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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. DENHAM).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

March 11, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JEFF DENHAM 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 7, 2014, 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

BIG BEND COUNTRY

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

Mr. GALLEGO. Mr. Speaker, in my continuing efforts to highlight the 23rd District of Texas, I would like to talk about one of my favorite and one of the most rural parts of the 23rd District, the ghost town of Terlingua. Terlingua, the ghost town, is located near Big Bend National Park.

There are not a lot of ghosts there. There is a lot of history. There are very few people. The population is about 100 people or so. The name comes

from tres lenguas, which is Spanish for three tongues because three creeks flow together nearby. It was founded in the mid-1880s as a mining town after the discovery of cinnabar.

There are many things to do there every day. You can go rafting or kayaking on the Rio Grande, mountain biking, camping, hiking, motorcycling, and many, many other outdoor activities.

On the first Saturday in November, more than 10,000 chiliheads convene for two annual chili cookoffs, the Chili Appreciation Society International and the Frank X. Tolbert/Wick Fowler World Chili Championships.

In the 1970s, as a matter of fact, the chili cookoff also sponsored a Mexican fence-climbing contest to parody the U.S. government's plan to reinforce chain link fences along the U.S.-Mexico border.

The other interesting thing about Terlingua is the unique politics of Terlingua. Clay Henry, the first mayor elected, was elected in 1986. Clay Henry was a beer drinking goat, and he defeated a local dog. Some of his campaign posters are still around, and now, they are worth a lot of money.

I invite everyone to explore the beauty of the Big Bend Country and the beauty of the 23rd District.

OBAMACARE WILL LEAD TO DESTRUCTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. BLACK. Mr. Speaker, ObamaCare is a fundamentally unfair law that is hurting the middle class and lower-income Americans across the country.

In fact, just this week, the labor union Unite Here issued a scathing report on the President's health care law, charging ObamaCare will lead to the destruction of the health care plans for

their members and the like, and it will make inequality in our Nation worse.

Unite Here was the first labor union to endorse the then-Senator Obama in his race for President in 2008. So even one of the President's closest union allies has turned against ObamaCare because, as they report, it will hit the average, hard-working American where it hurts the most, in the wallet.

The President and congressional Democrats sold this law as something that would reduce health care costs for the American people.

It is completely unfair to force the people to participate in a program that doesn't live up to that promise. This law was supposed to help insure the uninsured; yet it has never been more unpopular among those without health insurance.

In fact, a recent Kaiser Family Foundation poll found that 56 percent of the uninsured have an unfavorable opinion of ObamaCare.

A recent McKinsey study found that affordability was the number one reason cited by the uninsured for why they aren't signing up. The uninsured who cannot afford ObamaCare are set to be hit with another cold reality of the President's signature health care law: they will be penalized for being put into this situation.

The President has the audacity to fine hard-working Americans for not being able to afford his costly and disastrous health care product. This despite the fact that he has exempted big business from ObamaCare, and members of his own administration do not have to purchase ObamaCare plans for themselves.

This kind of selective enforcement is unfair to low-income and middle class families. It is why, last week, my House Republican colleagues were joined by 27 Democrats to pass legislation to eliminate the individual mandate tax penalty under ObamaCare for 1 year.

□ 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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Through ObamaCare, the President is marginalizing the very people he says he wants to help, and now, even his closest allies have taken notice.

Mr. Speaker, President Obama's labor union friends are right. ObamaCare is destructive to low- and middle-income families, and the politicians who are responsible for this train wreck must be held accountable.

OUR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, hundreds of men and women are in Washington, D.C., this week representing America's transit agencies, millions of transit users, with the highest ridership in over a half century: 10.7 billion rides.

Tomorrow, they will be joined by over two dozen streetcar cities. This is one of the fastest growing new development and transit tools that is taking place all across the United States. They are here seeking the Federal Government to step up and do its job.

