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House of Representatives

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
February 25, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable STEVE WOMACK 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: Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

As the people's House reassembles, our Nation faces a complicated and, to many, a confusing economic issue.

Bless each Member of this assembly with the wisdom, knowledge, and understanding needed to meet the interests of the citizens of the United States.

Renew in us all the adoption by Your Spirit, that we may affirm our freedoms, not only with conviction in the way we understand others, but in ourselves by actions proven beyond words.

Bless us this day and every day. May all that is done here 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 his approval thereof.

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. 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.

Ms FOXX. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. FOXX 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.

THE PRESIDENT'S SEQUESTRATION

(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, in four short days, thousands of jobs will fall victim to the President's sequester. It is no secret that the very proposal for sequestration originated in the White House. And what has the President done to help Congress solve the mess he created by reaching a solution? He has traveled across the country and made speeches from the White House campaigning for tax increases.

In Friday's Washington Post, Bob Woodward described the President's approach to raise taxes as a substitute

for the sequester as "he is moving the goalposts." The best way that our country can avert this devastating policy, which will destroy jobs and place our national security at risk, is for the President to put the interests of the American people before party politics.

House Republicans have voted twice to replace the sequester with common-sense reforms. Time is running out. With just days to go, the President should begin working with House Republicans by engaging in the legislative process.

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

SAFE CLIMATE CAUCUS

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

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the non-partisan Government Accountability Office took historic action this month. For the first time ever, GAO put climate change on its high-risk list because of the serious threat it poses to the taxpayer.

It makes sense. Just look at Superstorm Sandy and the droughts and heat waves we have recently endured. Extreme weather events have cost our Nation more than \$180 billion over the last two years.

That's why today the cochairs of the Bicameral Task Force on Climate Change are writing to 69 inspectors general across the Federal Government. We are asking for their help in assessing whether government entities are doing all they can to confront this threat.

As a member of the Safe Climate Caucus, I believe it's time we take this issue seriously. If we don't, we will leave our children an unstable climate and disaster costs that they will not be able to afford.

□ 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 PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE TAKEOVER BRINGS MORE CHAOS

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act becomes more apparent every day that goes by, and the problems that are contained therein. Indeed, the President's takeover of health care is delivering more chaos to our health care system.

We have 26 States that are not going to be participating in State exchanges, so a Federal exchange will be set up in those States. The complex eligibility process that citizens will have to go through, the exchange of personal information with Federal agencies that they are going to be required to provide, is truly staggering. Once an individual submits an application to an exchange, the information is then shared with Health and Human Services, the Social Security Administration, the Department of Homeland Security, the Treasury Department, and the IRS.

Enrollees will not only have to submit all of their information when they first enroll, but they will have to resubmit every year.

The President's law intends that exchanges will be ready by October 1. Let me tell you, the five Federal agencies that are involved in this are not forthcoming with the information that they're, in fact, on track. And, in fact, the informatics piece, the information piece that is supposed to be ready when this is all switched on in October is likely not to be ready.

There was a better way to do this. Republicans had better ideas. Governors had better ideas. The administration simply would not listen.

SEQUESTRATION

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, we have now entered the final week before the dangerous, arbitrary, and irrational policy of sequestration, which Republicans proposed first in their cut, cap, and balance bill in July of 2011.

If I were the majority leader, Mr. Speaker, that policy would not go into effect. Budget discipline is absolutely necessary, but damaging job growth in our economy to do so is self-defeating.

The only responsible way forward is for Republicans and Democrats to work together to achieve a balanced solution to deficits that can turn off the sequestration. House and Senate Democrats have each proposed balanced alternatives that combine smart, targeted cuts in spending and tax expenditures. I would hope the majority leader, Mr. CANTOR, would bring that to the floor.

While many Republicans have been praising the sequester as a viable path forward, Democrats recognize this mindless policy for the danger it is.

I urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, to recognize the sequester's consequences, and to work with Democrats to find an alternative, or, if that can't be done, to abandon this reckless policy.

We only have 4 days left to go, and our country's overall well-being depends on it.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to call up H.R. 699, which is the balanced Democratic alternative to sequestration, which I know we have ample time to debate over the next few days and, hopefully, send to the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain that request without appropriate clearance from both sides.

THE PRESIDENT'S SEQUESTER

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of our colleague from Maryland, but I think he needs to direct them to the President, and I am going to speak to that in my 1-minute.

The editorial page of The Washington Post is not known for being critical of the President. This weekend, however, it published an op-ed by one of their most veteran reporters which should establish once and for all that the sequester—arbitrary across-the-board spending cuts that go into effect March 1—was the brainchild of the Obama administration.

Woodward writes that at 2:30 on the afternoon of July 27, 2011, White House officials Jack Lew and Rob Nabors brought up the idea of the sequester in a meeting with the Democrat Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID. Even more notable is Woodward's assertion that "Obama personally approved of the plan," which was presented.

Jack Lew is now the President's nominee for Treasury Secretary, and Woodward reports that in his confirmation hearings in the Senate, when asked about proposing the sequester, Lew went into "denial mode." The American people are tired of denial mode, Mr. Speaker. We need a serious plan to replace the President's sequester, and it needs to come from the other side of the aisle.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 10 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1705

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro

tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) at 5 o'clock and 5 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on the motion to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Any record vote on the postponed question will be taken later.

NEIL A. ARMSTRONG FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER AND HUGH L. DRYDEN AERONAUTICAL TEST RANGE DESIGNATION ACT

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 667) to redesignate the Dryden Flight Research Center as the Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center and the Western Aeronautical Test Range as the Hugh L. Dryden Aeronautical Test Range.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 667

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REDESIGNATION OF DRYDEN FLIGHT RESEARCH CENTER.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Hugh L. Dryden Flight Research Center in Edwards, California, is redesignated as the "NASA Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the flight research center referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "NASA Neil A. Armstrong Flight Research Center".

SEC. 2. REDESIGNATION OF WESTERN AERONAUTICAL TEST RANGE.

(a) REDESIGNATION.—The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Western Aeronautical Test Range in California is redesignated as the "NASA Hugh L. Dryden Aeronautical Test Range".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the test range referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "NASA Hugh L. Dryden Aeronautical Test Range".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH) and the gentleman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 667, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?