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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

O gracious God, from whom all blessings flow, we are grateful for all the gifts of life that You have so freely given. For all the days past, in good times and bad, Your spirit has been with us to strengthen and to heal. In all the days ahead we look with anticipation to the new opportunities of service and with the hope that the waters of justice will flow over us and all people. And for this day we ask a full measure of Your grace that we will be the people You would have us be and do those good deeds that honor You and serve people everywhere.

In Your name we pray. 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 Tennessee (Mr. CLEMENT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CLEMENT 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

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize 15 1-minutes on each side.

EDUCATION SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

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

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled last week that taxpayer-financed vouchers payable to parochial schools are constitutional, and today we will pass legislation that will allow parents to set up tax-free education savings accounts that they can use to send their children to the school of their choice.

The top priority of parents has always been to get the best education for their children. Now our Nation is moving in the right direction when it gives parents more choices and when it makes the schools more accountable, and many of our public schools are the best in the world but others need to be improved so that our children can get the kind of education that will help them realize the American dream.

As the debate progresses, let us remember that the reason we have schools is to educate our children. It is not to support labor unions or to give bureaucrats more money. So let us support education savings accounts so parents can help their children get the best education possible.

CLOSING THE GENDER GAP?

(Mr. ROGAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, the Washington Post reports that test scores in core subjects for young women like math and science have risen. Despite this reassuring news on the academic front, there is also evidence causing great alarm. Today young women are now turning to drugs, tobacco and alcohol at a much earlier age.

Citing the national "Girls Report," the article said the number of young women who smoke has nearly doubled in the last 5 years alone. This rate far exceeds that of their male peers. The number of girls who use marijuana has more than tripled in the same period.

The number of young women arrested has steadily increased over the last 10 years. In an interesting correlation, the number of girls who participate in after school athletics has declined, while the number of girls who report depression has increased.

Recently I joined Majority Leader DICK ARMEY in my district to recognize the work of several facilities that are working to ensure a healthy environment for our children. As Congress now considers education reform, I hope we will heed the warning signs ahead and empower successful local programs. Our children and our country deserve no less.

SUPPORT GUTIERREZ BILL TO PREVENT DEPORTATION OF THE SEVERELY ILL

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, our legislation often affects millions of people. Today I ask you to consider just one person, a young girl named Keysi Castillo. Keysi is your typical, happy 10-year-old except for one thing. She has a severe medical problem, a congenital heart condition requiring surgery, supervision and long-term care.

But her troubles do not stop there. She and her mother face possible deportation. For anyone, that is serious. For Keysi it is a matter of survival. Her doctor has declared that being sent back to her native Honduras would be tantamount to a death sentence.

Honduras lacks the health care that she requires and its climate and high altitude pose a considerable risk to her health. Keysi is too young to know about politics or immigration policy, but she knows that she is sick and you and I know we can help her.

Today I will introduce a bill to do that, to enable Keysi to remain in the

□ 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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