

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Thursday, April 22, 2010

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

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

April 22, 2010.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ED PASTOR to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, we bless You and thank You for Mother Earth. Earth's beauty calls forth wonder in children and offers daily sustenance to the elderly. Earth is common ground for all human life and invites us to be respectful and grateful for her diverse gifts of land and sea.

Help us to learn from her seasons the wisdom of Your timing. May the variety of her species and the potential of her resources teach us prudence and perseverance. May her fruitfulness give witness to Your ever-faithful love; and her tilt to the Sun model our turn to You to face every need.

Earth is home for us all, but no one's lasting city. With all her laws of nature, Earth is stable yet ever-changing, making all dependent upon You both now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. WELCH 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced

that the Senate has agreed to without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 222. Concurrent resolution recognizing the leadership and historical contributions of Dr. Hector Garcia to the Hispanic community and his remarkable efforts to combat racial and ethnic discrimination in the United States of America.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 85-874, as amended, the Chair, on behalf of the President of the Senate, appoints the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts:

The Senator from North Dakota (Mr. CONRAD) vice The Honorable Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 94-201, as amended by Public Law 105-275, the Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, appoints the following individuals as members of the Board of Trustees of the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress:

Patricia Atkinson of Nevada vice Dennis Holub of South Dakota; and

Joanna Hess of New Mexico vice Mickey Hart of California.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 10 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

EXPAND GOLDMAN SACHS INVESTIGATION

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Well, all America has heard about "too big to fail," and they are still pretty angry about that and the bailout of Wall Street. But now there is a new addition to the lexicon thanks to Goldman Sachs, and that is "designed to fail for profit."

Goldman Sachs worked with a hedge fund manager who put together collateralized debt obligations that he hand-picked because he thought they would fail. Goldman got a fee for putting them together, Goldman sold him insurance, or bets against them, and then Goldman went out and sold to unknowing investors those same securities as great investments.

We are thankful that the Securities and Exchange Commission is back on the beat after a long nap under the

Bush administration and Chris Cox. We congratulate Chairwoman Schapiro, but we are asking her to expand the scope of her investigation to look at any credit default swaps that were paid to Goldman Sachs that involved these so-called Abacus instruments and whether or not we could reclaim those as ill-gotten gains for America's taxpayers.

HONORING SERGEANT SEAN DURKIN

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

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, there are many heroes from Colorado who have fought and continue to fight in the global war on terror. Today I rise to pay tribute to one hero in particular, Army Sergeant Sean Durkin of Aurora, Colorado.

On March 27, 2010, Sergeant Sean Durkin and his fellow soldiers were on a mission near Forward Operating Base Wilson in Afghanistan when their convoy was struck by an explosive device. Sergeant Sean Durkin and two other brave soldiers exited the vehicle to respond to the blast but were all injured when a second improvised explosive device went off. Sergeant Sean Durkin was gravely wounded and ultimately succumbed to his injuries while at Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

In 2004, Sergeant Sean Durkin graduated from Eaglecrest High School in Colorado. Sergeant Sean Durkin is a shining example of Army service and sacrifice. As a former member of the Army and as a retired Marine officer, my deepest sympathies go out to his family and to all who knew him.

GOLDMAN SACHS AND BAD BETS

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. President, last week we saw two stories about Goldman Sachs. It made record profits of \$1 billion a month for the past 3 months and it was sued for civil fraud by the Securities and Exchange Commission for the manner in which it made that money misleading its own clients.

Goldman has transformed itself from one of the most respected institutions on Wall Street to one of the most reviled for putting itself ahead of its clients and the American people. The \$1

□ 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.

billion designed-to-fail Abacus deal for the benefit of a hedge fund billionaire who needed to get richer did not create a single new job in America. It did not provide a single American family with a new mortgage. It didn't help a single new business get started. It did more to damage the economy than it could possibly have done to have helped it.

But the only difference with this Texas Hold'em new poker game that Goldman fuels is that when Goldman makes a bad bet the American taxpayer is the loser.

JUDGE REJECTS FIRST AMENDMENT

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Federal Judge Barbara Crabb sided with some atheists last week and wrongly ruled the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional.

The first amendment to the Constitution states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof." The judge obviously forgot the "free exercise" part.

Our Founding Fathers jealously guarded the right to free exercise of religious conscience. Thanksgiving was started in 1789 by President George Washington so the Nation could, "Thank and pray to the Almighty for blessing America." We start each day of Congress with a prayer. Heaven knows we need it. We have a long history of honoring the religious foundation of America's liberty.

