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House of Representatives

The House met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 29, 2003.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Edward J. Burns, Executive Director, Secretariat for Vocations and Priestly Formation at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C. offered the following prayer:

Blessed are You, Lord God of all creation, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the father of Jesus and God of us all. We thank You for the many gifts You have given us out of love. We praise You for the wonders of Your works. We now ask that You bless us.

As the Members of the United States House of Representatives reconvene after their holiday recess, we are mindful of Your many gifts of salvation and redemption. We ask now that You bless these men and women. Grant them the strength, grace, perseverance, and wisdom to carry out the task that lies ahead of them. Bless their endeavors and give success to the work of their hands.

Bless our troops who are serving our country; in particular, those men and women who are serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Guide them, protect them, and grant peace and consolation to their families.

We recognize that we do not work alone; but rather, we rely on our broth-

ers and sisters. Bless our constituents and colleagues, our friends and loved ones. May we serve faithfully in bringing forth a Nation that is just, one that keeps faith and hope alive.

We ask this in Your name. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WOLF 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.

EXPLAINING OPPOSITION TO TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. DELAY. Madam Speaker, the number one domestic priority of this administration and this Congress is to stimulate the sluggish economy. The President's tax relief proposal will create jobs. It will grow the economy. It will spur investment and innovation in the private sector. And it will put more money into the pockets of the American men and women who earn it.

By contrast, the alternative plan being touted is insufficient, and its proponents have some explaining to do. As the President put it the other day, if they agree that tax relief creates

jobs, then why are they for a little itty bitty tax relief package?

Well, some oppose tax relief because they think the money belongs to the government instead of the people who earn it. The good news is that this is an intellectually consistent response. The bad news is, the only person in the Western Hemisphere who believes it is Fidel Castro.

Others say they worry about the deficit, but their argument contradicts itself. The budget was balanced in the 1990s through spending restraint and economic growth. Letting people keep more of their own money stimulates the economy and limits our ability to spend.

Those opposing significant tax relief would intentionally hamstring the economy and leave hundreds of billions in Washington, D.C. to be spent like a stray \$20 bill in Las Vegas, not exactly a recipe for a balanced budget.

Finally, some in Washington just attack everything that the President proposes. This, unfortunately, describes too many Democrats in Congress, more interested in griping than governing.

Madam Speaker, whether their reasons are extreme, self-contradictory, or partisan, the enemies of significant tax relief are wrong. We need real tax relief to create jobs, grow an economy that can afford all our priorities, balance the budget, and hold the line on spending. That is, after all, why the American people elected Republican leaders in the first place.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE LIFE OF CORPORAL ARMANDO ARIEL GONZALEZ

(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. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay

□ 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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tribute to the life of Corporal Armando Ariel Gonzalez, who gave his life bringing freedom to the oppressed people of Iraq.

Armando understood the significance of Operation Iraqi Freedom better than most Americans because, as a teenager, he and his father used a raft to escape from an oppressive regime in Cuba to find liberty in America.

Corporal Gonzalez was a dedicated Marine assigned to the Marine Wing Support Squadron 273 stationed at the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort in South Carolina. He served bravely in a hostile environment, and supported one of the most successful military campaigns in history, one that will be immortalized along with the battles of Belleau Woods, Okinawa, Inchon, and Khe Sanh.

Armando fought for a country he could not call his own, but has received his citizenship posthumously, thanks to the hard work of the gentleman from Florida (Mr. LINCOLN DIAZ-BALART).

He leaves behind a loving wife, Liudmila, who is expecting their first child. His baby will be born an American, and can be proud of a father who died as a true patriot. In conclusion, God bless our troops.

REPUBLICANS PROPOSE RECKLESS TAX CUT WHILE MILLIONS OF AMERICANS GO WITHOUT HEALTH INSURANCE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, just a few steps away from the floor of the House, there are many of us gathered near the Senate, standing up to speak on behalf of the 75 million uninsured Americans: physicians, representatives of hospitals, the American Medical Association, the National Medical Association, nurses' organizations, students; individuals who recognize, Madam Speaker, that it is not gripping when we say that we cannot afford a \$726 billion tax cut that will result in a \$1.7 trillion deficit in this economy, it is the people of the United States. It is the veterans who are disenrolled who cannot go to veterans' hospitals even as I speak, even in my congressional district, because we have no money in the budget. It is the young men and women who are willing to offer themselves as the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq, the United States troops who will be returning, individual troops who make a \$1,000 a month who cannot afford, when they leave the service, good health care.

