

they will do justice, love with mercy, and walk humbly with You.

May all that is done this day 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.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. 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. 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The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.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. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HULTGREN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HULTGREN 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 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

RECOGNIZING COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION WEEK

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize Computer Science Education Week.

On Monday, I participated in an international "Hour of Code." PJ, a 12-year-old programming genius, helped me write basic computer code for the game Angry Birds.

Elgin Technology Center staff, along with local robotics team mentor Carol McKellar, organized an important educational event for students eager about coding. If these kids can accomplish what we did in just an hour, imagine how far students could go if computer science were more accessible at a younger age.

Currently, software jobs outnumber students 3 to 1. Teaching coding can help fill employers' growing needs for graduates in computing fields. Coding is not just for computer scientists. Fields such as advanced manufacturing require workers skilled in computer science.

If I can learn, it shows anyone can learn to code.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, in this holiday season of compassion and giving, we must not forget those who are still suffering from the effects of the worst recession to hit our country since the Great Depression.

Although the recent news about job creation is cause for optimism and the budget negotiations look promising, there are still too many trying every day to find work to allow them to put food on the table and keep a roof over their heads.

We must pass an extension of unemployment insurance. Unless we take action, millions of Americans, thousands of them Oregonians, will see unemployment benefits end in a few short weeks. Remember, benefits are contingent on continued job search. Our constituents are searching, but if they are still out of work, they are about to lose a lifeline. We can't let that happen.

I encourage House leadership to bring a resolution to the floor that will continue unemployment insurance for another year. We must act now. This is no time to end assistance to millions of Americans who are out of work through no fault of their own.

CONSTITUENTS ARE HURTING BECAUSE OF OBAMACARE

(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, people across America are hurting because ObamaCare is destroying jobs. Thousands of residents from North Augusta to Blythewood in South Carolina's Second Congressional District have appealed for answers to the difficulties they are facing because of the government health care takeover. Kathleen Sebelius has failed.

Over the weekend, I heard from constituents who were applying for a second or third job because their current income will not cover the increased costs of health care. Others have shared stories of sticker shock because they pay three times more for the same coverage.

Concerns have been vindicated by the projections of job losses by the National Federation of Independent Business because of the health care takeover.

We must repeal and replace ObamaCare with a patient-centered plan that creates jobs, which has been long proposed by Congressman Dr. TOM PRICE, and puts personal health care decisions back into the people's hands.

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

Congratulations to First Lieutenant Hunter Wilson for completing his service this year in Afghanistan.

EXTEND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS

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

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of over 1 million Americans to urge my colleagues to extend unemployment insurance benefits so they can continue to meet their basic needs while searching for work.

Last week, we were encouraged by the labor report that showed the economy was adding jobs, the unemployment rate is shrinking, and companies are again investing. But there is still work to be done. For the 11 million Americans without a job, the economy is still in a state of emergency. When a mom in Chicago or a dad in Kankakee loses their job, the whole family feels it.

I have met with many people from Illinois with impressive qualifications who are weary from the job search. They want what we all want: a good job, a livable wage, and a Congress that will work to create new economic opportunities. But until that is achieved, they are asking for a hand up, not a handout, in these tough times.

It is for these Americans I urge my colleagues to extend unemployment insurance benefits now, because every citizen deserves support in their pursuit of the American Dream.

WHAT IS THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN?

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, what we know is this: on January 1, millions of Americans are scheduled to lose the health insurance plans they liked and wanted to keep. Nowhere near that many have managed to enroll in ObamaCare. Because Washington said those plans would be illegal on January 1, health care providers followed the law and took steps to cancel millions of plans on schedule.

But President Obama and Secretary Sebelius haven't been ready with a functional alternative, and certainly not an affordable alternative for the millions of Americans who will be without coverage on January 1 because of ObamaCare.

No one wants to see a situation where fewer Americans have coverage, but forcing an unready law and unwanted alternatives on the American

people might just have unintended consequences.

So what's the President's plan?

The American people are tired of waiting for clarity from an administration that keeps waiting until the last minute to change its mind and announce the next big delay.

RENEW SPECIAL DIABETES PROGRAM

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

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, last year diabetes cost the U.S. economy \$245 billion. That number will only continue to climb unless Congress supports critical medical research and treatment initiatives like the Special Diabetes Program.

The Special Diabetes Program contributes to groundbreaking research at the National Institutes of Health. Continued investment in this program will bring hope for a cure and a better life to the 26 million Americans living with diabetes. The Special Diabetes Program also funds treatment, education, and prevention programs for American Indian and Alaska Native families who are disproportionately affected by diabetes.