The National Day of Prayer does not seek to establish a government religion. Quite to the contrary, we specifically recognize one day each year the right of Americans to freely exercise their religion, free from anyone's interference, including atheists and Federal judges.

What's next, Judge Crabb? You going to ban Thanksgiving and Christmas as national holidays?

And that's just the way it is.

EARTH DAY

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the last 40 years of Earth Day represent some of my personal highest hopes, fondest dreams, and greatest frustrations about the environment. At times we have watched retreat, denial, and in some cases destruction. But we have also seen people mobilized and government respond with groundbreaking legislation.

Today, Earth Day is not so much an issue of hope or despair as one of determination. The current path we are on is not sustainable. It's, indeed, destruc-

tive. More and more people know the devastating facts. But what is exciting is that we know what to do about it. From Girl Scout troops to community colleges to the United States military, people are moving in the right direction with solutions that are cost-effective and that most agree we should implement even if we aren't concerned about destabilizing the Earth's climate.

The Big question is, Where will we be on the 50th anniversary of Earth Day? Will we have risen to the challenge of global pollution, leading by example, making real progress to a low carbon future while we revitalize American industry to compete for business at home and abroad? We can, and I hope that we will.

ENERGY AND THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. The Third District of Nebraska is one of the largest agricultural districts in the country and is home to more than 30,000 farmers and ranchers. Yesterday, the House Ag Committee took the first step on the road leading to a new Farm Bill.

Taking a comprehensive look at the agriculture sector requires us to be direct about the impact of policies coming from Washington to those 30,000 Nebraskans and agriculture producers throughout the country. Measures like the House-passed cap-and-trade bill will have dire consequences for agriculture. As higher energy prices hit other areas of our economy, farmers and ranchers will pay more for seed, fertilizer, equipment, energy, and other supplies.

My goal is to create policies which will strengthen U.S. agriculture and provide long-term stability for our Nation's producers who feed America and the world. We must not continue to saddle producers with onerous regulations which stand in the way of growth and only lead to more uncertainty.

LETTER TO THE SEC RE: GOLDMAN SACHS AND AIG

(Mr. CUMMINGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to ask the Securities and Exchange Commission to do their job. The letter Mr. DEFAZIO and I wrote to the SEC asks for nothing more and nothing less. The SEC has sued Goldman Sachs for potential fraud. Rather than jumping to the conclusion that there was no fraud or simply convicting Goldman Sachs in the court of public opinion, Mr. DEFAZIO and our 36 cosigners and I call for an expanded investigation by

the SEC. Should fraud be found, we ask that any taxpayer money paid by AIG and obtained through fraudulent transactions be recovered.

Finally, we are asking that evidence of criminal wrongdoing be turned over to the Justice Department. The SEC must be serious about reining in companies who ignore our laws. I am committed to this cause, Mr. DEFAZIO is committed to this cause, and our 36 cosponsors are committed to this cause.

I invite all of my colleagues to sign onto the letter and join us.

ELIMINATE SWEETHEART DEALS

(Mr. BUCHANAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I introduced a bill that would eliminate sweetheart deals. Recently, the current health care bill that got passed, I know in my area, in my town hall meetings, talking to a lot of Americans, people are concerned about the health care bill that just passed, but they are outraged about the sweetheart deals.

What do I mean? The \$300 million that went to the Louisiana purchase, \$100 million that went to a hospital in Connecticut. People are outraged because they feel it is their money, it is their taxpayer money, and they are very concerned about it. They feel it is buying votes.

And that's the reason I think we have such a low approval rating in this country, because they view it as back-room deals, secret deals. This bill will eliminate all the sweetheart deals that are in this bill.

I ask my colleagues to join me in eliminating sweetheart deals in the current health care legislation.

THE AMT ADJUSTMENT ACT

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, a critical component of our economic recovery is tax relief for our middle class. I rise today to urge my colleagues to support the AMT Adjustment Act, which eliminates the AMT from the lives of most middle class families and greatly reduces it for the rest.

In places with a high cost of living like New York's Hudson Valley, more and more middle class taxpayers find themselves paying the excessive AMT. We must restore balance to the Tax Code and prevent this millionaire's tax from hitting the middle class for once and for all.

H.R. 5077 increases the amount of income exempt from the AMT and permanently fixes the tax by indexing it to the cost of living. Tax day is bad enough already, and it shouldn't have big surprises to the tune of thousands of dollars our families have to pay.