That is why we believe the tax cut cannot and should not be passed, because of the millions of individuals who are uninsured.

I believe we should stand for what America believes in. That is the promise of America, that all of us should have equal access to health care. I be-

lieve that is what we should invest in, the people of this country rebuilding around the world our friendship, and not passing a reckless tax cut.

ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE BILL

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, on March 23 the Federal Department of Transportation decided to yank funding from the Lancaster Airport in my district, denying the airport of its ability to provide commercial air services.

The Department operates a program called the Essential Air Services Program which provides subsidies to airlines that serve smaller markets that would otherwise go without commercial service. But the Department of Transportation is wrong in this case.

The 68-mile route it chose between Route 30 to Philadelphia International Airport takes 3 hours to drive or more. The route most commonly used is 80 miles and takes about half that time to drive.

This week I am introducing a bill to remedy this wrong. The Essential Air Services Eligibility Fairness Act will make sure the highway mileage between a place and the nearest hub airport will be determined by the most commonly used route between the two airports. It will protect, in my case, 876,000 air trips that originate every year in Lancaster; and it will protect the other small market airports around the country that provide convenient air service for millions.

HOMELAND SECURITY AND TAX CUTS

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

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, as we prepare for the debate on taxes and spending, I want to call attention to an article in Sunday's Denver Post on the threat of shouldered-fired missiles to our airliners.

The article quotes security experts as saying this threat is "nearly impossible to defend against," and points out that equipping the U.S. commercial airline fleet with jammers or decoys could cost up to \$10 billion.

There are other threats, as well. We need to do much more to prevent ship containers that would be used to smuggle in weapons of mass destruction.

Of course, we cannot prevent every conceivable threat to our homeland security. We have to set priorities and we have to fund those priorities.

One thing is for sure: when the President proposed and this Congress passed a budget resolution that includes more than \$1 trillion in tax cuts, we cannot, in good conscience, tell the American people we are funding these priorities.

Madam Speaker, our States need help in beefing up security. When our home-

land security alert system goes to orange, our State budgets go into the red. I fear this President and this Republican Congress are sacrificing homeland security and other needs in favor of deep tax cuts that will have little positive effect on our economy.

We need to do better.

ALERTING NATION TO ASSIST IN SEARCH FOR ASHLEIGH MOORE OF SAVANNAH, GEORGIA, AND OTHER MISSING AND EXPLOITED CHILDREN

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

Mr. BURNS. Madam Speaker, today the Subcommittee on Select Education is holding a hearing on missing and exploited and runaway youth under which revisions to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children will be considered.

This topic is particularly relevant to the people of Savannah, as there is a young girl from that area in my district who has been missing for more than 2 weeks.

Ashleigh Moore is only 12 years old. She is an African American young lady who is a little over 5 feet tall and weighs 120 pounds. She was last seen wearing a white shirt and brown pants. Her family is very worried about her, and the entire community from Savannah is making every effort to find her. I am hopeful that she will return safely home very soon.

I would urge anyone who has any information about Ashleigh to contact the Savannah police at 912-232-4141.

Madam Speaker, children are a precious resource. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children acts to reunite missing children with their families, and work with crime prevention officers to reach out to the community with child safety information and services.

□ 1415

My thoughts and prayers are with Ashleigh's family today.

DEMOCRATIC PLAN CREATES JOBS

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, the distinguished majority leader got up here and said the first priority of the President was the economy. That is interesting for a President who over his 2 years in office has lost 2½ million jobs, 2½ million American workers who do not have jobs and hundreds of thousands of others that have run out of unemployment and the President has resisted extending their unemployment benefits. And we will see what happens this May as hundreds of thousands more lose their unemployment and they have no income support for their families, to pay