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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Rabbi Stephen A. Leon, Congregation B'Nai Zion, El Paso, Texas, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, "This is the day that God has made, on it may we rejoice."

These words from the Book of Psalms reflect the thoughts that are in my heart on this glorious day. Imagine if every person each day would arise and thank God for one more day of life, for one more precious moment to make a difference for good in this world.

How fortunate I feel to live in this blessed country of America where a rabbi from El Paso, Texas, is given the opportunity to offer a prayer before this historic assembly which represents the highest ideals of democracy.

May each of us here realize what awesome moments God gives us each day, and may we in partnership with the Almighty help speed that day when every person in the world will be privileged to live in peace and freedom.

Let us say, 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. REYES) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. REYES 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.

WELCOMING RABBI STEPHEN A. LEON

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

There was no objection.

Mr. REYES. Madam Speaker, it is a real honor and privilege to have Rabbi Leon here this morning in this great people's House.

I want to especially welcome not just the rabbi but members of his family that are here. I know that back in my district, back in El Paso, people have gotten up extra early to see the rabbi give our opening prayer.

It's a real honor and a real privilege and pleasure.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

THE ECONOMY HAS NOT BEEN RESCUED

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, American families and small businesses are hurting. The economy has been hurting; but this morning, in previewing the President's speech tonight, our former colleague, the President's chief of staff, said this: We've rescued the economy.

Now, I'm sure that the 9.5 percent unemployment rate that we have in our country today—and from most economic experts on its way up, don't believe that we've rescued the economy. The 11.1 percent unemployment rate that we have in Ohio, I'm sure those people are looking up today wondering, wait a minute, the President's going to say we rescued the economy? I don't think so.

Not only has the stimulus bill not worked and the economy not been rescued, the President continues to promote policies that will create more unemployment in America.

The national energy tax that went through this House last month will cause millions of Americans to lose their jobs over the next 10 years, like 2.5 million per year. And we're debating the health care plan, the government takeover of health care, which according to the President's Council of Economic Advisers' model will cost 5 million more Americans their jobs.

I don't believe that the economy has been rescued.

H.R. 1503 IS A SHAMEFUL PLOY TO STIR UP FEAR AND DISSENSION

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.R. 1503, the so-called "Birther Bill." You ought to read it.

H.R. 1503 is predicated on the vicious and false rumor that circulates among fringe elements of our society that Barack Obama is not a citizen of the United States and his Presidency is, therefore, illegitimate.

I bring you a copy—and I hold it up—of his birth certificate which has been authenticated in the State of Hawaii by the Department of Health, and I also hold up an announcement in the newspaper on August 14.

Yet, despite being proved categorically untrue time and time again, this rumor stays alive because of tacit acknowledgment embodied in this legislation from legislators in this room. Anything to bring the messenger down. These rumors hurt America.

These rumors hurt America. They hurt the strength of our country. The fact that some Members of the minority would embrace this hateful rhetoric stuns me.

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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