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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Paul C. Granillo, Priest Secretary, Diocese of San Bernardino, California, offered the following prayer:

Good and gracious God, this morning we ask You, our Creator, to bless the United States of America and this, her House of Representatives. Help us to be a people and leaders committed to the self-evident truths proclaimed in our Declaration of Independence, the rights of humanity to life, liberty, and happiness.

Never let us take for granted the honor it is to live in this country, and never let us fail to recognize the responsibility that that honor places upon us.

Help us to use the many blessings bestowed upon our Nation to make the world a better, more peace-filled place. Help us to be generous towards our sisters and brothers who hunger for food, medicine, education, and justice.

Loving God, we give You thanks for the gifts and responsibilities You have bestowed upon each of us this day, most especially for our life, our liberty, and our happiness. 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 California (Mr. BACA) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BACA 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 206. An act to designate the Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail, and for other purposes.

S. 213. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to convey certain Federal land to the Rio Arriba County, New Mexico.

S. 251. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation, to conduct a water resource feasibility study for the Little Butte/Bear Creek Subbasins in Oregon.

S. 485. An act to reauthorize and amend the National Geologic Mapping Act of 1992.

S. 584. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior to allow the continued occupancy and use of certain land and improvements within Rocky Mountain National Park.

S. 652. An act to provide financial assistance for the rehabilitation of the Benjamin Franklin National Memorial in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the development of an exhibit to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin.

S. 695. An act to suspend temporarily new shipper bonding privileges.

S. 761. An act to rename the Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in the State of Idaho as the Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation Area in honor of the late Morley Nelson, an international authority on birds of prey, who was instrumental in the establishment of this National Conservation Area, and for other purposes.

S. 777. An act to designate Catoctin Mountain Park in the State of Maryland as the "Catoctin Mountain National Recreation Area", and for other purposes.

S. 819. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to reallocate costs of the Pactola Dam and Reservoir, South Dakota, to reflect increased demands for municipal, industrial, and fish and wildlife purposes.

S. 891. An act to extend the water service contract for the Ainsworth Unit, Sandhills Division, Pick-Sloan Missouri Basin Program, Nebraska.

S. 895. An act to direct the Secretary of the Interior to establish a rural water supply

program in the Reclamation States to provide a clean, safe, affordable, and reliable water supply to rural residents.

S. 958. An act to amend the National Trails System Act to designate the Star-Spangled Banner Trail in the State of Maryland and Virginia and the District of Columbia as a National Historic Trail.

S. 1154. An act to extend the Acadia National Park Advisory Commission, to provide improved visitor services at the park, and for other purposes.

S. 1238. An act to amend the Public Lands Corps of 1993 to provide for the conduct of projects that protect forests, and for other purposes.

S. 1338. An act to require the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the Bureau of Reclamation and the United States Geological Survey, to conduct a study on groundwater resources in the State of Alaska, and for other purposes.

S. 1627. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a special resources study to evaluate resources along the coastal region of the State of Delaware and to determine the suitability and feasibility of establishing a unit of the National Park System in Delaware.

WELCOMING FATHER PAUL GRANILLO

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

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to welcome our guest chaplain, Paul Christopher Granillo of the Diocese of San Bernardino, and thank him for giving the opening prayer this morning. I believe he is the first Catholic priest from the San Bernardino Diocese to offer the prayer in the U.S. Capitol.

Father Granillo, or Father Paul, as he is known, was born in Redlands, California and educated at the local schools there where I met him as a student where he was involved with the Junior Achievement program.

He is part of a very proud Mexican-American family that has lived in that

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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city for three generations. He is the eldest of two sons born to Richard and Connie Granillo. His younger brother, Carlo Granillo, is a police detective in the City of Fontana. This is a wonderful family, and I am sure they are proud to serve the Inland Empire communities in their respective ways.

Father Paul attended Cal State University of San Bernardino and graduated with a BA degree in history where my wife, Barbara Baca, Joe Baca, Jr., and his wife, Jennifer Sanchez Baca, also graduated from. He received a Master of Divinity from St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California and a License in Canon Law from Catholic University here in Washington, DC.

Following his ordination in May of 1997, he served as a parish priest in Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage and Riverside, California.

He is now assigned to Our Lady of the Rosary Cathedral, and he currently serves as Priest Secretary to Bishop Gerald Barnes and as the Communications Director for the Diocese of San Bernardino and Riverside Counties in California.

Father Paul is very active in the greater San Bernardino communities, providing services and counsel to growing Hispanic communities.

