

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas has 27 minutes remaining.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. GRAYSON, I assure you, you will have ample time.

I want to conclude with this: I believe that this is a great country. Notwithstanding all that I have explained about Black history, this is a great country, and I love my country. I believe that this is a country that has allowed me privileges and opportunities that I probably could not have enjoyed in another place. So let me share this brief vignette with you.

I was not born into riches, obviously, based upon the stories that I have told, but from very poor parents. My father could neither read nor write.

I remember going to work with my father one day. I have no idea as to why I was there. My father was a mechanic's helper. He was not a mechanic. He was a helper. He was the person who would clean up the wet spot on the floor. He was the person who would fetch the tools and do the things that were required that many people would not do. And I heard them address my father by a name that I was not familiar with. They called him "Secretary." And as any child would, I suppose, I made an inquiry: Why do they call you Secretary? He explained to me that they were making fun of him, that they were aware that he could not read and that he could not write, and they were making fun of him.

I said: Well, why would you do this? Why would you let them make fun of you like this? Why would you let them do this to you?

It hurt as a young child to see your father being made fun of because he could not read and he could not write.

By the way, it was not his choice. It wasn't his choice to be a person who could not read or write.

But my father's answer is really what this story is all about. When I said to him: Why would you let them do this to you? He said to me, after having told me many more things, but he said to me: I do it, and I accept it because I want you to be able to read and write.

And isn't it wonderful that the son of a secretary can now stand in the well of the House of Representatives in the United States of America and read and write laws for the United States of America?

I thank you for the time, Mr. Speaker. I am grateful to all who made it possible for us to have this hour. And I believe that ours is the best country in the world. I believe that it really doesn't get much better than the United States of America. There are things that we need to do and things that we need to correct. But on a bad day, it is good to live in the USA. On a bad day, when your dog that you reared from a pup wants to bite you, on a bad day when your spouse wants to desert you, if you have to have your dog bite you and your spouse desert you, have it happen in the United States of America.

God bless you, and I yield to Mr. GRAYSON.

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, today is a sad anniversary. Twenty years ago today, the brilliant comedian, Bill Hicks, died of cancer at the age of 32. Hicks' comedy has been an inspiration to me and millions of others. He has been voted the fourth greatest stand-up comedian of all time. And if Hicks were alive to hear that, he would complain bitterly about losing out to Gandhi, Einstein, and Stalin.

In honor of Bill Hicks, I would like to try to yield this platform to him. This is how Bill Hicks ended his own performances. He would say to the audience:

You have been fantastic. I hope you have enjoyed the show. There is a point to my act. Is there a point to my act? Let's find a point. I would say the point of my act—and I have to—but the point is this:

The world is a ride like an amusement park. And when you choose to go on it, you think it is real because that is how powerful our minds are. And the ride goes up and down, and it goes round and round. It has thrills and chills, and it is very brightly colored, and it is very loud and it is fun. For a while.

Some people have been on the ride for a long time, and they begin to question: "Is it real or is it a ride?" And other people, they have remembered, and they come back to us, and they say: "Hey, don't worry. Don't be afraid, ever. Because it is just a ride." And we kill those people. We kill those people.

We tell them: "Shut him up. We have a lot invested in this ride. Shut him up. Look at the furrows of worry. Look at my big bank account and my family. This has to be real."

This can't be just be a ride. But it is just a ride. And we always kill those good guys who try to tell us that it is just a ride. Have you ever noticed that? And we let the demons run amok.

But it doesn't matter because it is just a ride, and we can change it any time we want. It is only a choice. No effort. No worry. No job. No savings and money. It is just a ride.

It is a choice, right now, between fear and love. The eyes of fear want you to put bigger locks on your doors and buy guns and close yourself off. The eyes of love instead see all of us as one.

Here is what we can do to change the world right now into a better ride. Take all the money that we spend on weapons and defense each year and, instead, spend it on feeding, clothing, and educating the poor of this world which we could do many times over—not just one human being, but all of us, no one excluded. And then we can explore space together, both inner and outer, forever in peace.

Thank you very much. You have been great. I hope you enjoyed it. You are fantastic. Thank you very much.

Bill Hicks wrote his own eulogy, and that was how he ended his act. This is what he said in his own final words in his own eulogy:

I left here in love, in laughter, and in truth. And wherever truth, love, and laughter abide, I am there in spirit.

Rest in peace, Bill Hicks.  
Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. I yield back.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. WESTMORELAND (at the request of Mr. CANTOR) for today after 2:30 p.m. on account of attending a visitation for a funeral.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 39 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, February 26, 2014, at 10 a.m. for morning-hour debate.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XIV, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

4812. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of General Keith B. Alexander, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4813. A letter from the Acting Under Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting a letter on the approved retirement of Lieutenant General William N. Phillips, United States Army, and his advancement on the retired list in the grade of lieutenant general; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4814. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the Department's report on assistance provided for sporting events during calendar year 2013; to the Committee on Armed Services.

4815. A letter from the Chairman and President, Export-Import Bank, transmitting a report on transactions involving U.S. exports to Kenya Airways of Nairobi, Kenya; to the Committee on Financial Services.

