

RECOGNIZING THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF LINCOLN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Mr. Speaker, this month Lincoln Montessori School of Nebraska is celebrating its 40th anniversary. Started in 1969 by Mary and Larry Verschuur, Lincoln Montessori School is one of the first schools in the United States to be custom built to facilitate the Montessori curriculum. The school has served hundreds of families over two generations and is fully a part of Nebraska's diverse educational community.

Forty years later, Mary and Larry are still the school's motivating force. They guide young children daily with beautiful and purposeful materials, offer after-school enrichment classes for older children, conduct classes to help parents understand and implement the Montessori philosophy, and lecture on education in Nebraska and around the world. The result: children who are self-directed and self-disciplined, joyful, and eager to learn. The children are free to discover the world.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the First District of Nebraska and the United States Congress, I thank the Verschuurs, two extraordinary people, for their dedication to the formation of young children and congratulate them on the 40th anniversary of Lincoln Montessori School in Nebraska.

WELCOMING HOME PENNSYLVANIA NATIONAL GUARDSMEN

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise Pennsylvania National Guardsmen who just arrived home after serving 8 months in Iraq. Members of the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team's First Battalion 112th Infantry have arrived at Ft. Dix, New Jersey. Some 1,500 U.S. flags will line their route, along with countless yellow ribbons placed by Pennsylvanians who want to show their thanks.

The soldiers come from Crawford County and from the cities of Bradford and Ridgway. Earlier, guardsmen from the 2nd 112th Regiment Infantry Regiment from Bellefonte and Lewistown came home.

The brigade operated in 800 square miles that was home to 900,000 Iraqis. They captured some 80 hidden supply dumps, causing severe shortages and disrupting enemy operations.

As these men and women are reunited with their families, we realize the sacrifices they have made. The child's birth that they missed, the report cards, the joys of a sports milestone, they can't replace those lost moments. But we can pause and stop and

say thank you, and God bless and welcome home.

STOP THE INNOVATION TAX

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, as we continue the debate on health care, we must remain cognizant of the impact on both jobs and health care innovation.

That's why I strongly oppose the new \$40 billion innovation tax on the medical device industry that's being proposed in the Senate. Minnesota, and the Third Congressional District in particular, is home to many of the top medical device manufacturers responsible for life-saving technologies. Hundreds of small businesses and entrepreneurs in the medical technology field also call Minnesota home.

I visited and I have met with many of these entrepreneurs. They are hard working. They are employers that provide tens of thousands of good-paying jobs for Minnesotans. Moreover, these medical breakthroughs save money, and they improve the quality of care.

A massive new tax increase will stifle job growth. It will stifle innovation, and it will ultimately harm quality health care. I strongly urge the Senate, the President, and my colleagues to oppose this misguided new tax.

THE PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, freedom's bell has sounded across this Nation. It is loud; it is clear. The people's resistance to big, bloated government has begun in the hearts and minds of the American people.

It was shown in their actions over the weekend. Over a million Americans took time off from work, gathered up their families, made their signs, brought their flags and came to D.C. with the cry for government to listen. Their message to Congress and the administration: We have had enough.

They have watched in stunned horror as this Congress has made government bigger and less accountable. Congress has lavishly spent trillions of their tax dollars, money that does not belong to the government, but to the people.

Now the threat of a government takeover of their health care has made it personal to them. It doesn't matter how many times it's said otherwise, the American people understand what government-run health care looks like, and they don't like it.

Thomas Jefferson once said: "The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground." But the tide is turning, Mr. Speaker. The American resistance is awake and on its feet and on the move. People are not happy, and we ignore them at our own risk.

And that's just the way it is.

CZARS IN THIS ADMINISTRATION

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, as I have been in my own district and spoken with many individuals who have attended my townhall meetings, they have exercised their right to bring their grievances before this Member of Congress.

And one of the issues they have talked about is the question of the constitutional importance of these so-called czars. We now have over 30 czars in this administration, those that have not been subject to the scrutiny of consideration by the United States Senate, those who apparently have decision-making responsibility in areas, who have traditionally been in Cabinet level officers, and others who have in fact been vetted by the Senate. It seems the longer I am here the more it appears that political life in Washington seems to follow art.

Now, you might say we have come to a situation in Washington, D.C. in which we now have a new show. It's called "Dancing with the Czars." It could last more than a full TV season because we have more than 30 of them. It can continue on into the summer. It's not a joke, it's serious, and the American people deserve answers.

PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY WANT TO CUT SPENDING

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this weekend on national television, Mr. Axelrod, who works for the President at the White House, said that the big meeting on the Mall really didn't amount to much, and it really didn't represent what the American people think.

I don't know what that guy is smoking down at the White House, but I think it might be illegal.

The people in this country at the TEA parties and on the Mall this weekend are telling every Member of Congress and in the Senate they want to cut spending. They don't want more government intrusion into their lives, and they want just to be left alone.

But this body here, and my colleagues on the Democrat side, continue to come up with new proposals, new spending, and we are spending trillions and trillions of dollars that we simply don't have. And our kids are going to bear the responsibility for that because we are not doing our job.

