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## House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARSON of Indiana).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
July 29, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ANDRÉ CARSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

### INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, the future health of America is at a crossroad, requiring us to make a critical decision. Will we choose the road that promises a healthier future for all Americans or will we choose to continue down the path that has led the United States to lag behind 28 United Nations countries in life expectancy?

Incredibly, the United States annually spends \$2.2 trillion on health care, more than any other nation. Seventy-five percent of that health care budget is spent largely on preventable chronic disease conditions. Yet the United States has the highest rate of preventable deaths among the majority of in-

dustrialized nations. Even more troubling is the fact that the number of people in the United States with preventable chronic diseases continues to rise steadily.

If unchecked, public health experts agree that nearly half of our population will suffer from at least one chronic disease by the year 2025.

Mr. Speaker, we can no longer ignore the science that links nearly 60 percent of premature deaths in our country to preventable environmental conditions, to social circumstances or to negative behavioral choices. We have known for almost a decade, for example, that being overweight and physically inactive accounts for more than 300,000 premature deaths each year in the United States, second only to tobacco-related deaths.

While we continue to ignore this preventable reality, our Nation's obesity epidemic shows no sign of abating. It may very well be that today's children will be the first in a generation to have shorter, less healthy lives than their parents.

However, there is good news. The road to a healthy future often requires only simple, small choices that have proven to be effective in reducing the incidence and severity of many chronic diseases. They include better eating habits, exercising more and taking an aspirin every day.

Unfortunately, these proven preventive strategies fail to reach large numbers of people at risk for chronic diseases. One reason for failure is our health system continues to prioritize medical care based on disease treatment rather than health care focused on prevention and on the control of diseases before they become more costly and difficult to treat.

Next year, as a new Congress and as a new administration work to fix our broken health care system, it is imperative we prioritize disease prevention and public health in the formulation of any health policy.

For that reason, I am introducing a resolution today calling for an increased Federal commitment to prevention and public health. I am pleased to be joined in this effort by my co-chairs from the Study Group on Public Health: Representatives JIM MCGOVERN and KAY GRANGER; Representative JIM MORAN from the Prevention Caucus; and Representative DIANA DEGETTE of the Diabetes Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, the future health of our country is at a critical point in our history. New research has shown that investing in clinical- and community-level prevention saves lives and significantly reduces health care costs.

It is, therefore, essential that the road we choose to a timely, accessible, effective, and affordable health care system includes a focus on public health and prevention. Both are key elements to reaching our goal of a strong and healthy nation.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 36 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARNAHAN) at noon.

### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord, is it what people say or what others say about us that mirrors our

□ 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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