

and conditions better. He was a voice for the otherwise voiceless. He used his power to advocate for people who were otherwise powerless.

In the mid-nineties, I observed Representative Payne at a hearing with the Bush State Department. He was arguing, he was pleading with the State Department to designate the Darfur genocide. He actually had tears in his eyes and tears in his voice, and this is a man known for being very mild mannered.

His compelling arguments and his compassion and passion actually made it possible to convince the world to condemn the Sudan/Darfur government's role in planning and executing the militia's campaign to kill. His leadership had an indelible impact on African nations.

Congressman Payne shared my belief that the wars we've been fighting for the last decade are dreadful mistakes. He was one of those who stood with us in 2005, when the war in Iraq was still popular, to say no, this is wrong, we have to bring our troops home. But he also understood that it wasn't just about ending war, Mr. Speaker. It was about also leaving something else behind: hope, opportunity, democracy, and human rights.

He knew that the key to ending violence, terrorism, and instability was to build up human capital, to fight hunger and disease, to defend and advance women's rights, to build strong schools, and provide decent health care worldwide.

We've lost Donald Payne. But in his honor, let's not lose sight of the ideals he made his life's work. Let's not lose sight of the goals he fought for so tenaciously.

Because of Donald Payne's example, I will fight forever for peace and for stability worldwide, and believe me, the beginning of this effort will be to bring our troops home from Afghanistan.

VOICE OF TEXAS—BILL BAGI: CROSBY, TEXAS

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, like many Members of Congress, I receive thousands of emails from my neighbors each month about the issues that are important to them. Since I work for them and I'm their advocate, it is important that I bring their words directly to the House floor and let other Members hear what I call the pulse of Texans.

Bill Bagi, from Crosby, Texas, recently wrote me about the deteriorating condition of our southern border with Mexico. Here's what he has to say:

I own and operate a heavy, specialized trucking company and transport specialized freight around the USA and Canada. One-fourth of my freight ends up in the south Texas towns of McAllen, Pharr, and Brownsville, and other towns.

Over the last 10 years, I have watched the border in south Texas deteriorate with not

only undocumented crossing, but much worse—the cartels. I know from many of my business customers along the U.S. border that this cartel issue is becoming a very serious issue. Many speak of a blood bath to come on the Rio Grande River.

I urge you to ask the Congress and our President to not stop the deployment of people on the southern border, but to increase them tenfold to protect our U.S. citizens living in America.

This is much more serious than the media and the government want to admit.

Does the U.S. government want a blood bath to take place before they protect our U.S. southern home front? We must stop the infusion of these cartels at the Rio Grande, or they will infest the whole United States, as the Chicago cartel did back in the mob days.

Families are not arming themselves for fun in south Texas. They are preparing for the worst to come. Many believe the U.S. government will not be there when the time comes and we need them. If we don't stop them in south Texas, than Houston and Dallas will be infested with cartel influence.

I have great concerns that they are already operating in the Highlands/Baytown area of southeast Texas.

Thanks for your past support and future drive to protect U.S. citizens.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Bagi tells us that he's scared to even go to the south Texas border region. He is a businessman, and he sees firsthand, as the citizens who live on the border do, the problem with the drug cartels.

He is not alone. Mexico is quickly becoming, in my opinion, a failed state. Texas towns are in danger because the Federal Government just does not adequately defend the homeland. Bureaucrats in Washington should listen to the people who actually live and work on the southern border.

Unlike what our government wants us to believe, the drug cartels do not stop at the Mexican-Texas border. Even just last week, our border patrol came under gunfire on the border in Texas from the Mexican side of the border. Mr. Speaker, we send troops to foreign nations to protect their borders. Why don't we protect our own?

Local sheriffs and the border patrol do the best they can with what they have, but it's just not enough. It's really past time for the Federal Government to step up and make Mr. Bagi and all Americans feel safe again. After all, the Constitution actually requires the Federal Government to protect the homeland.

And that's just the way it is.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, this week is yet another week in which the House of Representatives has done virtually nothing. We heard my colleagues say they're repackaging some bills, putting a new bow around it, and they're going to pass it out of here. It's a press release for the week that they go home.

After 14 months of running the House, Republicans haven't passed a real jobs bill. I'll give a great example.

Economists and business people know that the biggest growth markets for American companies are exports. When we support U.S. exports, we are supporting American economics. But to support, we need the Export-Import Bank.

The Ex-Im Bank is a wonder. It provides extremely low-risk loans for businesses for exports, small business, medium-size, and big. The U.S. Export-Import Bank does not cost the American taxpayers one penny. It actually makes money, and it helps American businesses and workers sell hundreds of billions of dollars of American goods.

In short, the Ex-Im Bank does just what we need to be doing: compete in the world economy with every tool we have.

Study after study, year after year says that American export efforts need a huge overhaul.

The President is doing all he can. He stood in this well and talked about it and has put forward proposals. But with simple legislation like the extension of the Export-Import Bank, we could do very much more. The Export-Import Bank is the center of our export strategy.

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Now, how does it work?

General Electric was recently bidding on a \$500 million rail project to supply 150 diesel-electric locomotives to Pakistan. Pakistani officials told GE they preferred the GE locomotives and were willing to pay a premium for their high quality and dependability.

There was a complication in that the bid from the Chinese locomotive manufacturer included a financing package with longer terms and drastically reduced fees that GE could not match on its own with private sector financing. The Export-Import Bank stepped in with a financing package that matched the Chinese financing package and enabled Pakistan to make its decision on a true apples-to-apples comparison of American and Chinese goods.

We can win that one. We can win it always when we have a level playing field. That's what the Export-Import Bank does. It helps us compete.

It's not just big businesses—GE, Boeing. It is also that every office in the Congress receives a letter once a month from the Export-Import Bank, telling us of the companies that got that service in our districts. Nucor Steel, Brooks Rand Labs, NOVA Fisheries, American Wine Trade, Coastal Environmental Systems, International Lubricants, which are all in my district, receive the support of the Export-Import Bank. Without it, they could not have done business on their own.

Now, in the past year, not only have we supported \$34 billion worth of exports and 227,000 jobs in 3,300 companies in this country, but the U.S. Treasury

has gotten back \$3.4 billion in fees from the loans they make.

So where are we?

Fifty countries in the world do this. China is using every tool available to it, including this one; but the House Republicans sit over there with their heads stuck in the sand, and we're about a month away from it expiring. We should increase the amount of money we allow the Export-Import Bank to use. Remember, the Export-Import Bank makes money on extremely low-risk loans to support tens of thousands of jobs in the United States. Why aren't we working on this kind of jobs legislation? Well, it's because the President asked for it. They are so determined, Mr. Speaker, to prevent the President from being re-elected that they won't do what's good for American business and what's good for American workers.

This is not partisan. These small companies are all over our districts. They want to make loans. They want to make sales overseas. They need the help of this bank, and the Republican leadership sits—I don't know where they are. They're somewhere in a dark room. Somebody should turn on the light and tell them there is some stuff to be done and to get out here and pass a real bill, not this jobs cockamamie thing we're going to do in a few days about repackaging stuff we've already passed.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. This is a month that we note as celebrating women and women's history as a major component of the wonderful history of the greatest Nation in the world. How proud we are of a Nation that supports people's rights no matter your walk of life or religious background or ethnic background; and how proud we are now in 2012 to note that there are men and women on the front lines, on the battlefields defending America's freedom.

So I rise today to continue my advocacy for women's rights. I note that I have been a proponent of women's rights from the earliest part of my career as a lawyer, as a civic participant, as a civilian in my hometown of Houston, as a mother, certainly as a wife, and as a public servant now as a Member of the United States Congress.

I am delighted to acknowledge the Congressional Women's Caucus and to note that the mission of the Women's Caucus is to improve the lives of women and their families. Since 1977, the caucus has focused on issues that are pertinent to women—from fair credit to child support, equitable pay, retirement income, preventing domestic violence at home and internationally, and of course preventing sexual assault.

So I rise today with a degree of consternation and a resounding stand

against the siege and onslaught of women's access to health care. Let me be very clear: women's access to health care is not a battle about a woman's choice or the utilization of contraceptives or family planning. It is, simply, women's access to health care. The issue of birth control is an issue of women's health care. Let me give you a recent study's commentary by the National Women's Law Center:

It found that 25-year-old women have been charged up to 84 percent more than their male contemporaries for individual health plans that specifically exclude maternity coverage. Let me be very clear: 84 percent higher than a male's plan to allow a woman to have access to health care. Therein lies the purpose of the Affordable Care Act—not individual mandates but to be able to even the playing field for women's health care. Therefore, let me indicate that using or not using birth control or family planning is an individual matter, but you cannot obtain those without a prescription. It should be a decision between a woman, her conscience, her doctor, and certainly her faith. So I wish to address the recent tenor of the debate on birth control.

A young law student, Sandra Fluke, came before this body, before the Members of Congress, and testified regarding coverage for family planning and contraceptives. She was then publicly derailed as being a slut and a prostitute. I would hope the days of derogatory terms to silence women's opinions are over forever, particularly when they speak about truth. She recounted the story of a young friend who lost an ovary.

Let me repeat: she, Ms. Fluke, recounted a story of a young friend who lost an ovary due to polycystic ovarian fibroids, which can be managed by contraceptives through prescription. Unfortunately, that young woman could not afford contraceptives and had to endure terrible pain. As a result of asking for help to address female law students' health concerns, Ms. Fluke, in coming to this body as an American citizen, as is her right to petition and speak to the Members of Congress, was called a slut and a prostitute by an entertainment talk-show host.

Calling women these sorts of names is no more than vile, underhanded and a way of defeating one's right to speak. I don't deny the right of entertainers and talk-show entertainers and flamboyant conversationalists to speak all day, but there has to be a defining moment of dignity and respect to anyone's disagreement. So I hope more and more advertisers will recognize that a woman's power is greater than the individual entertainer's power. Drop off of that show. Drop off one by one, day by day. Leave them to the old-fashioned medicine of the 1800s—the pills that will cure all. Let the old doc medicine be their advertisers. That's about the level that they should be at.

Women's health is so very important; and at some point, reproductive health

is very much a part of it. Polycystic ovarian syndrome is helped by contraceptives. Mr. Speaker, all of these—endometriosis, the lack of menstrual periods, menstrual cramps, premenstrual syndrome—are helped by treatment and access to women's health.

Let me finally say in conclusion that when you cut Medicaid, you cut poor women's access to health care. I will stand and fight for women's access to health care and their own decisions because it is part of the American way. So let us stand together, united as a Nation, being fair and open to all opinions, but never denying a woman, along with every other American, access to health care.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 9 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

God of the universe, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Lord, You have promised to be with all people wherever they are, whatever their need. We reach out in prayer for the homeless, the poor, those anxious about the future, those who are ill, or those to whom freedom has been denied.

Bless the Members of this people's House. Inspire them as representatives of the American people to labor for justice and righteousness in our Nation and our world, mindful of Your concern for those most in need.

For all the riches of our human experience, O Lord, we give You thanks. Make us aware of our responsibilities as stewards of Your divine gifts and empower us with Your grace to faithfully and earnestly use our talents in ways that bring understanding to our communities and our Nation and peace to every soul.

May all we do be done for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.