

HONORING STAFF SERGEANT  
DANIEL MERRIWEATHER

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a Memphis, Shelby County citizen who gave his life in service to our country in Afghanistan, Staff Sergeant Daniel Merriweather. He was the second soldier from Shelby County to die in Afghanistan since the beginning of Operation Enduring Freedom and our 12th in the Middle East since 2002. Staff Sergeant Merriweather, who was with the 118th Military Police Company, died when his convoy ran over an improvised explosive device.

He graduated from Overton High School in Memphis, Tennessee. He studied broadcast journalism, played football, loved sports, cowboy hats, boots, and country music. And you can see from his picture and from the reflections of his friends how much he loved life and how popular he was.

He wanted to serve his country, and he did so. He did two tours of duty, one in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. At 25 years of age, he is survived by his wife, Rachele; his two children, 3-year-old Kale and Daniel Merriweather, Jr., just 3 months old; his parents, Pamela and Darryl Finnie; his sister, Adrienne; and his brother, Darryl Finnie, Jr.

These are the 12 soldiers who died from Shelby County, and unfortunately Staff Sergeant Merriweather joins that company.

Mr. Speaker, let us take a moment to honor the service and memory of Staff Sergeant Merriweather.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you, Sergeant Merriweather.

PRESIDENT'S INAUGURATION ONE  
YEAR AGO

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago today, the President was sworn into office, giving Democrats full control of Congress and the White House. After promising the American people a misnamed stimulus plan to keep unemployment under 8 percent, we see 10 percent unemployment continuing to cripple families.

Three hundred and sixty-five days later, the American people still haven't seen this Congress focus on job creation policies to promote small businesses. Instead, the American people have been saddled with more borrowing, more taxes, more spending, and increased deficits. As shown in Massachusetts, the American people support limited government, not failed big government.

Seven million Americans have lost jobs since Democrats took Congress, and now Americans want real change. It's time the Democrats get this mes-

sage and get their priorities straight: Drop this backroom government health care takeover and take up job creation policies.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

MAIN STREET NEEDS HELP

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

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, last fall, at the end of the last administration, we all know that America's largest financial institutions and companies were on the brink of collapse, and the Federal Government, and more importantly, the American taxpayers came to their rescue. But let's be clear: We did not do that because we were fans of their behavior. We did not appreciate even then the excessive greed that was driving Wall Street without any sense of responsibility. We helped them because ordinary citizens were being crushed, and we hoped to get the credit flowing.

So what has happened? Wall Street has experienced recovery, but Main Street still needs help. Wall Street needs to help pay for the revitalization of Main Street, and that is why I support the Wall Street Bonus Tax, which is going to levy a tax on those excessive bonuses that the Wall Street banks have the audacity to continue to give out even as the plight of our middle class is suffering.

Mr. Speaker, we have to do everything we can to stand up for the American taxpayers and the people who live in our communities.

LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM  
SPECIAL ELECTION IN MASSACHUSETTS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the United States Senate special election in Massachusetts offers many lessons for both Democrats and Republicans. Surely among them are these:

All true reform starts with the voice of the people.

Moderation beats extremism.

Common sense triumphs partisanship.

Voters can exercise real independence.

One-party control leads to arrogance.

There are few guaranteed election results.

Listen to the people, don't defy them.

Of course some will say there are no lessons to be learned or that the result of this special election should be ignored or can be explained away. But those who don't listen to the people, Democrats or Republicans, will pay a steep political price.

AMERICANS WANT REAL CHANGE

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. It's clear from the results last evening that the voters are angry. They haven't seen the change in direction that they thought they voted for 1 year ago in November.

Now, some Republicans will see it as an endorsement to turn back to the failed policies of the Bush years that put us in this mess. That wasn't the message. But the message is they want real change. They want the reform of Wall Street. They're tired of business as usual where the fat cats make out and the taxpayers get the bill. They want to see real reform in health care, take on the insurance industry, take on the pharmaceutical industry.

The Obama administration kicked off health care reform with a deal with the pharmaceutical industry. Now, that is not the kind of reform the American people want to see.

We need to step back and put forward a package of real reform. Take away the antitrust exemption of the health insurance industry; lower the cost of health care for all Americans; make the policies better; take on the pharmaceutical industry; allow people to reimport drugs from Canada that are exactly the same as the drugs sold here at a fraction of the cost. Those are the kinds of concrete steps people want to see.

HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION  
CONTAINS A MARRIAGE PENALTY

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, while there is controversy about the pending health care legislation, one point where there should be bipartisan agreement is that the Federal Government should not penalize people simply for being married.

After review, it appears that both the House and the Senate bills contain significant marriage penalties. In the House bill, an unmarried couple with an income of \$25,000 each would have their combined premiums capped at \$3,076 per year. If the couple gets married, their annual premium cap drops to \$5,160 for the same insurance. In short, there is a \$2,084 penalty for simply being married.

While under the Senate bill it would be less, the marriage penalty would still exceed \$1,500 a year. Simply put, a marriage penalty on the middle class is just one more reason to dump this government takeover of our health care system.

A NEW ECONOMIC VISION

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