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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, Father of us all, Your providential care for our Nation and Your well-timed blessings during singular events of our individual lives, have revealed Your constant and personal love.

Even before we were born, You prepared the way for us with well-chosen people who knew our need. To this very day a single voice can speak wisdom over the din of a crowd. People tell us their dreams and inspire us in our daily efforts.

Someone asks the right question at exactly the right moment and occasions the answer needed but until then hidden.

History has shown us: wars create heroes in our midst. The struggle for civil rights and to put an end to suffering has called forth leadership when most needed.

Lord, You continue to fashion and challenge us until we reach the full potential You have placed within us. Therefore, we are confident in our present difficulties You have placed in position those who know what we need and will guide and protect us.

May Your truth and Your love be realized in us today and last forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. 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. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS 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 passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 1512. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

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

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR DAY

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

Mr. DOYLE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an upcoming expression of caring and activism. Tomorrow, March 20, would have been Fred Rogers' 81st birthday. It also marks the second annual "Won't You Be My Neighbor Day," a day each year dedicated to furthering the efforts of Pittsburgh native Fred Rogers, known to many as Mr. Rogers from the long-running TV show "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood."

Fred Rogers spent most of his adult life nurturing the development of self-assured, well-rounded, and caring young people.

Family Communications, Incorporated, the nonprofit organization

founded by Fred Rogers in 1971, is asking all Americans to put on their favorite sweater tomorrow and undertake some act of neighborliness or caring—anything from striking up a friendly conversation with your neighbor to helping out in your neighborhood, so long as it helps create closer communities and exemplifies what it really means to be a good neighbor.

I hope my colleagues and people across the country will join me in honoring Fred Rogers' remarkable life's work by observing "Won't You Be My Neighbor Day" tomorrow.

BUREAUCRATIC OFF-ROAD BLOCK

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

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, Montanans can enjoy our beautiful State from the convenience of a road; but to really get out and experience it, we often have to leave the roads behind. That is why off-roading has become a major part of Montana's heritage, and our economy.

Unfortunately, the Consumer Products Safety Commission has erected a bureaucratic off-road block for young all-terrain vehicle enthusiasts. ATV parts, which are unlikely to be handled by children, have been banned, forcing ATV and motorcycle dealers to remove these products from their showrooms. And now couldn't be a worse time as many of these dealers are just trying to stay afloat through the slow economic times.

I have introduced legislation to fix this problem. We all want to ensure the safety of our kids, but let's put our efforts into protecting them from real threats, not bureaucratic bungling.

SPACE SOLAR ALLIANCE

(Ms. GIFFORDS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

□ 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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H3643

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, this week the Space Shuttle Discovery docked at the International Space Station to deliver the final platform of solar panels that will support additional laboratories and the arrival of an expanded crew.

As the new chair of the Space and Aviation Subcommittee and a champion of solar energy, I am delighted by the space solar alliance that will advance human knowledge and technological development.

The panels being installed 220 miles above us this week have a wingspan of a 747, and they contain over 32,000 cells, enough to power 50 homes.

Recently, First Solar, an Arizona solar panel maker, announced solar cells that will be less than \$1 per watt. Global Solar, another Arizona company, creates solar cells that can be integrated into military and police gear.

What started as an expensive niche technology is now a consumer-driven, mass-produced product. Solar was absolutely vital to America's success in fulfilling our bold commitment to explore the heavens. Today it is playing a vital role in tackling an equally daunting task, America's energy independence.

OUTRAGE TOWARD AIG

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans share the outrage of the American people that AIG would use taxpayer dollars to award executive bonuses during this economic crisis.

But we believe the American people deserve 100 percent of their money back, not 90 percent. The American people deserve to know that this whole outrage could have been avoided.

Senator WYDEN authored an amendment banning executive bonuses, and that amendment was stripped from the stimulus bill. Senator DODD took responsibility, but he told CNN that "the administration had a problem with the amendment."

The bill on the floor today to enact a 90 percent tax on AIG employees is just a cynical attempt to divert attention from the truth that Democrats in Congress and this administration made these bonus payments possible in the first place.

