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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. McNULTY).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 30, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MICHAEL R. McNULTY to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

Rev. Nathan Meador, Zion Lutheran Church, Staunton, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Almighty Father, Wisdom Incarnate and Eternal Spirit of Truth and Life, You bid Your people seek Your will, Your wisdom and Your gifts. At this time in history, our Nation is faced with many challenges and presented with many great opportunities for serving You and our neighbors. Grant the Members of this House Your strength, wisdom and guidance as they seek to serve You in leading this great Nation in the way of Truth and Life. Bestow Your blessing upon all the people of this great Nation whom this august assembly serves. Strengthen us as we face those challenges and encourage us as we seize the divinely given opportunities to make this world a better place. At Your direction and in Your peace, may we dwell in safety and live for You and the service of our neighbors. We pray in the risen name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

Mr. SHIMKUS 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 with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4040. An act to establish consumer product safety standards and other safety requirements for children's products and to reauthorize and modernize the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 4040) "An Act to establish consumer product safety standards and other safety requirements for children's products and to reauthorize and modernize the Consumer Product Safety Commission," requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. INOUE, Mr. PRYOR, Mrs. BOXER, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. STEVENS, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. SUNUNU, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

WELCOMING REV. NATHAN MEADOR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois

(Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I want to welcome Rev. Nathan Meador to the Chamber today. Pastor Meador is the pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in Staunton, Illinois. He has served in this capacity since August of 2003. He currently serves as a vicarage supervisor and resident field education adviser to several students from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Elected in 2006, he is also a member of the Southern Illinois District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Board for Congregational Support.

In Staunton, Rev. Meador is proud to serve as the chaplain for the Staunton Volunteer Fire Department, treasurer of the Staunton Area Clergy Association and chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Staunton Education Foundation.

Born January 29, 1970, in Highland, Illinois, Rev. Meador spent his entire childhood as a resident of Edwardsville, Illinois. He is a 1988 graduate of Metro-East Lutheran High School in Edwardsville, Illinois, and my former student. He continued his education at Concordia University Wisconsin, earning a bachelor of arts with a double major in pre-seminary studies and theological languages. A master of divinity degree was earned from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, in 1996.

His first call was to serve a dual parish in Sheldon and Gilman, Wisconsin. There he served Trinity and Zion as pastor for 2 years. In 1998 he accepted the call to serve as pastor of Zion Lutheran Church in rural Wausau, Wisconsin. He served in this capacity until August 2003 when he accepted the call to serve in Staunton, Illinois.

Rev. Meador is married to Jill Jaeger and has been married for 15 years. They have three children: Joseph, 11; Beth, 8; and Andrew, 4.

□ 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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When not being a parish pastor, Rev. Meador enjoys officiating high school and youth athletics and playing golf.

Welcome, Nathan.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. After consultation among the Speaker and the majority and minority leaders, and with their consent, the Chair announces that, when the two Houses meet in joint meeting to hear an address by His Excellency Bertie Ahern, Prime Minister of Ireland, only the doors immediately opposite the Speaker and those immediately to her left and right will be open.

No one will be allowed on the floor of the House who does not have the privilege of the floor of the House. Due to the large attendance that is anticipated, the rule regarding the privilege of the floor must be strictly enforced. Children of Members will not be permitted on the floor. The cooperation of all Members is requested.

The practice of reserving seats prior to the joint meeting by placard will not be allowed. Members may reserve their seats by physical presence only following the security sweep of the Chamber.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Thursday, April 24, 2008, the House stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 7 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1053

JOINT MEETING OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE TO HEAR AN ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY BERTIE AHERN, THE PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND

The Speaker of the House presided.

The Majority Floor Services Chief, Barry Sullivan, announced the President pro tempore and Members of the U.S. Senate who entered the Hall of the House of Representatives, the President pro tempore taking the chair at the left of the Speaker, and the Members of the Senate the seats reserved for them.

The SPEAKER. The Chair appoints as members of the committee on the part of the House to escort His Excellency Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, Prime Minister of Ireland, into the Chamber:

The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER);

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN);

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL);

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON);

The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY);

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY);

The gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL);

The gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY);

The gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY);

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER);

The gentleman from Missouri (Mr. BLUNT);

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. PUTNAM);

The gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER);

The gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN);

The gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. MCCRERY);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. WALSH);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. KING);

The gentleman from New York (Mr. MCHUGH); and

The gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FERGUSON).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The President pro tempore of the Senate, at the direction of that body, appoints the following Senators as members of the committee on the part of the Senate to escort His Excellency Bertie Ahern, the Prime Minister of Ireland, into the House Chamber:

The Senator from Nevada (Mr. REID);

The Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN);

The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY);

The Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY);

The Senator from Connecticut (Mr. DODD);

The Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. KERRY);

The Senator from Pennsylvania (Mr. CASEY);

The Senator from Kentucky (Mr. MCCONNELL);

The Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN);

The Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN); and

The Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS).

The Majority Floor Services Chief announced the Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Jerome Mendouga, Ambassador of Cameroon.

The Acting Dean of the Diplomatic Corps entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seat reserved for him.

The Majority Floor Services Chief announced the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

The Members of the Cabinet of the President of the United States entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and took the seats reserved for them in front of the Speaker's rostrum.

At 11 o'clock and 8 minutes a.m., the Majority Floor Services Chief announced His Excellency Bertie Ahern, the Prime Minister of Ireland.

The Prime Minister of Ireland, escorted by the committee of Senators and Representatives, entered the Hall of the House of Representatives and stood at the Clerk's desk.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

The SPEAKER. Members of Congress, I have the high privilege and the distinct honor of presenting to you His Excellency Bertie Ahern, the Taoiseach, Prime Minister of Ireland.

[Applause, the Members rising.]

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY BERTIE AHERN, THE PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND

Prime Minister AHERN. Madam Speaker, Senator BYRD, Members of Congress, Senator KENNEDY, Chairman and Past Chairman of the Friends of Ireland, Mr. NEAL and Mr. WALSH, my distinguished predecessor as Taoiseach, Ambassador Bruton, distinguished guests:

Thank you for your kind introduction. Your invitation to address this joint meeting this morning honors my country and honors me also. It reaffirms the enduring bonds of friendship and esteem between our two peoples and between our two republics. Those bonds have been built and nurtured and refreshed over the centuries. America and Ireland have something that goes beyond a friendship between countries. To be an Irishman among Americans is to be at home.

So, Madam Speaker, I stand here before you as a proud son of Ireland. And I stand with you as a steadfast friend of the United States of America.

I know, Madam Speaker, like so many others assembled here, you share many links with Ireland and with County Wicklow in particular. A famous son of Wicklow, the son also of an American mother, Charles Stewart Parnell, stood in this place 128 years ago, the first Irish leader to do so. Parnell turned to the United States, as have many Irish leaders since, as we strove to emulate the achievements of America and to vindicate the principles that inspired your Founding Fathers: the principles of liberty, of equality and of justice.

In the early part of the last century, Eamon De Valera came here seeking help as Ireland struggled for her independence. In more recent times, many Irish leaders have come here in the quest for peace in Northern Ireland. Whenever we have asked for help, America has always been there for us—a friend in good times and in bad. From the very outset, Ireland gave to America Presidents, patriots and productive citizens of a new nation. Beginning with the Irish-Scots in the 17th and 18th centuries, they came from all corners of our island and from all creeds. The Irish helped to build America. The very bricks and stones in this unique building were quarried and carried by the hands of Irish immigrant laborers.