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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Dr. Ivan N. Raley, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Byrdstown, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Our heavenly Father, as we gather in this historic and honored hall, with these whom You have chosen and our Nation has elected to serve in their place here in this special city, we come, Lord, humbly and devotedly before You.

Father, we are reminded in Your Word where a man who had been sick for 38 years met Your Son, Jesus, and when He met him and was asked if he would be made whole, he said he had no one.

Father, I believe that across this great Nation of ours there are tens of thousands of people who are looking to the men and women of this great hall and this great body and are saying, as clearly as the layman 2000 years ago, we need someone.

Father, touch each of these who have been elected, ordain them as Your servants and use them gloriously this day. May their voice be Yours. May their decisions be Yours.

Father, God bless this body. God bless America.

In Your holy name. 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.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CAPPS 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.

IN RECOGNITION OF DR. IVAN RALEY

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in proud recognition of Dr. Ivan Raley. Dr. Raley is a native Tennessean who has selflessly served the people and the State of Tennessee as a pastor for the last 30 years. My local church, the First Baptist Church in Byrdstown, has been blessed as the home of Dr. Raley for the last 3 years, and today, following in the tradition established by Benjamin Franklin and our Founding Fathers, Dr. Raley delivered the opening prayer to the United States House of Representatives.

In addition to serving as pastor of my local church, Ivan Raley works as regional vice president of the Tennessee Baptist Children's Home, Inc. The Tennessee Baptist Children's Home was founded in Nashville, Tennessee, in 1891 to provide residential care to orphaned, neglected, abandoned and abused children while helping them become whole persons in the name of the Lord.

In my opinion, Dr. Raley is a rare individual who truly believes in serving his fellow man. By tirelessly spreading the message of faith, hope and caring for others, Dr. Raley has been able to help thousands of Tennesseans seek comfort in the Lord's arms. Dr. Raley understands that words like morals, values and faith are not just punch words that should be used shallowly for personal gain, but rather, they should be the foundation and driving force of every human life.

Dr. Raley knows that love lives in the heart of every individual, whether they be friend or stranger, and that when we know and accept this love, we will understand the blessing of life that God has given us.

I thank Dr. Raley for all he as done for me and my family and all he continues to do for the orphaned children in Tennessee.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain five 1-minute speeches on each side.

PUNTA GORDA POLICE DEPARTMENT STARTS ADOPT-AN-OFFENDER PROGRAM

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, the news coming out of Florida is distressing, the brutal murders and abductions of young girls.

Punta Gorda Police Department started a new program yesterday, Adopt-An-Offender, where police officers are placed with sexual offenders in the new program.

In a press conference Tuesday afternoon, Police Chief Chuck Rinehart commended all the officers of his department for 100 percent participation.

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After the recent murder, said the chief, of Jessica Lunsford, in Citrus County, the Punta Gorda Police Department decided they were unsatisfied with the way they were handling local sex offenders. The result was this program.

He said, ''We will work hand-in-hand with our local probation and parole officers to ensure that offenders and predators are following the lines drawn for them. The bottom line to offenders and predators: Don't cross the line.''

St. Lucie County Sheriff Ken Mascara and Under Sheriff Gary Wilson have had a similar program for some time.

I commend both of these agencies for their proactive leadership and urge all cities and counties to follow their lead. It is time we get tough. We should not expect people to register. We should be pursuing them. We should be following them. If they break the law, they should be back in jail.

IT IS TIME TO GET OUT OF IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, yesterday's Washington Post carried two pages of pictures of our brave young men and women who were killed in Iraq.

This war is an abstraction for most Americans, but not for the families of those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The fallen soldiers' contributions will never be diminished. What they stood for is in the highest service to this Nation.

But we must ask questions of those who sent them, of those who would keep our troops there, of those who would send even more troops, of those who say, well, now that we are there, we must stay there. Such logic would have left us still fighting a war in Vietnam.

How can we move on to other matters in this Capitol when we are sending more men and women to die in a war that was based on a lie? This war has forever altered the lives of tens of thousands of families in this country and hundred of thousands in Iraq.

Enough is enough. It is time for an exit strategy. It is time to get out of Iraq.

WASTED PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, imagine this: A person in a nursing home receives a prescription for a 90-day supply of medication. A few days later, the physician changes that. What happened with those unused drugs? They are thrown away.

Millions of Federal and State dollars could be saved by restocking unused prescription drugs that are often thrown away by long-term care facilities when a patient changes prescriptions, passes away, is discharged or transfers.

What if these drugs could be restocked and safely used?

It has been estimated that restocking unused medications may save as much as $1 billion among the elderly Americans each year and up to $380 million in long-term care facilities alone.

The FDA issued an informal opinion allowing the restocking of drugs that meet safety guidelines; however, there is still wide disparity between what the States are doing. This confusion is costing the States and the Federal Government money.

Rather than flushing drugs down the drain each month and wasting money, I urge my colleagues to work with me and the States on uniformed standards for restocking drugs and to examine the new savings that can save money, improve lives, and improve health care.

For further information, I ask my colleagues to check out my Web site at murphy.house.gov of ways we can continue to save lives and money.

MEDICAID CUTS IN THE BUDGET

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, 44 Republicans wrote to the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. NUSSLE), the Committee on the Budget chairman, protesting the Medicaid cuts included in the House budget they had recently voted for. Their letter says, ''We strongly urge you to remove these reductions and the reconciliation instructions targeted at Medicaid.''

Their letter correctly notes that the policy should drive the budget and not the budget the policy. That is a good idea. Unfortunately, it seems like one that will not be followed in the impending budget deal.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that if the budget conference report contains Medicaid cuts, these 44 Republican Members will not buckle to the pressure of the Republican leadership.

We all need to stand firm. Just issuing a letter against cuts in a budget you just voted for is not enough. It is important to follow up by not voting for the final bill if it contains the cuts you say you are against.

Cuts to Medicaid of this magnitude are going to have real harm to millions of real people. We should reject any budget that indiscriminately calls for millions of dollars in cuts to Medicaid.

LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is hard to tell by reading the front pages of papers across the country, but the House has been racking up legislative accomplishments, one after another after another, most of the times with growing bipartisan support.

Look at just a few of the accomplishments in the first 100 days of this Congress.

Legal reform. The Class Action Fairness Act addresses the most serious lawsuit abuse by allowing larger interstate class action cases to be heard in Federal courts with a Consumer Class Action Bill of Rights.

Border security and immigration reform. The REAL ID Act completes the work of the 9/11 Commission recommendations by implementing reforms to strengthen our border security and better protect our homeland.

The death tax repeal. The permanent repeal of the death tax ends the unjust and unfair tax on millions.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great pleasure and a welcome sight to me to see my colleagues on the other side of the aisle join us to do the people's work. Let us continue that good work and tackle Social Security and tax reform.

THE REPUBLICANS' BUDGET ON AFRICAN AMERICAN AND HISPANIC COMMUNITIES AND CHILDREN

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

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, the Democratic leadership just released two reports that make clear just how much damage the Republican budget will do to the African American and Hispanic communities, as well as to children.

This budget fails to deliver $12 billion in proposed funding for education. If the President really meant that no child would be left behind, why are 3 million children not getting the help in reading and math that they deserve?

The budget fails to make health care accessible. With more than 20 million African Americans and Hispanics without health insurance, the Bush budget offers health care cuts that will increase the number of the uninsured.

President Bush claimed that his Social Security privatization plan would benefit African Americans because we have shorter life expectancies. The budget makes it clear that the President would rather exploit this issue to sell his privatization scheme than do something to help African Americans live longer.

This budget creates deficits, not jobs, and it favors tax cuts for the rich over making the American dream more accessible to all. Every American deserves better.

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FIRST 100 DAYS OF CONGRESS MARKED BY LEGISLATIVE ACHIEVEMENT

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