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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 17, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable HEATHER WILSON to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Monsignor Richard W. O'Keefe, Immaculate Conception Parish, Yuma, Arizona, offered the following prayer:

Lord of all our endeavors, give to our elected Congress men and women the courage to follow noble aspirations, strength to support worthy causes, integrity to seek the truth, and in all of their legislative duties, be their inspiration and guide.

Lord, you remember forever Your covenant with us. Even though it was centuries ago that You formed a community of family life with us, still You remain continually faithful. Enable us by Your merciful help to keep faith with You, to renew our covenant at important or difficult moments of our life so that at the end we may receive the promise of the covenant.

Lord, to those who believe in You, You promise kindness and truth, justice and peace. When we are faced with difficulties, increase our faith, but do not lower our ideals. From the least likely places You can bring forth the triumph of Your grace. These things we ask in Jesus name. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. GIBBONS 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 Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed with amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1905. An act making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 1905), ''An Act making appropriations for the Legislative Branch for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2000, and for other purposes,'' requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. BENNETT, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. CRAIG, Mr. COCHRAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. BYRD, to be conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate disagrees to the amendment of the House to the bill (S. 1059), ''An Act to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2000 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe personnel strengths for such fiscal year for the Armed Forces, and for other purposes,'' requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. WARNER, Mr. THURMOND, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. SANTORUM, Ms. SNOWE, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ALLARD, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. SESSIONS, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. BYRD, Mr. ROBB, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. CLELAND, Ms. LANDRIEU, and Mr. REED, to be conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 331. An act to amend the Social Security Act to expand the availability of health care coverage for working individuals with disabilities, to establish a Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program in the Social Security Administration to provide such individuals with meaningful opportunities to work, and for other purposes.

S. 559. An act to designate the Federal building located at 300 East 8th Street in Austin, Texas, as the ''J.J. 'Jake' Pickle Federal Building''.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 10 1-minute speeches on each side.

WELCOME TO REVEREND MONSIGNOR RICHARD O'KEEFE

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

Mr. PASTOR. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and it is an honor to introduce to my colleagues and welcome to the House Monsignor O'Keefe

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from Yuma, Arizona, who is one of Arizona's greatest assets.

Monsignor Richard O'Keefe was ordained as a Roman Catholic priest on June 14, 1959, in Ireland. Two months later he found himself serving as an associate pastor in Douglas, Arizona, and ever since that time has continued to reside in Arizona. For the past 27 years, Monsignor O'Keefe has faithfully served my constituents in Yuma, Arizona, and for the last 17 has served in the capacity of pastor of Immaculate Conception Church.

I have to tell my colleagues that he is a man who works with all segments of the community. He knows how to bring all of us together to solve the problems and bring a better quality of life to our community. His philosophy is that our government, as well as its citizens, must ensure that all residents of Arizona be given equal and fair treatment.

Monsignor's vision and commitment to education is evident, for his tireless work towards building the first Catholic church high school in Yuma. Monsignor O'Keefe is a friend, a confidante and a great asset not only to Yuma County, but to all of Arizona.

On behalf of the Congress, Monsignor, we thank you for your service to your church and to your country.

FOND FAREWELL AND SALUTATIONS TO OFFICER KEITH PICKETT

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Madam Speaker, all across America we take great pride in the work that our law enforcement personnel offer to our cities, local communities, counties and States. Today on Capitol Hill, we pay tribute to a retiring Capitol Police officer, Mr. Keith Pickett. Mr. Pickett will be retiring this Saturday after 27 years of dedicated and valiant service to this body.

His on-the-job duties have been coupled with his strong involvement and commitment to the United States Capitol Police Retirement Association, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the American Legion. While serving the American Legion, Officer Pickett worked to raise money for Heroes, a benefit for survivors of slain police officers and firefighters.

Officer Pickett also served his Nation proudly in the United States Army before serving the occupants and visitors of our Nation's Capitol, this very building that symbolizes the freedom he protects. Here, at the center of freedom in Washington, D.C., we all wish Officer Keith Pickett a fond farewell and many thanks for his 30 years of service to the Federal Government.

