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House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. CAPPS).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,

April 28, 2009.

I hereby appoint the Honorable LOIS CAPPS to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2009, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes and each Member, other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

TRIBUTE TO FIRST LADY LAURA LANE WELCH BUSH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, Michelle Obama is enjoying immense popularity throughout America. She has been described as a "breath of fresh air" and the "First Lady we have been waiting for."

A Democrat constituent spoke to me several days ago expressing approval of the First Lady's high marks, but she furthermore expressed concern that we do not forget Mrs. Obama's immediate predecessor, Mrs. Laura Bush. I am in

agreement with my constituent in that I am pleased for Mrs. Obama, but I don't want her high marks to diminish the high marks Laura Bush recorded.

Madam Speaker, there is no blueprint for successfully filling the office of First Lady. Members of Congress have elections and constituents to provide constructive criticism along the way. The First Lady has no such benefit, and as a result, she must master the art of on-the-job training with the world's microscope on her every move.

Mrs. Laura Bush perfected this art as well as any other First Lady in our history. Not only is her list of accomplishments long and meaningful, but they were achieved with little fanfare during a tumultuous period in our history.

She is responsible, Madam Speaker, for spearheading the effort to bring the National Book Festival to the National Mall. She led the charge to bolster Teach for America, which helped increase the number of teachers being produced by this program every year. All of these teachers will teach in impoverished urban and rural schools. She helped stave an impending crisis in our libraries, which were facing a 40 percent rate of attrition. Furthermore, much of her time overseas was spent sharing information on HIV/AIDS and malaria awareness and the needs of women.

Madam Speaker, Mrs. Bush has sought no praise or public attention. This is exactly why her accomplishments should be recognized—and perhaps even memorialized to some extent so that future First Ladies can learn from her legacy.

When Mrs. Bush was asked whether she would assume a role by a previous First Lady, she replied that she would define her role as First Lady for herself.

Mrs. Bush's demeanor portrays her as quiet and unassuming. Oftentimes, Madam Speaker, people—male and female—who maintain quiet, unassuming

roles are not seriously embraced. Oftentimes, they are cut adrift or cast aside; not true with Laura Bush.

We wish Mrs. Obama well as she commences her role as our First Lady, while at the same time I want us to favorably recall the 8 years Laura Bush served as our First Lady.

BUDGET—OUR LONG-TERM ECONOMIC PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, we are working to pass this week in both the Senate and the House a budget resolution. It is a long-term economic plan that we are working together with the administration that will mark President Obama's 100th day in service.

The fallout from the failed policies over the last 8 years has made this job even tougher. Let's talk about what has happened over the last 8 years and what exactly President Obama inherited.

A record time during the last 8 years, President Bush—and the Republicans with that—built on a deficit of \$5.8 trillion. When President Obama came into this office, a \$5.8 trillion deficit; when President Bush came in, he had a \$5.6 trillion surplus when you looked at it over this time period.

The national debt doubled, and the amount held by foreign countries of ownership in this country has more than tripled. The smallest rate of job growth in three-quarters of a century. There have been flat wages. And more Americans are living in poverty without health care insurance.

But this isn't anything new to the American people. We have experienced this. We have seen it firsthand. And the

□ 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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