

I thank the Fresh Air Kids, their parents, their educators, the local media, the local elected officials, and fresh air boosters everywhere for making southeastern Massachusetts a better place to live and a safer place to breathe.

I look forward to many, many years of working with them and, once again, to the Fresh Air Kids, I say welcome to Washington, and I am very proud of you.

RECESS

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

Accordingly (at 1 o'clock and 17 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess until 2 p.m.

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SNOWBARGER) at 2 o'clock p.m.

PRAYER

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

We know, O gracious God, that the pace of living is brisk, and we know too that we need to have time to meditate on Your good gifts to us and to reflect on how we can interpret these gifts in our daily lives.

May we use the gift of faith so our lives develop meaning and purpose; may we use the gift of hope so we can anticipate a new and brighter day; may we use the gift of love so that we know others with trust and affection and share with them our feelings and experiences. May Your gifts of faith and hope and love, O God, that have nourished us along the way be with us this day and every day, we pray. 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 gentleman from Texas [Mr. LAMPSON] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. LAMPSON 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.

LET US GIVE THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY THE TAX RELIEF THEY DESERVE

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, our liberal colleagues have used every trick in the book to avoid giving the American people a tax break. After failed attempts at scaring welfare recipients and working taxpayers, now they are trying the same on senior citizens. Well, the truth is the Republican Taxpayer Relief Act will greatly benefit seniors in their retirement years because we believe that those who have worked hard, played by the rules, and saved for retirement should be rewarded, not threatened and not penalized.

Opponents of the capital gains tax relief say, "You're rich if you put money into mutual funds or contributed to a company retirement plan or built a small business with your own sweat and labor." But more than half of all taxpayers claiming capital gains have incomes less than \$50,000, and many are seniors who are able live a better life by converting their lifelong investments. In fact nearly 80 percent of assets other than homes are owned by the elderly and seniors.

No more excuses, my colleagues on the left. For the first time in 16 years, let us give the people of this country a tax break they deserve.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2003

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to remove my name from cosponsorship of H.R. 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

WORKING FAMILIES NEED A BREAK

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, as my colleagues know, in Congress we are working on giving Americans an \$85 billion tax cut. The question is who should reap the greatest benefits from these tax cuts? Should it be the wealthiest corporations and the wealthiest Americans? Well, that is what I believe my Republican colleagues suggest. Or should it be the middle-class families who are struggling to obtain their dreams and could greatly benefit from these tax cuts?

The Republican tax plan gives tax breaks to America's most profitable corporations and wealthiest individuals while leaving middle-class families with little help. According to a Treasury Department analysis, 63 percent of the Republican tax cuts will go to the top 20 percent of the wealthiest Americans.

The Democrats' tax plan provides for middle-income families by giving a break to those families making less

than \$75,000 a year. It also provides a \$500-per-child tax credit to middle- and low-income working families.

The Republican plan denies millions of these families such tax breaks. I believe that is wrong. Working families need a break.

PINOCCHI-NOMICS

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, I feel like we are surrounded by a bunch of Pinocchios. It appears we have two different groups of Pinocchios. On the one hand we have got some liberals who are calling millions of middle-class families rich by using something called family economic income. Family economic income is a magic formula that some ingenious bureaucrat at the Treasury Department dreamed up that means your income is actually 50 percent or more higher than people think it is. On the other hand we have got some liberals who want, now listen to this one, who want to reduce the income tax burden on people whose income tax burden is already zero. Their ideas of a tax cut is to, and now I am not making this up, is to increase the tax burden on the actual taxpayers to give tax decreases to those who pay no taxes. It is hard to know which group is growing the longest noses.

I do not know how to decide which arguments are more absurd, the family economic income liberals or the tax cut to the welfare crowd. Mr. Speaker, this is Pinocchi-nomics.

NEW DEFINITION OF INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR IS GOP EXTREMISM AT ITS ABSOLUTE WORST

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, if there is any doubt about the Republicans' dedication to helping the rich at the expense of the average working American, one need only look at the new definition of independent contractor in the GOP's tax agenda. The definition has been drastically broadened to allow employers to reclassify longtime employees as independent contractors. By so doing, employers would no longer be obligated to provide health and pension coverage as well as a host of other labor protections to millions, and I repeat millions, of Americans who are now entitled to such benefits; and to add insult to injury, individuals reclassified as independent contractors will be hit with a tax increase. They will be forced to pick up the Medicare and Social Security taxes that employers were formerly responsible for paying.