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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
March 9, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DONNA F. EDWARDS 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 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

WELCOMING NINTH ANNUAL NATIONAL BIKE SUMMIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, occasionally there is some controversy and conflict here in our Nation's Capitol, but this week we have an opportunity for celebrating events that bring people together. We have the ninth annual National Bicycle Summit, which will be welcoming people from 47 States and four foreign countries who will be fanning out across the Capitol to talk about the opportunities

for this country in promoting bicycle activities.

This has been an exciting period for people who believe in cycling. Under the leadership of now Chairman OBERSTAR, the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in the last reauthorization celebrated the most significant biking, hiking, and walking bill in history. Now, as Mr. OBERSTAR is chairman, we anticipate that there will be even more initiatives that will be undertaken. In the economic recovery package, there were \$825 million of projects all across the country that are shovel-ready that actually put more people to work per million dollars than highway construction.

Bike partisanship is alive and well on Capitol Hill, with over 200 members in the Bike Caucus. There is a reason why people are focusing on cycling activities. Since 1980, the number of miles Americans drive has increased three times faster than the population, and almost twice as fast as vehicle registrations. We have reached a point where our roadways simply demand relief.

We have an obesity epidemic. Sixty-five percent of American adults are either overweight or obese. Thirteen percent of our children and adolescents are overweight, due in large part to lack of regular activity. There is an opportunity to burn calories instead of fossil fuel. The Centers for Disease Control estimates that if all these physically inactive Americans become active, we have the opportunity to save over \$75 billion a year in health care costs.

The transportation sector contributes one-third of our greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to cooking the planet.

There are opportunities for individuals to make a difference in their lives. A bike commuter saves almost \$2,000 a year in auto-related costs, avoids 50 hours of being stuck in traffic and

saves almost 150 gallons of gasoline. And you don't have to be a regular long-distance bike commuter. Forty percent of American trips are two miles or less. Over a quarter are less than one mile.

We all have an opportunity to make a difference. We can start by working with our children. Only 15 percent of students were walking or bicycling to school as we began our new century, yet in an earlier generation more than half the children were able to get to school on their own.

We watch as bicycles have been integrated into day-to-day activities. Right here on Capitol Hill, you will watch bicycle patrols with Capitol police. In fact, more than 96 percent of the large cities in this country have routine bicycle patrols, and they are spreading across the country.

It is also big business. I am not just talking about a bicycle-friendly community like mine in Portland, Oregon, where it is about \$100 million dollars of economic activity and employs about 1,000 people. Nationally we are talking about \$133 billion, supporting over 1 million jobs, producing over \$17 billion in annual Federal and State tax revenue and producing over \$53 billion in annual retail sales and services. These are activities that help revitalize the economy exactly at the time we need them. Even those ever-present bicycle rides that are mushrooming around the country support in excess of \$100 million a year in critical medical research.

It is time for us to focus on what we in Congress can do to be more bike partisan. We urge you to join in welcoming the cyclists to Capitol Hill and become a member of the Congressional Bike Caucus.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

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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