We must continue our commitment to fighting this deadly disease. Without a timely, multiyear renewal, work that could save hundreds of thousands of lives is put at risk. I urge my colleagues to support legislation to renew the Special Diabetes Program.

REPUBLICAN SOLUTIONS

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

Mrs. BROOKS of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, we still have a lot of improving to do. While last week's job report showed some encouraging signs, there is more work to be done.

What are House Republicans doing to help?

Well, for one, we want to get government out of the way of economic growth. We want to curb the excessive regulations coming out of Washington, D.C. We want to protect Americans from the harmful effects of ObamaCare.

And with so many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, it is not fair that Washington Democrats want to force people to pay more for their own health care. What is more, policy cancellations and technical problems have left many Americans unsure if they are even covered at all.

That is not going to help our economy. We need real pro-growth solutions that will create more jobs and give all Americans a shot.

AIRLINE FEE INCREASE

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

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the work that has been done by Senator MURRAY and Congressman RYAN as we work towards passing a budget deal before the end of this year. I think the end result is not perfect in anyone's eyes, but what they have done is something that symbolized what can be achieved when two sides come together in the best interests for our country.

However, there is one element of the agreement that I am raising with concern because my State of Hawaii has a very unique circumstance. We have six major islands where people live with no interisland railway, no highway or ferry system that connects each of these islands; and people who commute back and forth, people who look for access to health care, have no option other than to fly. In some cases, this air route is an essential lifeline in each of these areas.

In the past, Congress has recognized Hawaii's unique situation and exclusive reliance on air travel. We are concerned about the disparate impact of increased taxes and fees on this air travel in our State.

Again, the budget deal is a solid step in the right direction, but we must ensure that the people of Hawaii, who have no options available to them other than to fly, are not unduly burdened with the fee increase. I look forward to being able to address this issue.

ALICIA DAWN KOEHL RESPECT FOR NATIONAL CEMETERIES ACT

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

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of S. 1471, the Alicia Dawn Koehl Respect for National Cemeteries Act. I thank my Indiana colleagues, Senator DAN COATS and Congresswoman SUSAN BROOKS, for their hard work.

The namesake of this bill is Alicia Dawn Koehl. She was the wife of Fort Wayne native Paul Koehl from my district and the mother of two children. She was also the daughter-in-law of Frank and Carol Koehl.

Last year, Alicia was tragically murdered, and after her killer, an Army veteran, committed suicide, he was buried in a national cemetery with military honors despite laws prohibiting such distinction.

This bill provides the Department of Veterans Affairs the authority to right such wrongs, ensuring our national cemeteries are reserved for our country's most deserving heroes.

Mr. Speaker, my sympathies go out to the family and friends of Ms. Koehl. It is impossible for any of us here today to fully grasp the hardship they have needlessly endured.

I respectfully ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

EMERGENCY UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION EXTENSION ACT

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the nearly 40,000 unemployed Nevadans at risk of losing their benefits if Congress fails to act before the end of the year.

While our economy has slowly begun to recover from the recession and housing crisis, there are still 1.3 million fewer jobs today than when the recession started 6 years ago. Nearly 4 million jobless Americans have been unemployed for more than 27 weeks. And while a newly unemployed worker has a 20 to 30 percent chance of getting hired, a long-term unemployed worker has only a 1 in 10 chance of finding a new job in any given month.

Cutting off a critical lifeline to those already struggling to make ends meet would be irresponsible and reckless, causing significant damage to our economic growth and costing our economy nearly 310,000 jobs, including 3,000 in Nevada.

I am proud to cosponsor the Emergency Unemployment Compensation Extension Act that would extend this vital program and related provisions for another year.

So before Congress pats itself on the back about a budget deal, let's think about those families truly in need during these holidays and beyond.

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JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, as our Nation's economy continues to improve, we still need to have a serious discussion about jobs in this country.

As Congress will soon debate whether to extend unemployment benefits for needy Americans, we must remember that there are young people that are graduating from high schools in our country that are not ready to take jobs that are in high demand.

For instance, from an article I read in The Wall Street Journal last year, an estimated 600,000 skilled middle class manufacturing jobs went unfilled in this country. That is absolutely unacceptable. Much of that can be attributed to kids who are simply unprepared.

Mr. Speaker, improved education must be included if we are serious about rebuilding the middle class in this country. And if we are really serious about looking out for the middle class, we have to do something about raising the minimum wage in this country. Any serious discussion about raising the standard of living in our country without addressing these two areas of education and raising the low minimum wage that we have is simply not addressing the issue seriously.