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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. KIRK).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 16, 2001.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MARK STEVEN KIRK to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1447. An act to improve aviation security, and for other purposes.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2001, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) for 5 minutes.

BORDER STATES EXPERIENCING STATE OF ECONOMIC EMERGENCY

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise on behalf of the towns and cities along the

southern border with Mexico in our Nation. These areas are dying economically and need our assistance now.

In the wake of the events of September 11, this country has embarked upon unprecedented procedures to increase our domestic security, and those procedures are proper. We must have a new sense of preparedness; we must have a new sense of being on guard in this dangerous time of the 21st century.

But as we increase our security efforts, we have not taken the steps to address the effects on our economy and on our quality of lives as we take those steps. Yes, we must be prepared and, yes, we have to take these security measures and, yes, we are going to have inconveniences that we have never experienced before, but let us think these out thoroughly and take the steps to increase our resources, if necessary, to make up for the problems caused by the increased security.

We have grounded, for example, much of general aviation around this country, causing incredible hardships on one sector of our economy. We can think that through and change that situation. We bailed out the airlines, but all of the businesses and the economy related to airline flight, whether travel agencies or rental cars or hotels, and all the people associated with staffing those areas have been laid off, those businesses are in trouble, and yet, this Congress has taken no steps to help them.

In an area where I know best because I represent the border district in San Diego, California, which borders with Mexico, towns and cities all along the Mexican border have taken a hit such as no other American community has taken because of the security measures. Yes, we have to protect our northern and southern borders from any infiltration by terrorists and, yes, we have to inspect all of the pedestrians and all the vehicles and all of

the trucks that cross those borders, and we have to do it more thoroughly than we ever did before. But let us increase the resources to do it and not try to do it with fewer resources.

For example, at the biggest border crossing in the world between 2 nations in my district of San Ysidro, California, where between 50,000 and 100,000 people cross per day, the wait at the border because of the new security checks has gone from a half-hour to 4 hours, to 5 hours, to 7 hours, 8 hours or more. In fact, nobody knows how long the wait will be as they start off for jobs legally, for education legally, for cross-border cultural activities legally. Nobody knows how long it is going to take to cross that border, whether we are talking about San Ysidro and Otay Mesa and Tecate and Calexico, California; and Nogales, Naco and Douglas, Arizona; and Brownsville, Harlingen, San Benito, McAllen, Pharr, Edinburg, Roma, Zapata, Rio Grande City, and El Paso, Texas. These areas depend economically on cross border traffic, cross border legal traffic. Legal traffic. People who have the proper documents to work and shop in our Nation.

So businesses all along the border are suffering losses from 50 to 80 to 90 percent of their income. They are additional victims of September 11 and nobody seems to be worrying about them.

Yes, increase the border security. Assure all Americans that no terrorists are crossing. But let us increase the resources.

I have been told by the Director of the INS in San Diego that if she had 20 more inspectors per shift, that is 100 more positions in San Diego, which would cost roughly \$5 million or \$6 million, she can reduce the border wait from 6 hours to 20 minutes and assure us of the level 1 security that this country demands and our citizens want. We can do the security and we can keep a reasonable flow across that border if we give some resources to the INS and to the Customs Service.

□ 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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