And, secondly, I just wanted to say one more thing. This ACORN group needs to be investigated. They are getting access to almost \$10 billion, and we know there are an awful lot of

crooked things going on. It needs to be investigated by this body. My colleagues on the Democrat side, who are the chairmen of the committees, need to listen.

We need to investigate ACORN.

LEHMAN BROTHERS COLLAPSE

(Mrs. BACHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, it was 1 year ago today that Lehman Brothers collapsed. And as we mark this 1-year anniversary, it is also with trepidation that we remark that the Federal Government today is the leading insurer, the leading lender, and the leading carmaker in the United States, the Federal Government.

Since the inception of Bailout Nation less than 1 year ago today, an economist from Arizona State University has documented, today the Federal Government owns or controls 30 percent of private business profits. That's right, 30 percent. And if President Obama gets his way and nationalizes an additional 18 percent of private wealth in the health care industry, that would be nearly 50 percent of private business profits.

Think of that, 50 percent of private business profits nationalized in less than 1 year's time. We can do better. Let's enjoy freedom. Let's embrace freedom and let's say no to Bailout Nation and to the Federal Government taking over the private economy.

And let's investigate ACORN.

HONORING NASA

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, just a few months ago we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Apollo mission for NASA, and we are excited as a Nation to think of the brightness and the genius of our country.

Tomorrow, before the Science and Technology Committee, the author of the "Augustine Report" will present his findings regarding NASA. As a representative from the Houston area, where the Johnson Space Center is, I encourage America to be that same genius.

Let's continue manned space flight and continue our exploration in space, as well as our support for the international space station. Out of those efforts come new inventions, new cures for diseases, and new opportunities for the genius of America to be seen around the world. We must continue manned space flight.

Supporting the space centers in Florida and Alabama, California, Mississippi and Texas, I know America can achieve for the future.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a few days ago, there was a townhall meeting not too far from here in Reston, Virginia. Over 3,000 people were inside and about that many outside who could not get into the school. Now this townhall event was held at South Lakes High School, and one of the security officers there, a Wesley Cheeks, Jr., did not like one of the signs that the protesters were carrying and holding up. The sign apparently was not to the officer's political liking.

So the security officer demanded that out of the thousands of signs at the event, the one he didn't like was going to come down, and he ordered the person to take it down because it was obviously critical of the administration. Note, Mr. Speaker, there was nothing illegal about the sign.

This officer told the man with the sign to put his sign away or he would be arrested. Yes, arrested for freedom of speech and the right to protest. The protester said, This used to be America. Officer Weeks said in response, Well, it isn't any more, okay.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's not "okay." Not by a long shot. This is still America, the land of the free—the land where we can disagree with government, whether government likes it or not—the land paid for in blood by bold men of noble character and heart and noble action, who understood that free speech undergirds liberty and freedom. They understood that the right to speak the truth to authoritarian power is granted by the Almighty to those bold enough to stand and claim that right. No king, no government, no dictator, and no high school security officer has the right to abuse their authority and suppress freedom of speech.

One of the founding principles of this Nation is freedom of speech. It is so fundamentally important that our Founding Fathers put it first in our Constitution's Bill of Rights, made it the First Amendment to the Bill of Rights, because it is the most important. Without the First Amendment, the rest are meaningless.

The First Amendment simply says, Congress—that's us, folks—shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or of the right of the people to peaceably assemble and to petition the government for redress of grievances.

It is the tendency of all governments to encroach upon the rights of people in this Nation, and other nations. And while many Americans are going about their daily business of work, taking their kids to school, to football practice, to Boy Scouts, grocery shopping, and going to dinner, mowing the grass, and living their lives, don't underestimate that these people are paying attention to what government is doing to them.

Freedom of speech is crucial for folks to get the attention of fellow Americans when the size of government no longer fits the Constitution. Freedom of speech is sacrosanct, and not just for those who agree with government, but it is a holy right, especially for those who disagree with government oppression.

It is the right of a free people to speak truth when the government is wrong. It is the right of the people to gather and stand in the face of their elected officials and speak what they see—tyranny of a government gone amok.

It is the right of a self-governing people to come together in cities around the Nation to speak out and to hold the government accountable when those who seek to rule over us have stepped out of their constitutional bounds.

There can be no more fundamental display of our God-given right to freedom of speech than what we're seeing from the American Resistance Movement today. From townhalls to city streets, the right of free speech is one of the very guardians of the freedom and liberty that make this Nation the greatest in history. And it is the government that would do well to listen, be silent, and then act in the interest of the American people.

And that's just the way it is.

START OF THE FINANCIAL CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, today marks the 1-year anniversary of the fall of Lehman Brothers. Just prior to that, former Treasury Secretary and former Goldman Sachs executive Hank Paulson; Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke; and then-President of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York and now Treasury Secretary, Tim Geithner, bailed out Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and orchestrated the first of multiple tranches of taxpayer money to AIG.

Some mark the fall of Lehman as the start of our financial crisis, but it started long before. It started on Wall Street, the very place that President Obama gave his financial regulatory reform speech today. The President stated, Restoring a willingness to take responsibility—even when it is hard—is at the heart of what we must do. Very carefully worded, Mr. President. But what real reform will assure it?