PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KNOLLENBERG) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. KNOLLENBERG led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

INTRODUCING THE GUEST CHAPLAIN

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

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, I take this opportunity to introduce to the House the guest chaplain who is with us today, the Reverend Dr. Peter M. Kurowski. The Reverend is affectionately referred to as "Pastor Pete" by his congregation at St. Paul's Lutheran Church in California, Missouri, which is located in Missouri's Fourth Congressional District.

In recent years, I have had the privilege of getting to know Pastor Pete through our discussions of history and the Missouri Tigers. I have found his spiritual guidance to be uplifting as well as inspirational. Pastor Pete, along with his wife of 25 years, Janice, continue to make such an outstanding contribution to their communities.

A native of Green Bay, Wisconsin, Pastor Pete has attended Oshkosh State University, Concordia College and Fort Wayne Senior College. He later attended Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri.

He has served congregations in St. Louis, Missouri, Joylston, Illinois, and New Orleans, Louisiana, prior to serving the California, Missouri community.

Pastor Pete is the author of the book, Lifelines of Love, and has done script writing for the Lutheran Layman League animated video "Red Boots for Christmas." He has also written a number of theological and sports articles for various periodicals.

I am truly proud to have such a distinguished leader from California, Missouri give the opening prayer to my colleagues here in the House this morning.

VOTE "NO" ON H.R. 45, NUCLEAR WASTE POLICY ACT OF 1999

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Commerce recently amended H.R. 45, the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1999 to exempt the $8 billion Nuclear Waste Fund from the Budget Enforcement Act. So what does this mean?

Well, this move to take the nuclear waste budget off-budget would open the floodgates to unrestricted, uncontrollable spending.

By taking H.R. 45 off-budget, we will permit funding increases without the necessary offsets and provide for little or no congressional oversight and accountability, all in the name of nuclear waste.

By fragmenting the budget to accommodate nuclear waste interests, we would set a dangerous precedent that every other trust fund would undoubtedly attempt to follow.

As Members of Congress, we should be concerned about any erosion of our commitment to budget discipline. Let us not forget that there are several hundred trusts and special funds in existence today, with only Social Security and the Postal Service receiving this special status of off-budget.

I would encourage my colleagues to uphold their commitment to fiscal responsibility and vote "no" on H.R. 45.

Mr. Speaker, that is CRA. That is how we measure it.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL

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

Mr. LaFalce. Mr. Speaker, the Community Reinvestment Act was created by the Congress in 1977 to combat discrimination by encouraging federally insured financial institutions to help meet the credit needs of the communities they serve. I am here today to report that the Community Reinvestment Act, or CRA, has been a tremendous success.

CRA's success results from the effective partnerships of municipal leaders, local development advocacy organizations, and community-minded financial institutions. Working together, the CRA has proven that local investment is not only good for business but critical to improving the quality of life for low- and moderate-income residents in the communities financial institutions serve.

We will be hearing about other CRA success stories in the next few weeks,