had chemical weapons, but only after 4 months of serious scandals, ObamaCare destroying jobs, and the upcoming debt debate vote, did it seek action. On my tour, I was inspired at the North Augusta Rotary Club by the four-way test: Is it the truth?

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th, 2001, and September the 11th, 2012, at Benghazi in the global war on terrorism.

MILITARY ACTION IN SYRIA

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

Mr. HOLDING. Madam Speaker, before I returned to Washington last week, I was skeptical of the President's proposal for military action in Syria. After classified briefings and hearing directly from Secretaries Kerry and Hagel, I am more skeptical than ever.

This administration has done nothing to convince me and the American people that they have a focused, effective plan for military action in Syria, or really any true plan at all. These

□ 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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strikes, like the administration's Middle East policy of the last 4½ years, lack coherence and fail to support a long-term strategy.

Additionally, they have not adequately considered the risk of retaliation from Assad's allies, Russia and Hezbollah.

Madam Speaker, the test of a successful foreign policy is that our friends trust us and our enemies fear us. President Obama has failed in this regard, and a military strike will fail to benefit the United States' broader strategy or international interests.

USE POWER OF THE PURSE TO STOP OBAMACARE

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

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, how do Yucca Mountain, Iran Contra, and the Vietnam War relate to the Affordable Care Act? All of those represent legislative limitations of funding to counter decisions made by the executive branch. In each instance, Congress used its authority provided under the Constitution to place limits on Presidential decisions. We need to use those constitutional powers again.

The Affordable Care Act is lurching toward an uncertain start and is dramatically different than what was signed into law over 3 years ago. Gone are the CLASS Act and the 1099 business activity reporting requirement. What about the Federal preexisting program? It hasn't accepted a new patient since February of this year.

How unfair is it that the large corporations in this country received an 11th-hour Presidential exemption and Members of Congress receive a subsidy? None of this is available to the average American.

I look at all of this and I ask: What tools are available to prevent this disaster? And the answer is provided in the historical record when previous Congresses used the one trump card they have available. All that is required is the courage and the clarity of vision to alter history.

GREECE V. GALLOWAY

(Mr. COLLINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COLLINS of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to promote the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, specifically, the right of all citizens to freely express their religion.

This November, the Supreme Court is scheduled to hear oral arguments in the case of Town of Greece v. Galloway. The town of Greece, located just outside of my district in western New York, is accused of violating the First Amendment because the vast majority of volunteers who opened town meetings, they opened them with a prayer using Christian references.

Legislative and communal prayer has a rich tradition in this country and should not be curtailed by illegitimate fears of religious overreach in the United States. We must remain a Nation that does not force a religion on any person but is accepting of those who wish to profess their faith.

MILITARY RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

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

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, the constitutional right to religious liberty is, with increasing frequency, being denied to the men and women in our military who swore to support and defend the Constitution when they enlisted.

Within the past month, we have seen a new case of an Air Force veteran who says he was relieved of duty by his commander because he would not champion same-sex marriages. This senior master sergeant with 19 years of service to his country has now been entangled in the military justice system, not for anything he has done or said, but for refusing a commander's order to make a statement that would violate his deeply held religious beliefs.

What's happening in this case violates current statutes, not to mention the First Amendment. That's why it's so crucial that Congress protect military religious freedom and its expression. My amendment to do that was passed in this House, and we need the Senate to act and the President to stop his threat to veto.

FREE EXERCISE OF RELIGION

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

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise in defense of the First Amendment right to free exercise of religion.

Thomas Jefferson once asked:

Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift from God?

The clear answer is no.

If freedom of religion is not protected in the very places where laws are crafted, how can we expect the laws enacted to respect each individual's freedom of religion?

As a pastor and a chaplain, I believe that freedom of religion isn't some mere abstract concept to be debated in the Halls of Congress or before the Supreme Court. Religious freedom gave me the ability to preach God's word in Georgia, and religious freedom allowed me to give faith-based encouragement to soldiers while I served alongside them in Iraq.

It is a precious liberty our Founders fought and died to protect, and I will not allow freedom and free exercise of religious liberties to be undermined here or anywhere.

GREECE V. GALLOWAY

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

Mr. WALBERG. Madam Speaker, I rise to support the First Amendment as well—as a patriot, as a pastor, as a Member of Congress.

Joseph Stalin, an enemy of America, once said it this way:

America is like a healthy body and its resistance is threefold: its patriotism, its morality, its spiritual life. If we can undermine these three areas, America will collapse from within.

President Eisenhower, a patriot, said it this way in October of 1954:

Atheism substitutes men for the Supreme Creator, and this leads inevitably to domination and dictatorship. We must jealously guard our foundation in faith, for on it rests the ability of the American individual to live and thrive in this blessed land and to be able to help other less fortunate people to achieve freedom and individual opportunity. These we take for granted, but to others they are often only a wistful dream. "In God We Trust," often have we heard the words of this wonderful American motto. Let us make sure that familiarity has not made them meaningless for us. We carry the torch of freedom as a sacred trust for all mankind. We do not believe that God intended the light He created to be put out by men.

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 Friday, August 2, 2013:

H.R. 2576, to amend title 49, United States Code, to modify requirements relating to the availability of pipeline safety regulatory documents, and for other purposes;

H.R. 1171, to amend title 40, United States Code, to improve veterans service organizations access to Federal surplus personal property;

H.R. 678, to authorize all Bureau of Reclamation conduit facilities for hydropower development under Federal Reclamation law, and for other purposes;

H.R. 267, to improve hydropower, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule I, the following enrolled bill was signed by Speaker pro tempore THORNBERRY on Tuesday, August 6, 2013:

H.R. 1344, to amend title 49, United States Code, to direct the Assistant Secretary of Homeland Security (Transportation Security Administration) to provide expedited air passenger screening to severely injured or disabled members of the Armed Forces and severely injured or disabled veterans, and for other purposes.