United States of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 109th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 151 WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JANUARY 25, 2005 No. 5

House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

As we begin this regular session of the 109th Congress, the words of Deuteronomy demand our attention and spring into action the solemn oath sworn by Members of this Chamber to uphold the Constitution and serve God's people.

''Today you are making an agreement with the Lord: He is to be your God and you are to walk in His ways and observe His statutes, commandments and decrees, and to hearken to His voice.

''And today the Lord is making this agreement with you. You are to be a people especially His own, as He promised you; and provided you keep all His commandments, He will then raise you high in praise and renown and glory above all other nations He had made, and you will be a people sacred to the Lord your God.''

Let the people say: Amen. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. CUELLAR 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.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

WASHINGTON, DC,
January 25, 2005.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on January 25, 2005 at 9:07 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. Res. 7.

Appointments:

Senate National Security Working Group;

Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAHL,
Clerk of the House.

HONORING THE LAKEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL MARCHING BAND

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

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the efforts of a talented group of young men and women from my hometown of Lakeville, Minnesota.

Over 300 members of the Lakeville High School Panther Band made all Minnesotans proud with their outstanding performance last week in the Presidential Inaugural Parade. The skill and enthusiasm demonstrated by these 10th- through 12th-graders reflected well upon their director, Nathan Earp, and the families, teachers and fellow students who support them.

As a neighbor and a fan of the Marching Panthers, I was proud to watch them go by, and I am proud to pay tribute to them today.

HONORING THE OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS OF JOSEPH A. SCOTT, JR.

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

Mr. CUELLAR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding contributions of Joseph A. Scott, Jr., and to acknowledge a scholarship fund in his name recognizing his exceptional years of service to the people of San Antonio.

Joe paved the way for others and became the first African American in San Antonio to become a licensed insurance agent. He then went on to found World Technical Services, providing jobs for the disabled and those conquering substance abuse. He most recently served as a cofounder of the New Covenant Baptist Church.

Joe has also played an integral role in San Antonio politics, working closely with former President Lyndon B. Johnson, former mayor and HUD Secretary Henry Cisneros and the late Congressman Frank Tejeda.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have this opportunity to recognize the many accomplishments of Mr. Joseph A. Scott, Jr.

COMMENDING ERSKINE COLLEGE

(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, I rise today to recognize Erskine College, the oldest 4-year, church-related college in South Carolina, which was founded by the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church.

For over 106 years, Erskine's faculty and staff have created an environment of excellence, where students are taught to incorporate their first-class education and good moral values into

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