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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

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

Lord God, ever faithful and mindful of all our deeds, the people of this country are truly grateful for the daily work of our Nation's Federal, State and local government employees. Their dedication and sacrifice are commemorated this week as we mark the 25th anniversary of Public Service Recognition Week.

Bless, protect and answer the prayers of all these public servants who provide service in every city and county across America. So often we take them for granted for keeping our streets and water supply clean and safe, delivering our mail, and other administrative and labor-intensive work for the benefit of our lives and the lives of our children.

As we lift them and their families in our prayers today, we prayerfully beg You to encourage others to commit themselves wholeheartedly to public service. Make our country strong by this work of the people, for the people, and by the people.

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 Texas (Mr. POE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. POE of Texas 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland). The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

HOUSING CRISIS

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

Mr. SIREs. Madam Speaker, the current housing crisis has had devastating consequences for homeowners in communities throughout New Jersey and the country. Our Nation is faced with the highest foreclosure rate in 25 years. Millions of families may lose their homes to foreclosure this year because too many lenders approved loans that homeowners could not afford to pay.

By passing H.R. 1728, the Mortgage Reform and Anti-Predatory Lending Act of 2009, we have an opportunity to curb abusive and predatory lending. Specifically, the bill outlaws many of the destructive industry practices that marked the subprime lending boom in the first place. It also establishes a simple standard for all home loans, ensuring that borrowers can repay loans they are sold. Finally, it protects tenants who rent homes that go into foreclosure.

This legislation marks a critical step in the rebuilding process of our economy while providing the American consumers with the protection they deserve. For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES IN NORTH KOREA

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, last week, the Congressional Human Rights

Commission met with defectors from North Korea and we heard firsthand how the people of North Korea continue to suffer terribly at the hands of the cruel dictatorship there.

It is vital that the international community and the United States take more specific, deliberate action aimed at helping the suffering people of North Korea. There are numerous reports of the suffering going on inside North Korea; prison camps, severe torture, slave labor, forced abortions, and almost certain death for those who have tried to escape and have been forced to return.

The U.S. Congress passed the North Korea Human Rights Act to provide a stronger foundation for the U.S. to help the North Korean people. Unfortunately, that act has not been implemented to the fullest extent possible.

The North Korean people need to hear the message that they are not alone, that they are not forgotten, and that there are many in the United States and around the world who deeply care about their plight and are working to help them.

We look forward to the day when we can visit a free North Korea and see the people living with human rights and dignity.

CONSUMERS UNION POLL

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

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, a recent Consumers Union Poll states that 71 percent of Americans support health care reform that provides health care to all Americans. They also told us why. Sixty-four percent of those polled had concerns that they weren't able to afford a doctor in the last year. Sixty percent of them were afraid they were going to go into bankruptcy because of unforeseen medical expenses. And they also had a good

□ 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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