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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

Lord God, as a Nation who believes in Your Divine providence, we have seen Your right hand guide us in the past. Time and time again our Union has been tested by economic threat, civil demonstration, war, natural disaster, misdeeds and negligence of the past, as well as foreign attacks.

During these days, we place our trust in You again. Humbled by the complexity and varied issues that face this Nation, we beg for Your wisdom to guide us, prudence to make good judgments, patience to deal with one another, perseverance toward the goal of justice, and compassion for those most in need.

By these virtues, Lord, manifest Your presence in our midst. This we ask now and 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 Kentucky (Mr. GUTHRIE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GUTHRIE 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.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

EMPLOYER-OWNED LIFE INSURANCE LIMITATION ACT

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Today I told my staff, I have good news and bad news. The bad news is that I had to cancel their health insurance policy. It was just too expensive. But here's the good news. I'm taking out a huge life insurance policy on all of my employees. So if you get sick and die, I told them, Don't worry. I've got you covered.

Now, I didn't tell them that I made the insurance policies payable to me—LUIS GUTIERREZ. I didn't tell them that I'll use the benefits for myself and I'm just going to line my pockets.

Sound ridiculous? Sound wrong? Sound unfair? You're right. It is.

So today I'm introducing the Employer-Owned Life Insurance Limitation Act. All across America, companies take out life insurance policies on their employees. They spend $8 billion a year on these premiums, but the benefits go to the employers—big companies like Winn-Dixie, Wal-Mart, Dow Chemical, Procter & Gamble, and even Disney—and the employees don't even know about it.

In a Nation where millions of full-time workers have no health insurance, corporate America is finding a way to line their pockets with life insurance, profiting from their deaths. Maybe if we prevent companies from betting on the death of their employees, they will invest in the health of their employees.

H1N1 VIRUS

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

Mr. GUTHRIE. As cold and flu season is quickly approaching, media reports in my district and around the country are reporting on the exposure to the H1N1 virus.

I recently met with the Kentucky Pork Producers, who raise concerns that the media and individuals referring to the H1N1 flu virus as the ''swine flu'' is having a negative effect on them.

Because it is referred to as the ''swine flu,'' individuals may think that the H1N1 virus can be caught from eating or handling pork. However, Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack have repeated on various occasions that this is not a food-borne illness, but a respiratory virus.

Secretary Vilsack said recently that the virus should not be called ''swine flu'' because there is no indication that any swine from the United States has been infected, nor is there any significant risk of transmission by eating pork.

Pork and pork products are safe, and H1N1 virus cannot be acquired from eating pork. There are a lot of hard-working families in my district and across the country whose livelihoods are harmed by this misconception.

VICTIMS OF THE TSUNAMI

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

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember those who have lost their lives as result of the recent tsunami in American Samoa and the region and to also offer my condolences on behalf of the people of Guam. I ask that this Congress support our colleague, Congressman FALEOMAVAEGA, to ensure that all of the appropriate assets from the Federal Government are brought to bear to help the Samoan people recover from this disaster.

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I also rise today to remember the 246 Filipino citizens who have lost their lives as a result of flooding caused by Tropical Storm Ketsana. This destructive storm rampaged through the northern Philippines, leaving tens of thousands of people displaced.

Many of my constituents have family members who were affected by this storm. I commend the Filipino community of Guam, who were the first to mobilize our larger Guam community to quickly come together to collect relief items and provide monetary contributions to those affected by this natural disaster.

I commend the efforts of those who are helping to meet the needs of the people of American Samoa, Samoa, Tonga, and the Philippines as they work toward a full recovery from these disasters.

RURAL HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, in the current health care debate we are overlooking access to health care in rural America. For families living in rural towns all across Kansas and America, access to quality health care is often the primary concern. In fact, right now, less than 10 percent of our physicians serve 25 percent of our population.

In order to improve access to quality medical care, we need to start with three basic reforms. First, we should reimburse providers for the full cost of care so rural medical professionals can do their job of curing and healing. Second, we should repay enormous debt incurred through medical school so more young people enter general practice and practice care in smaller towns. Finally, the Federal Government should stop picking winners and losers with its coverage decisions in urban versus rural health care, because in every case, rural health care gets shortchanged.