We were recently together at a Catholic charity event. In addition to his church activity, he is an avid golfer where he and Father Howard Paul and Joe Baca, Jr. and I have had the privilege of enjoying a friendly competitive round of golf against one another. And I tell him, Father Paul, the Lord cannot always guide your golf ball in a straight direction because he wants you to know the feeling of the lost sheep that was lost, but found the right path.

I thank Chaplain Coughlin for his kind invitation to Reverend Granillo to offer this morning's prayer. I thank Father Paul for traveling to our Nation's capital today to be with us. God bless him, and God bless his family.

A BAD CASE OF AMNESIA

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I am concerned about some Democrats here in Washington. It seems that when it comes to the vote on the Iraq war, they have developed a serious case of amnesia. That is why I am going to give them a little reminder of what they said 3 years ago as they cast the votes they seem to have forgotten.

A leading liberal Senator from New York argued that "If left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capability to wage biological and chemical warfare and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons."

The Minority Leader in this House emphatically stated, "Saddam Hussein certainly has chemical and biological

weapons. There is no question about that."

The Minority Leader in the Senate warned that, "Saddam Hussein's near success with developing a nuclear weapon should be an eye-opener for us all."

Now, some Democrats want to act as if these statements of support for the war never happened. We all remember the line, "I voted for the war before I voted against it." It seems like many more Democrats are jumping on that bandwagon.

DEPARTMENT OF INJUSTICE

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate Robert Kennedy's 80th birthday, the Robert F. Kennedy Justice Department maybe, given what has happened, should be renamed the Department of No Justice, because political operatives in charge have betrayed his legacy and the cause of justice in this country.

As The Washington Post reports this morning, despite objections of the Justice Department's career professionals, President Bush's political appointees "preapproved" a controversial Georgia voter-identification program that has been compared to a modern-day poll tax.

This is just one of a series of incidents that have subverted the purposes for which the Justice Department exists.

Last June, Justice Department political appointees announced that the government would seek \$10 billion instead of the \$130 billion recommended by career lawyers in a case they tried for 6 years against the tobacco industry, and won.

In the voting rights section, political appointees have also overruled career lawyers in approving GOP-backed redistricting maps for Georgia and Texas in recent years.

Now, that is a way to build morale.

In fact, the Civil Rights Division has lost nearly 20 percent of its career lawyers this year alone because they are fed up with political interference. At this point, they might as well drop the word "justice" from the masthead of the Department.

It is time to end the political interference and let the Justice Department professionals do their jobs. Incompetence is not a virtue.

ALTERNATIVE MINIMUM TAX

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

Mrs. KELLY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly urge this House to act before the end of the year to protect middle class families from the alternative minimum tax.

When a 1993 tax increase failed to adjust the AMT exemption amounts for

inflation, what was intended to be a tax on high-income taxpayers became a tax that punishes the middle class. If the middle class exemptions are not extended for 2006, the numbers of New Yorkers forced to pay the alternative minimum tax will more than quadruple to 1.6 million families next year.

Make no mistake about it, these are middle class taxpayers that would be apprehended by the AMT because we have not changed the law. Many of them live in the Hudson Valley that I represent.

This is an unfair tax on middle class Hudson Valley residents who would be forced to pay an average of \$4,000 in new taxes next year. This is money middle class families need to pay their own bills and put their own family needs in order. The last thing we should be doing is forcing middle class families in New York to send more of their money to Washington, D.C.

Let us do the right thing for the middle class. Let us extend the AMT exemptions before the end of this year.

RECLAIMING AMERICA

(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, the budget bill attacks students and low-income and middle class families. It targets low and moderate income Americans with \$70 billion in new tax cuts that will be included in the budget, and those tax cuts favor the super rich.

The tax cuts for the rich are placed on the backs of students and their families. Under this bill, student borrowers, already saddled with \$17,500 in debt, could be forced to pay up to an additional \$1,500 for his or her college loans. The bill raises student loan interest rate caps, raises borrower interest rates and fees for consolidation loans, and raises student loan taxes, and puts billions of dollars in student aid at risk by cutting all the critical funds used to carry out and administer student aid programs.

So we have more and more young Americans who will not be getting a college education, but they will be getting a political education. If you do not vote, the politicians in Washington will ignore you, shove you aside, cut your education funds. It is a call to young Americans to get involved, register, vote, and reclaim this country.

RECOGNIZING LAURIN GROOVER'S LATEST SUCCESS

(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. Mr. Speaker, President Teddy Roosevelt once said that "The best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing."