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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. BENTIVOLIO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
May 8, 2014.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO 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 7, 2014, 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

RESEARCH TAX CREDIT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I supported the research tax credit legislation in the Ways and Means Committee, as I have done repeatedly in the past. I intend to do so on the floor as a first step in getting some certainty into a program that has been plagued with uncertainty for as long as I have been in Congress.

The tax credit has been extended 15 times without concern about whether

or not it is "paid for." Anyone who has been in Congress for awhile, in essence, has already voted to make it permanent and not pay for it.

Regardless of the budget rules, this is one area of investment that I think probably does pay for itself. It pays for itself in economic activity, scientific breakthroughs, and product development. It advances the interests of not just American companies, but of commerce and our overall economy.

As a country, we are consistently underinvesting in research. There is no substitute for the Federal Government playing the vital role that it has in the past with the development of the semiconductor, the Internet, and the basic role that it has played in dealing with health and medical research.

I don't like how this legislation has been handled. This is an issue that should have been characterized by bipartisanship, by working together to make the research tax credit more effective. We could consider making it refundable to help smaller emerging businesses. We could take a hard look at constructive criticisms that have raised questions about how we could make it work better. That should be our job.

Luckily, this is the start, not the end, of the process. There will be more work that will be done with our friends in the Senate under the leadership of Senator WYDEN and Senator HATCH on the Senate Finance Committee, who have already started down this path.

What is very likely to emerge in the short term will not be a permanent but rather a 1- or 2-year extension. It is progress to get it reenacted and to signal broad support for its permanence and refinement.

All of the controversy surrounding tax reform underscores the fundamental challenge.

The inability of the Republican leadership to embrace the work product of Chairman CAMP is illustrative. He

worked diligently and produced a somewhat simplified code with a lowered tax rate and without adding to the deficit, which is essentially what Republican leadership Presidential ticket claimed they wanted.

Yet my Republican friends are unable to accept the necessary reductions in other tax benefits that come with the package. But there is bipartisan reluctance in this regard.

It illustrates that we are, I think, never going to get out of this box until we have another source of revenue. The most promising would be a carbon tax, which would be broadly distributed throughout the economy. It should be revenue-neutral, using the revenue raised to modify the impacts on lower-income citizens and businesses, and using the rest of the proceeds to keep it revenue-neutral could help us simplify the Tax Code. It might be the only way to reform the Tax Code.

Simplification costs money, which an aging and growing country needs to replace. The carbon tax will do that and will have the added benefit of providing greater simplification for energy-sensitive provisions and, by the way, will help us save the planet.

The report released this week by the administration on climate underscores the impact that climate change and global warming is having now. A carbon tax is the best way to exercise our leadership to change that process. I have long supported a revenue-neutral carbon tax, and will continue to do so, as the key to long-term tax reform and environmental protection.

In the meantime, I will continue to support individual tax provisions that are important to my community, that help our economy and protect and enhance the infrastructure. I only hope that we are able to make the transition so that we can do this in a more thoughtful and constructive fashion.

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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PUTTING FISH BEFORE PEOPLE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, California is suffering one of the worse droughts in its history. More than a half-million acres of the most fertile farmland in the Nation have been devastated. Some Central Valley farmers have been notified that they will receive zero water allocations from the Federal system. The owners of long-held water rights are being cut off.

In some communities "water police" go from door to door to enforce water restrictions. Homeowners are forbidden to water their lawns, except under the most rigid constraints. Sacramento offers an app so they can turn in their neighbors to the water authorities.

And yet, knowing full well that we are facing a devastating drought and that our dwindling water supply will be desperately needed by our people this summer, over the past several weeks the Bureau of Reclamation has released 70,000 acre-feet of water from dams on the American and Stanislaus Rivers to meet environmental demands that place fish above people.

This is enough water to meet the annual needs of a city of half a million people, all sacrificed in order to flush salmon smolts to the ocean, where they tend to swim anyway, and keep the river at the right temperature for the comfort of the fish.

The releases of this water are so enormous they are called "pulse flows." Citizens are warned to exercise extreme caution on rivers undergoing pulse flows, so swift is the water current they produce as the water rushes toward the ocean.

Four months ago, Folsom Lake on the American River was almost empty. Yet on April 21, the Bureau of Reclamation more than tripled the water releases from Folsom and Nimbus Dams from 500 cubic feet per second to more than 1,500 cubic feet per second for 3 days. That is about 7,000 acre-feet of water.

On April 14, a 16-day pulse flow drained nearly 63,000 acre-feet of water from New Melones and Goodwin Dams on the Stanislaus. The irony is that if we hadn't built these dams, these rivers would be nearly dry in this drought and there wouldn't be any fish.

We cannot demand that our people discriminate and save and stretch and ration every drop of water in their parched homes while at the same time this government treats our remaining water supply so recklessly, so irresponsibly, and so wastefully.

This conduct utterly destroys the credibility of government demands for stringent conservation and sacrifice by our people, and it thoroughly undermines its moral authority to make these demands.

Inflexible laws administered by ideologically driven officials have taken this wastage of water to ridiculous ex-

tremes, and it cries out for fundamental reform. The House twice has passed such a reform bill, most recently as H.R. 3964, but the Senate refuses to act on it or to pass its own alternative.

Nevertheless, the administration has the authority to stop these releases through provisions in the Endangered Species Act but has failed to do so.

Mr. Speaker, we use the word "outrage" too often on this floor, but in this case it is an understatement. If a homeowner is caught with a 1-gallon puddle on his lawn on the wrong day, he can be fined. But the government thinks nothing of flushing 23 billion of gallons of desperately needed water for the comfort and convenience of the fish.

How much longer will the people tolerate this kind of mismanagement from their government? How much longer will we allow these policies to threaten the health, safety, and prosperity of the human population throughout these drought-afflicted lands?

California's chronic water shortages won't be addressed without additional storage. There are plenty of suitable sites, but current laws have delayed them indefinitely and made them cost-prohibitive.

Until those laws are changed and new dam construction can begin, our State and Federal Government have a responsibility to manage our dwindling water supply as carefully as we ask our citizens to do.

The wildly frivolous and extravagant water releases from our dams last month make a mockery of the extraordinary sacrifices that our citizens are making to stretch supplies in this crisis.

Perhaps, at least, these releases will serve to educate the public on just how unreasonable these environmental laws are—and the policymakers responsible for them.

HONORING NORMAN LUMPKIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the life and legacy of veteran newscaster Norman Lumpkin, who passed away on Tuesday, May 6. While we mourn the passing of this pioneer, I am comforted in knowing that his legacy will live on through the barriers he broke for Black journalists in the State of Alabama.

I join with his family, friends, and former colleagues in remembering Norman Lumpkin for his numerous contributions to the industry.

Norman launched his longstanding media career by working for radio stations in Montgomery, Alabama, and Indianapolis, Indiana. However, Norman would rise to prominence when he was hired in 1969 by WSFA in Montgomery, Alabama. He was the station's first Black reporter and also the first Black

reporter hired in the Montgomery media market.

Historian Richard Bailey defined Norman's prolific career in 3 words: "forceful, thorough, and believable." Bailey further noted that Norman personified Black broadcasting. He coined the phrase, "If you don't want to hear it on this station, don't let it happen." The phrase represented not only his thirst for truth but his commitment to accurate reporting.

Norman was guided by these principles when he was assigned to cover the reelection bid of then-segregationist Governor George Wallace in 1970. During the race, Norman admitted that fellow reporters would give him misinformation to embarrass him in efforts to discredit his journalistic integrity.

But this passionate advocate for truth was not deterred. In fact, Governor Wallace personally made sure that Norman was kept abreast of new developments and campaign events. Through his extraordinary coverage of Governor Wallace, Norman not only earned credibility but a lasting respect from those in the industry.

His perseverance proved that he was poised to become one of the best investigative journalists in the State of Alabama.

Norman Lumpkin also made history off-camera. He was the first Black president of the Alabama AP Broadcasters Association and was inducted into the National Academy of Television and Arts' prestigious Silver Circle in 2007.

He eventually left WSFA in 1999 and became news director at Montgomery's ABC affiliate before serving as public relations director for the Alabama Highway Department, where he eventually retired.

Today, I honor Norman Lumpkin for serving as an impeccable role model and source of inspiration for generations of Black journalists who now follow in his footsteps. Those that had the pleasure of watching him were indeed inspired by his mere presence. He was to many a perfect illustration of what was possible in his field. As he courageously broke barriers, he gave African Americans a voice in a State that was still struggling for racial equality.

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On behalf of a grateful Nation and State, we salute this American hero and Alabama treasure. Saying thanks to Norman Lumpkin somehow seems woefully inadequate, but on behalf of the countless journalists and media professionals that you have inspired, we honor your legacy and your place in Alabama history.

I ask my colleagues to join me in mourning the passing of a great veteran journalist, Norman Lumpkin.

NATIONAL NURSES WEEK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from