4816. A letter from the Secretary, Department of Health and Human Services, transmitting a report entitled, "The Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act (CHIPRA) Mandated Evaluation of Express Lane Eligibility: Final Findings"; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4817. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Acetochlor; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0829; FRL-9904-19] received January 22, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4818. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Delaware; Attainment Plan for the Philadelphia-Wilmington, Pennsylvania-New Jersey-Delaware Nonattainment Area for the 1997 Annual Fine Particulate Matter Standard; Correction [EPA-R03-OAR-2010-0141; 9905-88-Region 3] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4819. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Texas; Approval of Texas Motor Vehicle Rule Revisions [EPA-R06-OAR-2006-0885; FRL-9906-03-Region 6] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4820. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Air Quality Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Administrative Code-Permit; New and Modified Sources [EPA-R08-OAR-2013-0395; FRL-9904-24-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4821. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of Implementation Plans; Utah; Revisions to Utah Rule R307-107; General Requirements; Breakdown [EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0746; FRL-9902-49-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4822. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Approval and Promulgation of State Implementation Plans; Utah; Prevention of Significant Deterioration; Greenhouse Gas Permitting Authority and Tailoring Rule [EPA-R08-OAR-2012-0300; FRL-9903-27-Region 8] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4823. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Cyantraniliprole; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2011-0668; FRL-9388-7] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4824. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Diflubenzuron; Pesticide Tolerances [EPA-HQ-OPP-2012-0515; FRL-9904-27] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4825. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — Significant New Use Rule on Certain Chemical Substances [EPA-HQ-OPPT-2012-0182; FRL-9399-1] (RIN: 2070-AJ00) received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4826. A letter from the Director, Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule — alpha-Alkyl-w-Hydroxypropyl (Oxypropylene) and/or Poly (Oxyethylene) Polymers Where the Alkyl Chain Contains a Minimum of Six Carbons etc.; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance [EPA-HQ-OPP-2013-0210; FRL-9394-2] received January 30, 2014, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

4827. A letter from the Director, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, transmitting the Agency's reports containing the September 30, 2013, status of loans and guarantees issued under Section 25(a)(11) of the Arms Export Control Act; to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

4828. A letter from the Director, National Legislative Division, American Legion, transmitting the financial statement and independent audit of The American Legion, proceedings of the 95th Annual National Convention of the American Legion, held in Houston, Texas from August 23 — August 29, 2013, and a report on the Organization's activities for the year preceding the Convention; (H. Doc. No. 113—93); to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and ordered to be printed.

4829. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Legislative Affairs, Department of State,

transmitting a semi-annual report to Congress on the continued compliance of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan with the Trade Act's freedom of emigration provisions, as required under the Jackson-Vanik Amendment; to the Committee on Ways and Means.

4830. A letter from the Secretary, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a report concerning the operations and status of the Government Securities Investment Fund (G-Fund) of the Federal Employees Retirement System during the debt issuance suspension period; jointly to the Committees on Oversight and Government Reform and Ways and Means.

4831. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of the Treasury, transmitting a report covering the operation and status of the relevant federal fund accounts; jointly to the Committees on Ways and Means and Oversight and Government Reform.

#### REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Ms. FOXX: Committee on Rules. House Resolution 492. Resolution providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 899) to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes (Rept. 113-362). Referred to the House Calendar.

#### PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XII, public bills and resolutions of the following titles were introduced and severally referred, as follows:

By Mr. BECERRA (for himself, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. SCHWARTZ, and Mr. CROWLEY):

H.R. 4090. A bill to amend title II of the Social Security Act to improve the Social Security Administration's ability to fight fraud, prevent errors, and protect the Social Security Trust Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Ways and Means, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. POE of Texas:

H.R. 4091. A bill to authorize Members of Congress to bring an action for declaratory and injunctive relief in response to a written statement by the President or any other official in the executive branch directing officials of the executive branch to not enforce a provision of law; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. CARTWRIGHT (for himself, Mr. WELCH, Mr. SIRES, Ms. SHEA-PORTER, Mr. HOLT, Mr. PETERS of California, Mr. LOEBSACK, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. PRICE of North Carolina, Mr. POCAN, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. SABLAN, and Mr. HONDA):

H.R. 4092. A bill to amend the Energy Policy and Conservation Act to establish the Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy as the lead Federal agency for coordinating Federal, State, and local assistance provided to promote the energy retrofitting

of schools; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4093. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to raise the prime and subcontract goals, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. GRAVES of Missouri:

H.R. 4094. A bill to direct the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to develop and implement a plan to improve the quality of data reported on bundled and consolidated contracts, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4095. A bill to increase, effective as of December 1, 2014, the rates of compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for the survivors of certain disabled veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. RUNYAN (for himself and Ms. TITUS):

H.R. 4096. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to provide for annual cost-of-living adjustments to be made automatically by law each year in the rates of disability compensation for veterans with service-connected disabilities and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation for survivors of certain service-connected disabled veterans; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. McDERMOTT:

H.R. 4097. A bill to ensure that proper information gathering and planning are undertaken to secure the preservation and recovery of the salmon and steelhead of the Columbia River Basin in a manner that protects and enhances local communities, ensures effective expenditure of Federal resources, and maintains reasonably priced, reliable power, to direct the Secretary of Commerce to seek scientific analysis of Federal efforts to restore salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and in addition to the Committees on Natural Resources, and Energy and Commerce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mrs. BLACKBURN (for herself, Mr. FLEISCHMANN, Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee, Mr. DESJARLAIS, Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky, Mrs. BLACK, Mr. FINCHER, Mr. BARR, Mr. RAHALL, and Mr. ROE of Tennessee):

H.R. 4098. A bill to amend the Horse Protection Act to provide increased protection for horses participating in shows, exhibitions, or sales, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

By Mr. BRALEY of Iowa:

H.R. 4099. A bill to make supplemental appropriations for fiscal year 2014 for the tree and wood pests activities of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and for certain forest health management and urban and community forestry activities of the Forest Service; to the Committee on Appropriations, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.

By Mr. COTTON (for himself, Mr. GRAVES of Missouri, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, Mr. GRIFFIN of Arkansas, Mr. WOMACK, Mr. BROUN of Georgia, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, and Mr. CRAWFORD):