House Republicans have legislation that would ensure 100 percent of these bonuses are returned to taxpayers, but they blocked the plan from receiving a vote today. The American people have a right to get 100 percent of their money back, and Mr. Geithner should resign.

WAL-MART BATTLES TO DEVELOP ON BATTLEFIELD

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, 164 years ago brave Texans and brave Vermonters fought on an historical battlefield about 60 miles south of here, the Battle of the Wilderness. There were 165,000 troops amassed there, including Vermonters from the 1st Brigade; and 1,200 from Vermont's ranks died. Among them was Daniel Lilly, a teacher in Barnard, Vermont. His funeral is still today remembered as the largest funeral in the history of that town. Another, Ed Holden, fought and survived, but saw his brother with his head shot off die on the battlefield.

Today a different battle is taking place on that hallowed ground. It is a conflict between a great American corporation, Wal-Mart, and a great American historic battlefield, the Wilderness. My friend from Texas and I have joined together to ask Wal-Mart to do the right thing and not build its facility, a 140,000-foot facility, on that battlefield where troops were massing.

The question for us is whether we can honor the fallen. And that, as my friend will tell you, is just the way it is.

WAL-MART VS. HALLOWED GROUND

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the historical comments my friend from Vermont has said regarding Union troops from his home State. The Battle of the Wilderness took place in May 1864.

On the second day of the 3-day battle with a statement made by General Lee, "Texans always move them," the Texas Brigade successfully forced back Grant's Union troops. However, the Texans sustained 60 percent casualties.

There were 165,000 troops, Union and Confederate, in this Battle of the Wilderness. That is the number of troops that we have in Afghanistan and Iraq put together on one battlefield. There were 29,000 casualties. The fighting was so fierce in the dense woods it caught fire, and hundreds of wounded on both sides burned to death. Their graves are only known by God.

Mr. Speaker, those troops from the North and South were all Americans. Mr. Speaker, here is the battlefield. It is outlined in this black line. On this hallowed ground right here, you can see this X is where Wal-Mart wants to build one of their beautiful stores. There are other locations available for Wal-Mart. So we from the North and South in a bipartisan way want Wal-Mart to build someplace else.

And that's just the way it is.

MARCH MADNESS BRINGS US TOGETHER

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, Democrats and Republicans may disagree on

things, and people in my city of Memphis may disagree on things over the years. But one thing that brings us together is March Madness, the NCAA tournament which tips off this morning.

In that tournament will be my home team, the University of Memphis Tigers. They have the longest winning streak in the country, 25 games, and they have the Coach of the Year in John Calipari. We have a great team that came just inches away from winning the national championship last year.

We were seeded number two this year rather than number one where we should have been. But this is the opportunity to show who deserves to be seeded number one. The University of Memphis Tigers that bring my community together and do something that basketball and sports can do for this country in bringing us together in difficult times and giving us a pastime that is so important will do well, and our city will cheer for them and see that they do well.

President Obama has picked them to make the Final Four. He was correct. He picked them to lose to Louisville; he was wrong. We will do well.

Go Tigers.

□ 1015

AIG SCANDAL

(Mrs. BACHMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. BACHMANN. Mr. Speaker, today we understand that the Obama administration's stimulus bill—the \$1 trillion stimulus bill—was also the AIG bonus protection plan, because we understand now today that language is contained within the stimulus bill that would ensure that the AIG bonuses would stay with the executives who received them.

The American people are outraged. We are outraged as well. But who knew about these bonuses? When did they know about it? CBS News has reported the Obama administration has known for weeks about these bonuses. Senator CHRIS DODD also said that he knew about these bonuses, put the amendment into place, but says it wasn't his language, it was the administration's language.

This is a scandal that is brewing in Washington. We need to have answers. The American people need answers. This is their money that is being spent for these failing businesses. It's time that the American people know what the real truth is.

AIG OUTRAGE

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, I also rise today in outrage over the recent news that AIG paid out over \$165 million to