

to provide the right leadership at the right time for all the right reasons, and I thank you. May God bless you.

I might add, Mr. Speaker, that you have made it possible for me to know I have got the best job in this town, and I am going to do it with all my energy for another year.

The good people of Texas have made it possible for me to work with the finest people in the world, the Members of the United States House of Representatives on both sides of the aisle. To my friends on the other side of the aisle, we have many good contests. We are sometimes together, but we are more often in opposition. But we always represent what we believe. Thank you, my friends. You are constant, consistent and reliable.

You know, despite the often too-bit-ter contests we have, I cherish the fact that when our country needed us to come together, we stood on the steps of this Capitol and hand to hand we sang "God Bless America." It was that feeling of unity, not the heated exchanges, that I will remember most fondly when I leave here.

To my Republican colleagues, we should be proud of what we have done in our young majority. Twice now we have lowered the tax burden on America's working families and left them more in charge of their own hard-earned money. We reformed a failed welfare system in a way that has saved families. We honored the American people's prosperity by our spending restraint, and we turned government deficits into hard-won surpluses, and we must now hold them. We will hold those surpluses by restoring economic growth through supply-side tax cuts, and that is why we cannot leave here without an economic stimulus package.

My colleagues, my friends, my appreciation for you has only been made greater because in the past few years I have had the privilege of visiting nearly every congressional district in America. I am looking forward to returning to about 100 more next year. But for now, my friends, let us finish our work and go home.

Let me conclude by saying, I wish you all, all of you and all your hard-working staffs, and all the wonderful people that make this great organization work, and the security and the police, let me wish you all a happy holiday season. Whether it is the celebration of Chanukah or, for me, Christmas, the birthday of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, I just hope this is a happy and joyous occasion. It will be for me and my family, it will be for America, and it should be in all our lives.

Thank you, God bless you, and God bless America.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following titles:

H.R. 2199. An act to amend the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997 to permit any Federal law enforcement agency to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia to assist the Department in carrying out crime prevention and law enforcement activities in the District of Columbia if deemed appropriate by the Chief of the Department and the United States Attorney for the District of Columbia, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2336. An act to make permanent the authority to redact financial disclosure statements of judicial employees and judicial officers.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1519. an act to amend the Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act to provide farm credit assistance for activated reservists.

S. Con. Res. 55. Concurrent Resolution honoring the 19 United States servicemen who died in the terrorist bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia on June 25, 1996.

The message also announced that the Senate agreed to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 494) "An Act to provide for a transition to democracy and to promote economic recovery in Zimbabwe."

HOW THE GRINCH STOLE THE CONSTITUTION

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, a fourth grader in Pennsylvania has been told that he cannot hand out Christmas cards to his classmates if they contain religious messages.

Two middle school students in Minnesota have gotten in trouble for wearing red and green scarves during a Christmas skit and for ending the skit by saying "We hope you all have a merry Christmas."

Two ninth graders in Massachusetts have been told they cannot create Christmas cards that say Merry Christmas or depict a nativity scene.

A teacher in Illinois has been warned by her principal not to read a book about Christmas to her second grade class, even though it is from the school library.

A school district in Georgia has deleted the word Christmas from its school calendar to avoid a lawsuit from the ACLU.

Mr. Speaker, the Constitution has been hijacked. The founders never intended the first amendment to prevent schoolchildren from wishing each other a merry Christmas.

Left-wing lawyers are distorting the Constitution beyond all recognition. Pretty soon they will be able to make it say anything they want it to say, and then we will all be in trouble.

The Grinch may have already stolen Christmas. Let us keep him from stealing the Constitution too.

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COMMITTEE FOR STIMULUS PACKAGE NEEDS TO MEET

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

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, the President and many national leaders are asking us to stimulate the economy by putting together a package and presenting it to the President for his signature. Some may remember it was this House that passed the so-called stimulus package, but what was in it? Hundreds of billions of dollars of corporate tax cuts, and little if no notice was given to the hundreds of thousands of people that are unemployed. That is the Republican stimulus package. Yet Members are ridiculing the Senate for not moving. What they fail to realize is that the leadership of the committee is not on the Senate side. The chairmanship of the committee comes from the House side from the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. Speaker, it would seem to me that if we were serious about doing something, the committee would have a meeting. What most Americans and Members do not know, we have not met since last Wednesday. If there is an urgency, let us not blame the Senate. Let us find out where the blame is, and have Members of Congress not having press conferences or fund-raisers, but coming together trying to resolve this difference.

MUSIC INDUSTRY NOT HELPING PARENTS

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, recently the Federal Trade Commission released a study on the marketing practices of different sectors of the entertainment industry. The report finds movie and video game companies have made "commendable" progress since last year, placing limits on ads for violent