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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. WICKER].

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 25, 1997.

I hereby designate the Honorable ROGER F. WICKER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We pray, O gracious God, that the great virtues that support our civilization and culture will grow in our awareness and strengthen our lives and our communities. We know that there must be those values and truths that make stronger the fabric of our society and give cohesion and purpose to daily living. With all the competing beliefs about and with all the striving for new and more relevant ideas, give to us, O God, the strong faith to see clearly Your blessings to this world and to each of us. May those blessings continue to give us meaning in our endeavors and show us more clearly the paths of justice and of peace. In Your name we pray. Amen.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1902. An act to immunize donations made in the form of charitable gift annuities

and charitable remainder trusts from the antitrust laws and State laws similar to the antitrust laws.

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 gentleman from Arkansas [Mr. HUTCHINSON] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HUTCHINSON 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces that he will entertain fifteen 1-minutes on each side.

REDUCTION IN CAPITAL GAINS TAX

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, the liberals often refer to a reduction in the capital gains tax as a "tax cut for the wealthy." This is simply not the case. I know of a large number of farmers, senior citizens, and middle-income families in my district who would greatly benefit from a reduction in the capital gains tax.

I think my constituents would be extremely disappointed to hear that the liberals in Washington have declared

them wealthy. My constituents are good, hard-working Americans, who do the best they can to make ends meet, especially when they have to send so many of their dollars to Washington to pay for big government.

The taxpayer should not be penalized for selling a farm or a home or for being among the 43 percent of adult Americans who own stock. A reduction in the capital gains tax rate means real relief for real, hard-working Americans.

PUERTO RICO MEDICAID BUDGET AGREEMENT NOT HONORED IN RECONCILIATION

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

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Mr. Speaker, for the last three decades, the U.S. citizens of Puerto Rico have been excluded from participating in the Federal Medicaid Program at the same level of benefits as their fellow citizens in the 50 States.

The Medicaid block grant for Puerto Rico is currently capped at only \$133 million and, as a result, the Puerto Rico Department of Health has to provide in excess of \$700 million annually in local funding to take care of this island's medically indigent population.

Throughout my tenure in Congress, I have actively fought for increased participation by Puerto Rico in Medicaid. I find it unconscionable that the Federal Government would uphold a policy where the health and lives of the people of Puerto Rico are considered to be of less value than the lives of other citizens. And we are talking about citizens, not immigrants or legal residents.

In this spring's balanced budget negotiations, the congressional leadership and the administration agreed to increase Puerto Rico's Medicaid block

□ 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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