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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Guest Chaplain, the Reverend Dr. S.L. Roberson, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Ypsilanti, Michigan, offered the following prayer:

Almighty, all wise, ever-present, glorious, and merciful God, we come today prayerfully opening this session of the United States House of Representatives offering thanksgiving to You. We bless You, magnify You, exalt You, thank You, and praise You for Your world love and saving grace.

We pray that You will continue to bless America, building her up where we are torn down, strengthening us where we are weak, and drawing us closer together. We ask that You cover this deliberating body with abundant wisdom and understanding, and that You lead, guide, and renew a right spirit in each Member.

Direct these deliberations into meaningful, positive actions reflecting Your excellence in power, in judgment, in justice, in clarity, and unity for America and our global friends.

Finally, reveal and enlighten the best that is in each of us so that we may use our gifts to glorify You.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of Ohio led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

INTRODUCTION OF THE REVEREND DR. S.L. ROBERSON

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL) is recognized for 1 minute.

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I have the great privilege today of welcoming and thanking a dear friend, a distinguished American, and a wonderful clergyman to the House for the prayer, and I want to thank you and my colleagues for your courtesy to him.

I am delighted to present to my colleagues the wonderful gentleman from Ypsilanti, the Reverend S.L. Roberson, and I want to thank him for taking time to be with us today to act as our guest chaplain.

He has dedicated his life to the service of his fellow man and is one of the most beloved and respected pastors and citizens of the State of Michigan. He has been pastor of the Metropolitan Memorial Baptist Church in Ypsilanti for 53 years. He has served his country with great distinction as a member of the United States Marine Corps, of which he is very proud.

He has undergraduate degrees from Eastern Michigan University, has studied at Detroit Bible College, and has a doctorate of divinity from Urban Bible College so that he may more fully and better serve his fellow man.

In addition to his civic and spiritual service, he has worked for Ford Motor Company for 33 years in their Labor Relations and Personnel Services of Industrial Relations Department. He has found time to serve as president of the Ypsilanti Housing Commission and is chaplain of the Ypsilanti Police Department.

He is a wonderful individual to provide the opening prayer for the Congress because of his great life experi-

ences and his wonderful service to his country, including distinguished service in the military. He has given his fellow citizens over 50 years of spiritual guidance, and he has administered God's word to civil servants and citizens alike all across Michigan.

I ask my colleagues to welcome this distinguished American, our guest chaplain, Rev. S.L. Roberson, and to welcome his wife and friends who are in the gallery today.

I thank you, Madam Speaker. We have before us a man of great respect and a real cornerstone to his community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for further 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

MAKING COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, Democrats are taking a new direction in America. We realize that restoring the American Dream begins with a great education. Unfortunately, over the last 6 years affording a 4-year college education has become increasingly difficult, especially for the middle class. That is why this Congress is providing the single largest investment in higher education since the creation of the GI Bill.

We make college more affordable for all Americans by reducing the cost of student loans and increasing the size of Pell Grants, and we do this all with no new cost to the taxpayers. Our investment in college students would be paid for by reducing the excessive Federal subsidies to the student loan industry.

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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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Madam Speaker, this new Democratic Congress is working to help restore the American Dream by opening the doors of a college education to more Americans. We need to all work together to raise all boats.

LISTEN TO ALL THE FACTS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, Congress will soon hear from members of our military as well as civilian advisers about progress in Iraq. Yesterday, the General Accounting Office released its report. This one report tells only a partial account. We should base decision-making on complete information from our military leaders.

The GAO report does not assess progress being made on the ground, progress our military commanders have indicated is occurring. The benchmarks outlined in the report are laudable goals, assessed by dedicated officials. Developing democracy to protect American families takes time, as we learned in Germany and Japan. It took America 13 years to adopt our Constitution.

Next week, we will receive a report from our top commander in the field, GEN David Petraeus, and our top diplomat, Ambassador Ryan Crocker. We should remain open and receptive to what these professionals have to say. We must protect American families by making difficult but informed decisions.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th.

ESTABLISHING UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR EVERY CITIZEN

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

Mr. KAGEN. Madam Speaker, how many ears must we have before we can hear people cry?