We should focus on reforms needed to solve the health care crisis in rural Kansas and in rural America, and, in doing so, we will improve health care delivery to the rest of the Nation. Without addressing these exploding costs or recognition that we need to focus on training new practitioners, the access problems plaguing rural America will only get worse.

THE WAY WE GET BY

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

Mr. MICHAUD. I rise today to recognize a very important film called ''The Way We Get By.'' It features dedicated and patriotic Mainers who make sure no soldier passes through Bangor, Maine, without receiving a handshake and a heartfelt thank you.

As part of the President's United We Serve initiative, the USO, Operation Homefront, and HandsOn Network are presenting the film at the Capitol Visitor Center tonight as part of their combined efforts to rally support for volunteer activities for our military families.

Dr. Jill Biden will introduce the film, and Maine filmmakers Aron Gaudet and Gita Pullapilly, along with several of the troop greeters, will discuss the film after the screening. ''The Way We Get By'' has been inspiring audiences across the country and will air on PBS on Veterans Day.

We Mainers are proud of our troop greeters and their profound contribution to our many soldiers.

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IRAN IS GOING NUCLEAR

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Iran's rogue regime is getting closer and closer to going nuclear. And if we want to get their attention, we have to do something real: sanction Iran's gasoline imports. That's where Ahmadinejad is vulnerable. The tiny tyrant doesn't have enough oil refineries, and Iran imports 40 percent of its gasoline. We must make it pretty painful to be Iran's gasoline supplier. If we're waiting on the United Nations, that's not going to happen. Russia and Iran are just too cozy, and Russia will probably veto any sanctions. Also, Ahmadinejad's twin terrorist tyrant Moammar Qaddafi and the Libyans have a temporary seat on the Security Council. Libya will never vote to sanction their terrorist buddies. U.N. sanctions are a hapless illusion.

While the world talks, Iran test-fires missiles that could hit Israel, and they soon will have missiles that could hit Europe and the United States. Iran is the number one supplier of terrorism worldwide. A nuclear Iran is not an option. Peace-loving nations should sanction Iran's gasoline imports and encourage the Iranian people to change their reckless regime.

And that's just the way it is.

MARIANAS CULTURAL HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, remaining mindful of the heritage and tradition inherited from past generations is important to my people. Equally important is that we pass on these traditions to the generations that come after. For that reason, I rise today in recognition of Marianas Cultural Heritage Month from September 16 to October 12, 2009.

During this period, the people of the Northern Mariana Islands are actively demonstrating such local traditions as respect for our elders, indigenous methods for healing, the preparation of local foods, the wearing of traditional attire, the practice of sharing goods among neighbors and, of course, the remarkable navigational skills of our people, epitomized by Chief Aghurubw.

By demonstrating these traditions, we impart our knowledge of the legends and lore of our forefathers to future generations so they, in turn, will be able to transmit the unique culture and heritage of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands. I encourage my colleagues to learn about us and to appreciate the differences that make us unique and the commonalities that bind us.

MORE TROOPS ARE NEEDED IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. As a former prisoner of war in Vietnam, I learned a lot about how not to fight a war. Specifically, you cannot run a war from the White House and win. General McChrystal declared that more troops are needed in Afghanistan. Meanwhile, this administration has backpedaled on its pledge to the region and now is dragging its heels on the general's request. What must our young men and women in uniform think? How must their loved ones back home feel? The administration's waiting game torpedoes troop morale and begs mission failure.

Congress needs to hear directly from General McChrystal to ensure political motivations in Washington don't override the needs of our commanders and our troops. For America, ignoring the top general's request for more troops is not the way to run and win a war.

HEALTH CARE INNOVATION

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

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Finding a uniquely American solution to our Nation's health care challenges means expanding health access to health coverage, containing costs, improving quality, and achieving better health outcomes. To reach these goals, we have to be open to new ways to bridge the current system's fragmentation, encourage coordination, and promote collaboration.

As part of health care reform, we are demanding greater quality and value. We should challenge our health care providers and civic leaders around the country to implement delivery system innovations that work for their communities. We should push them to work together and take responsibility for the health of people in their area across a full spectrum of health services. They can best determine how to