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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

Washington, DC, September 21, 2005.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CANDICE S. MILLER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

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

PRAYER

The Reverend Monsignor Kenneth Velo, Office of Catholic Collaboration, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

E Pluribus Unum, out of many one, is not only an expression fundamental to these United States but also a reality we experience so often and one you visit each day as you seek consensus in this great Chamber.

So many differences, yet one great Nation, America. If there is one desire we all have, I believe it is peace. We bow our heads this morning, for though there are varied religious traditions here, it is faith and service that calls us together.

Our prayer this day includes family and friends, young and old. Our thoughts embrace the poor, the sick, the less fortunate. Our remembrances recall our beloved dead. For the people of the Middle East, for our women and men in uniform serving there and beyond, give peace, O God, give peace again.

For our brothers and sisters on the gulf coast and in particular New Orleans, Biloxi, and these days Texas as well, give peace, O God, give peace again.

For those who suffer in mind or body, those in pain from grief or loss, give peace, O God, give peace again.

May those who are homeless have shelter, the sick have comfort, and the dying have dignity. May those who are hungry have bread, and may we who have bread hunger for justice and peace.

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 Texas (Mr. REYES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. REYES 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.

WELCOMING MONSIGNOR KENNETH VELO

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, it is my great pleasure to recognize and welcome Monsignor Velo, one of Chicago's most distinguished religious leaders, as today's guest chaplain.

Born on Chicago's south side, the Monsignor was ordained in 1973. In 1985, Monsignor Velo became the executive assistant to the late Joseph Cardinal Bernardin, a position he held for 14 years. Monsignor Velo and Cardinal Bernardin were close friends, and it was Monsignor Velo who cared for Cardinal Bernardin's mother after the Cardinal passed away.

Impressed by his reputation as a public servant, the late Pope John Paul, II appointed Monsignor Velo to be president of the Catholic Church Extension Society. Today he is senior executive of the Office of Catholic Collaboration at DePaul University, the largest Catholic university in the country, located in Chicago's Lincoln Park.

Monsignor Velo is an important Chicagoan with an impressive background and résumé. But more important, Monsignor Velo is a humanitarian who has dedicated his life to God and to improving the lives of everyone around him. Chicago is blessed by Monsignor Velo. Madam Speaker, I thank him for his service and for being here today.

NATIONAL EMPLOY THE OLDER WORKER WEEK

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, I rise today to highlight that we are currently celebrating National Employ the Older Worker Week. This week, which is sponsored by the American Legion, has been observed for over 40 years. It is appropriate to recognize and appreciate this growing demographic workforce.

After all, our country is witnessing major growth in the number of Americans that are nearing the traditional retirement age. It is estimated that by 2008 nearly half of the workforce will be over 45 years old.

As our population continues to grow older, these citizens will play an even more important role in our economy. Older workers bring many assets to the workplace, including good work ethics, motivation, experience, and knowledge. My hat goes off to our older

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workers who are learning new skills and are exercising the many skills they already know in order to give back to society.

I am a firm believer that every single person at any age has certain gifts and talents from God. I am pleased our older workers are committed to sharing their talents with others. It is my hope that employers around the country will continue to recognize the many benefits of hiring older workers and expand job opportunities for these fine citizens.

THE NEED FOR AN EXIT STRATEGY IN IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, 3 years ago we heard the drums of war beating in this House Chamber, and Congress voted to take this Nation to war against Iraq.

We later learned that Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, was not trying to get uranium from Niger, had no intention nor capability of attacking the United States. Yet we went to war and war against Iraq remains.

We went to war without any thought of how we would get out of that war. We went to war with a big buildup; but when it came to talking about an exit from Iraq, there was very little or no discussion except for the one thing, Democrats and Republicans alike to come together, in support of House Joint Resolution 55, a resolution that requires the administration to produce, by the end of the year, an exit strategy and to begin the execution of that strategy by October 1 of 2006.

We owe it to those who serve. We owe it to the troops who gave their lives. We owe it to their parents and to their families, to have an exit strategy so that we can let the world community take the burden of the years ahead in Iraq.

CONGRATULATING NORFOLK PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(Mrs. DRAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I congratulate Norfolk public schools for winning the Broad Prize for Urban Education. Eighty-two school districts participated. Five finalists were selected. Yesterday the winner was announced: Norfolk public schools.

The criterion for this award is significantly improving student achievement and reducing the performance gap. Congratulations to Norfolk, Virginia, for their hard work, their dedication and their creativity, and a heartfelt thanks to the Broad Foundation for their vision and their commitment to America's children.

These models and programs will be used across America to improve the quality of education for all children.

DO THE KATRINA RECOVERY RIGHT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, we are united not just in our compassion for the victims of Katrina, but a sincere interest in doing recovery right.

Republicans and Democrats, both ends of the political spectrum, can agree that we do not want some Stalinist plan imposed on a manufactured community doomed to fail.

We need the courage to be partners respectfully, the wisdom to define the role carefully, the stamina to follow through thoroughly, and the integrity to avoid partisanship. We must meet the immediate needs of the refugees affected; but we must restore communities that are stronger, safer, and more sustainable.

We must involve all Americans with the skills and concerns starting with locals, wherever they may be. We must make this a model for how to do it right because it is not just about rescuing a damaged region; it is about how to make the Federal Government more effective.

KATRINA ABUSE

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

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, as the skies have cleared in the aftermath of Katrina, and the howling winds and rain of Rita develop in the gulf and head for Texas, we have learned that giving away American money in the form of emergency debit cards should be reevaluated.

There are reports in Houston of evacuees using their taxpayer debit cards to buy expensive jewelry, $800 Louis Vuitton purses. $2,000 cards are exchanged on the black market for cash in order to buy drugs, alcohol, and as they say, street entertainment.

There are reports of individuals using multiple stolen identifications to get numerous cards. At the Astrodome there are reports of dice games with the pot being debit cards.

Madam Speaker, we are also hearing the topless clubs are doing a booming business thanks to the evacuees. A local bartender has reported that the debit cards are used at his topless club to gain admission and purchase lap dances. Maybe these are emergency lap dances for the displaced and distressed evacuees.

Madam Speaker, when American money is given away in the name of compassion without adequate control, we see the above abuse. Those who take advantage of this disaster should be held accountable.

As the saying goes, Madam Speaker, no good deed goes unpunished. This ought not to be.

RECOGNIZING THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF CATHEDRAL HIGH SCHOOL OF EL PASO, TEXAS

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

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, I am proud to rise today in recognition of the 80th anniversary of Cathedral High School located in my district in El Paso, Texas.

Since Cathedral High School opened its doors with a faculty of four LaSallian brothers in 1925, it has woven itself into the fabric of the El Paso-Ciudad Juarez community.

The school has educated and taught the histories of two cultures and two nations to the sons of both. Over the years, Cathedral has produced thousands of college-bound graduates, many of whom have become great civic leaders and accomplished professionals. Among these men we count Ambassador Raymond Telles.

Ambassador Telles' Cathedral education prepared him to become the first Hispanic mayor of El Paso and to be appointed ambassador to Costa Rica, among many distinguished posts which he held.

He is an inspiration to generations of Cathedral graduates, to El Pasoans, and to Hispanics across the United States. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the 80th anniversary of Cathedral High School and wishing them continued success and excellence.

IN TRIBUTE TO AMERICA'S FIRST RESPONDERS

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

Mr. NEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the firefighters, police officers, and other first responders who have answered the call of duty and traveled from around the country to the gulf coast in order to help their fellow citizens and communities who have been devastated by Hurricane Katrina.

Many in this country sometimes forget that men and women put their lives on the line every day seeking not headlines or glory, but the simple satisfaction of helping and saving their fellow citizens. Their brave deeds, good work, and tremendous dedication deserve and demand the grateful respect and recognition of all.

And now more than ever, in recent days we have literally seen thousands of firefighters, police officers, EMS workers, and others pour into New Orleans and other devastated gulf coast areas to bolster relief efforts and save hundreds, if not thousands, of lives.

I am particularly proud to recognize those who have volunteered from around Ohio's 18th District as well as a number of our own United States Capitol Hill police officers who are currently on their way to the gulf coast.