Last week, the Census Bureau informed us that more Americans than ever before in our Nation's history are going without access to health care; 46 million, 46 million citizens have no health care coverage. But this national nightmare is measured best not in numbers, but in human lives. Families across Wisconsin are going bankrupt because they can't afford their medical bills. Teenagers across the country will go blind because they do not have access to the care they need for their diabetes.

Congress doesn't need a census report to feel people's pain. And as Members of Congress, we must not wait for yet another census report before we act. It is our duty and our moral responsibility to act now.

People in Wisconsin and everywhere else in America demand we establish

universal access to affordable care for every citizen, and working together, we will.

THANKING CONSTITUENTS FOR INPUT AT TOWN HALL MEETINGS

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, the right of people to openly and freely question their leaders and discuss solutions to common problems is the reason our democracy works.

I hold town hall meetings every August all across my district. This August, I had nine town hall meetings. I had over 700 people come out to these meetings. It is a wonderful time. The overwhelming majority of my constituents had a clear message: It is high time to change the way Washington does business.

The people of western North Carolina are sick of wasteful spending and the broken Tax Code that funds it. They have had it with incompetence and waste in Federal bureaucracies. They are sick and tired of Washington not securing the border and stopping illegal immigration.

Again, I want to thank my constituents for coming out to these town hall meetings. It is a sincere pleasure to represent them and to try to fight for that change here in Washington, DC.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank them for coming out and making their voices heard. I have listened, and I am working to make that change.

BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE UNITED STATES AND MEXICO

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

Mrs. CAPPs. Madam Speaker, last week I was fortunate to visit Mexico City as a part of a bipartisan trip organized by the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Our trip provided an excellent opportunity for my colleagues and me to meet with prominent Mexican leaders in business, journalism and government.

It also provided a forum to discuss ongoing political and economic changes in Mexico and ways in which we can improve the relationship between the United States and Mexico. We discussed civic and political life in both countries, how we can work more closely with Mexican partner institutions to help bring about a more open, competitive and equitable society. One example is the security issues we both face, one which we share.

Madam Speaker, our relationship with our friend and neighbor Mexico is critically important. It cries out for more cooperation and engagement.

I want to thank the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars and its Mexico institute for facilitating this important dialogue. I know I was better able to get a picture of the state of democracy

in Mexico, the shared goals and challenges that confront both of our countries, how we can be better neighbors to one another.

So I hope we can continue this important conversation and build a better future for the United States and for Mexico.

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IN MEMORY OF SPECIALIST TYLER ROSS SEIDEMAN

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a young man beloved by his family, friends and his community. I rise to remember Specialist Tyler Ross Seideman of the United States Army who was taken from us 2 weeks ago today in Multaka, Iraq.

Tyler and 13 of his Army brothers passed away when the Black Hawk he was in went down due to mechanical problems. Tyler, from the small town of Lincoln, Arkansas, was a sniper in the 2nd Battalion of the 35th Infantry Regiment based out of Hawaii. His closest friends described him with adjectives such as "brave," a "great soldier" and a "perfect gentleman."

I had the opportunity to attend Tyler's funeral this past Saturday. The outpouring of love and support from the people of Lincoln is something I will remember for the rest of my life.

My prayers and those of my family are with Tyler's parents, Bill and Lee Ann, and sisters Kiera and Kristen. I thank them for raising a man such as Tyler, and I thank Tyler for his service to a grateful Nation.

CHANGING COURSE IN IRAQ

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, for months now this Democratic Congress has tried to change course in Iraq, but a stubborn President, supported by a rubber-stamp Republican Congress in both the House and the Senate, has made that impossible.

In the spring, Republican leaders said by September, which is now, we should know if the President's troop escalation plan is working. And if it wasn't, then they would be ready to explore a different course.

Yesterday, the GAO released a report concluding that the Iraqi Government had fallen short of meeting 11 of the 18 benchmarks that President Bush said they would have to meet. The report also found that four other benchmarks had only partially been met. That means that the Iraqi Government has met only three of 18 benchmarks. Let's not forget that the main reason that