Officer Pickett, along with all of my colleagues in the House, I salute you for the many years of invaluable service you have provided your Nation and your fellow officers. We offer you our thanks and our best wishes as you enter this new era of your life.

COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT ACT

(Ms. LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LEE. Madam Speaker, I call to my colleagues' attention the importance of the Community Reinvestment Act, also known as CRA, which is incorporated within H.R. 10, generally described as the Financial Modernization Act.

The House will be considering H.R. 10 in the next several weeks, and I bring to my colleagues' attention the importance of maintaining CRA provisions in H.R. 10, as well as ensuring the modernization of banking securities and insurance functions to include modernization of the Community Reinvestment Act.

Madam Speaker, CRA has been an enormous success in the last two decades in raising and leveraging over $1 trillion in low-interest mortgage counseling for housing and small businesses in our underserved communities. However, the need for this kind of support continues and grows. There are over 5 million Americans in substandard housing, according to a 1998 HUD report which states: There has been a sharp increase in the number of working poor families needing housing assistance, with the total number jumping by 265,000, that is 24 percent, from 1991 to 1995.

We have a housing crisis in this country. One way to meet this crisis is to maintain the CRA provisions in H.R. 10, which are in the Leach-LaFalce language, and also modernize CRA by supporting the Gutierrez amendment to H.R. 10.

SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY INEFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, this morning let us consider the seven habits of highly ineffective government. Here is a list we can all enjoy, unless, of course, one belongs to the party that has made these seven habits of highly ineffective government what they are most proud of.

Number one, disregard the law of unintended consequences. The 1974 campaign finance ''reforms'' anyone?

Number two, be compassionate with other people's money. No further comment necessary.

Number three, take credit for the other party's achievements. I think welfare reform would certainly qualify here.

Number four, spend beyond your means. Forty years of liberal Democratic rule where new programs were created without even asking how to pay for them enshrined this into Washington culture.

Number five, demonize your opponent, attack his motives. No such thing as honest disagreements.

Number six, promise tax cuts; pass tax increases once in office. That is how the liberals get elected.

Number seven, expand entitlements that are about to go bankrupt. How do we think Medicare got to where it is now?

SUPPORT THE TAUZIN-TRAFICANT NATIONAL RETAIL SALES TAX

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, the IRS sent Joshua Jones a bill for $47,000. They said, Joshua, pay up or else. Joshua was in shock. Madam Speaker, Joshua Jones is 13 years old.

Now, I ask my colleagues, what did Joshua do, mow 50,000 lawns? Sell a million cups of lemonade? Beam me up. Thank God the burden of proof is now on the IRS.

But I have a better solution now for the Internal Revenue Service. Support the Tauzin-Traficant national retail sales tax. No more forms, no more income tax, no more audits, no more bills, no more IRS, and it is that simple. This is not rocket science.

I yield back the dilemma of Joshua Jones.

MEDICARE FUNDING

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

Mr. WICKER. Madam Speaker, Vice President AL GORE announced his Presidential candidacy yesterday, and in the speech he said, and I quote, ''I will make sure that Medicare is never weakened, never looted, never taken away.''

How ironic to hear Mr. GORE speak those words at a time when this administration is refusing to spend the funds authorized by Congress to ensure the solvency of the Medicare program.

The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 provided the money to safeguard the health care needs of our Nation's seniors well into the 21st century. Yet, the Clinton-Gore administration is shortchanging Medicare by $20 billion. Let me repeat that. This administration is shortchanging Medicare by $20 billion. This underfunding is creating serious problems in the delivery of health services to the nearly 40 million elderly and disabled Americans who depend on Medicare.

The Vice President could make good on his campaign rhetoric and avert a major health care crisis by persuading the bureaucracy at President Clinton's Health Care Financing Administration to quit shortchanging Medicare and restore the funding to the levels authorized by Congress.