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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. SCHWARZ of Michigan).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 28, 2006.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J.H. ''JOE'' SCHWARZ to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

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

Our God and Savior, You are eternal love, and all peoples are embraced by Your spirit. Show Your love to this Congress, shower Your wisdom upon all who work in public office for the good of Your people to build a just society.

Draw us closer into Your love and peace. Teach us to follow Your ways, that we may become capable of true love ourselves and be a fountain of living water in the midst of a thirsting world.

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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. BLACKBURN 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 pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, March 17, 2006.

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 March 17, 2006, at 9:30 a.m.:

That the Senate concur on House amendment to the bill S. 2275.

That the Senate passed S. 166.

That the Senate passed S. 1608.

That the Senate passed S. 2447.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 350.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 4826.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H. Con. Res. 361.

With best wishes, I am,
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House.

DEMOCRATIC SECURITY PLAN

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, Roll Call reports that the Democrats are going to unveil an ''ambitious security plan'' tomorrow.

Well, bless their hearts. If they have not noticed, those of us on this side of the aisle have been focused on the issue and passing security legislation for more than 5 years now.

President Bush has made national security his priority mission. House Republicans have been talking about it for months. We have been working with our leadership on it. They consider national security priority number one, not a political tactic to trot out 7 months before an election.

We passed the PATRIOT Act to target terrorists. The Democrats voted against it. We passed the REAL ID Act to make it harder for potential terrorists to use valid State-issued identification documents. They opposed that.

We are pushing a border security bill to strengthen our border control, and Democrats in the Senate are threatening a filibuster. Mr. Speaker, Americans are going to see right through their last-ditch effort to look engaged on security.

EXTEND THE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN DEADLINE

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, as this calendar shows, the countdown continues to an outrageous tax congressional Republicans and the Bush administration plan to inflict on American seniors.

If Washington does not act before May 15, millions of seniors who have yet to choose a prescription drug plan will face a 1 percent tax that will be added onto their drug premiums for every month that they wait to sign up.

So if a senior, for example, does not choose to sign up for a plan until September, that senior would be forced to pay a 5 percent tax on top of their monthly premium every single month for the rest of their lives.

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