For the first time in over 150 years, the Federal Government is in retreat on infrastructure. It all started, as you know, with the Constitution designating postal roads as one of the first obligations of our new country, and then we were involved with the development of a system of canals to help promote American commerce.

152 years ago, the Transcontinental Railroad Act was passed that ultimately tied America together from coast to coast and led to the finest passenger and freight rail system in the world.

Later, there were massive water projects in the West, electrification projects that brought the magic of electricity to rural and smalltown America. The interstate freeway system that began germinating under the administration of President Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression, blossomed into full flower, signed by President Eisenhower in 1956.

Mr. Speaker, we have established mass transit, with Ronald Reagan establishing a transit account, guaranteeing 20 percent of the gas tax revenues for that critical function and actually raising the gas tax a nickel a gallon, legislation signed by President Reagan.

And then there was the legislation in 1992, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, that promoted flexibility and a large-scale vision process to make the system work. Even the much-maligned Recovery Act, the so-called stimulus, had billions of dollars to help rebuild the country. But we have been stuck now for over a decade.

In 204 days, the bottom falls out of the highway trust fund, which means the Feds are going to have to cut back

on transportation funding this summer, which means this spring. State and local governments are going to be holding back.

I have been working with business, labor, and environmental leaders, local governments, AAA, the truckers, bicyclists, and contractors to be able to come forward with a funding program that will work. The first gas tax increase in 21 years is what we have proposed that would be indexed for inflation so we wouldn't have to go through this anymore.

In addition, H.R. 3638 would explore the new methodology that was used in an Oregon pilot project that would pay for road use based on a user fee for the distance traveled. It has the opportunity not just to fund transportation but to transform the travel system in the United States.

Congress needs to step up. What are their solutions if they don't want to raise the gas tax for the first time in 21 years? Maybe we could have a hearing before the Ways and Means Committee on how we are going to finance the reauthorization.

We can, in fact, solve this problem. We can put millions of people to work to revitalize our communities and to make our families safer, healthier, and economically secure. When these men and women visit you on Capitol Hill, please be prepared to say: If not raising the gas tax, tell them what is your solution so that we don't fall off the cliff in 204 days and retard vital progress?

IN HONOR OF JOHN HENRY DAYTON

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

Mr. DENHAM. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of one of my constituents, John Henry Dayton, who passed away on February 9.

John was born in Turlock, California, to Charles and Florence Dayton. He was raised on a ranch in Hughson, California, with his three siblings. Mr. Dayton attended grammar and high school in Hughson and then Oregon State University. In college, he married Beverly Jean Tack. Together, they raised two children.

After college, Mr. Dayton moved back to California. In 1971, John and his business partner, Harold Copp, opened Oakdale Village Pharmacy in the city's first shopping center. Eventually, they opened additional pharmacies in Escalon and Modesto.

Mr. Dayton was later remarried to Susan Thorpe in 1995. Together, they raised two children.

Throughout more than four decades of business in the Oakdale area, John earned a reputation as a knowledgeable, personable, and trustworthy local pharmacist.

In November 2012, John was diagnosed with stage four brain cancer. He was preceded in death by his father,

Charles Dayton, and stepson, Kevin Cooper.

Madam Speaker, please join me in celebrating the life of Mr. John Henry Dayton and all of his contributions to his family and our community.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BLACK) at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Dear Lord, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

At the beginning of a short workweek, we use this moment to be reminded of Your presence, and to tap the resources needed by the Members of this House to do their work as well as it can be done.

May they be led by Your spirit in the decisions they make. May their faith in You deliver them from any tensions that might tear the people's House apart, and from worries that might wear them out.

All this day, and through the week, may they do their best to find solutions to pressing issues facing our Nation. Please hasten the day when justice and love shall dwell in the hearts of all people and rule the affairs of the nations of Earth.

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GALLEGO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GALLEGO 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.

IRAN ARMS SHIPMENT

(Mr. HOLDING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1