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## House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. WOODALL).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,  
February 29, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ROB WOODALL to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, 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 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

### THE END OF AN ERA IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, what I'm about to announce will not come as much of a surprise. But we all know that this institution has an abysmally low approval rating, and the American people are asking for change in Congress. And so I'm announcing today that I will leave the Congress at the end of this year.

Now, I take the unusual step of announcing it from here in the well of the

House because I am a proud institutionalist. I believe that this institution is as great as it has ever been. Mr. Speaker, I announce it from here because, between the Rules Committee upstairs where you serve with me, Mr. Speaker pro tem, and the House floor, this is where the people of California sent me to represent them.

Now, as we look at the challenges that lie ahead, they are very, very great. I deliberated over this decision, and I have to say that 3 years ago I contemplated leaving at the end of that Congress, but ultimately made a decision that I wanted to continue to serve through this term. I wanted to do so in hopes that we would win the majority, with a goal of pursuing the four-point platform that I had always run on, that being the pursuit of a free economy, limited government, a strong national defense, and personal freedom. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to work with not just my Republican colleagues, but my Democratic colleagues as well, working in a bipartisan way to accomplish a number of things.

First, it was absolutely essential that we do everything to end the course that we had been on that ultimately brought us an 82 percent increase in nondefense discretionary spending. I'm happy to say that we've turned the corner on that.

Second, after years of languishing, we were finally able to pass three trade agreements that will create good jobs for union and nonunion workers in this country by virtue of having passed the Panama, Colombia, and South Korea free trade agreements.

I also believe that it's very important for us to recognize, as we look at our national security, the notion of people all over the world who are seeking to determine their own futures has created a wonderful opportunity for us. The House Democracy Partnership, another strong bipartisan organization, has just now partnered with its 17th

country in central Asia to help the legislative body strengthen and have the kind of independence and oversight of their executive branch that we have a tendency to take for granted here.

Fourth, Mr. Speaker, I feel very strongly—again, working in a bipartisan way—that it was essential to ensure that both Democrats and Republicans have the opportunity to have their ideas heard through their amendments on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Now, I do believe, again, Mr. Speaker, that this is the greatest deliberative body known to man. We've got a great deal of work that lies ahead throughout this year. But I'm looking forward to following the Madisonian directive—that Members of Congress, after serving here, should go out and live with the laws that have passed. I will say that, as passionate as we've been pursuing a pro-growth jobs-creating agenda, I look forward to doing that myself as I move into the private sector next year.

Mr. Speaker, I will say that I want to express my appreciation. I want to express my appreciation, Mr. Speaker, to lots of people. Of course the volunteers, family and friends, supporters, and the people who have offered prayers for our country on a regular basis. I also want to, most important, express my appreciation, Mr. Speaker, to the people of California who, back in 1978, when I was 25 years old living in a dormitory at my alma mater, Claremont McKenna College, they gave me the nomination for my party, and it's been a very, very exciting time.

I also want to say, Mr. Speaker, that I express my appreciation to the very, very dedicated public servants in my office in California and my offices here in Washington for their commitment to do the best job possible to help me represent the people of California.

□ 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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