PRAYER

Reverend Dr. Jim Birchfield, First Presbyterian Church, Houston, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for the gift of this new day and for the promise that You are with us. Thank You for Your grace, Your love, and the many blessings that are ours through You.

Forgive us for falling short of Your grace and Your call upon our lives, and help us to walk humbly, serve graciously, and lead righteously.

Guide this body today in the work that You have called them to. Grant strength, wisdom, courage, and compassion to the leadership and to each Member of this House, the Senate, our President, and all the leaders of our government.

Finally, we pray for our Nation. Grant us peace and unity. Call out the best in us, and help us to care for and serve the least of those among us.

Bless these leaders, that they might be a blessing to the world.

To Your glory, Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL 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.

WELCOMING REVEREND DR. JIM BIRCHFIELD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KENNEDY) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to be here today to watch my father-in-law, the Reverend Dr. Jim Birchfield, speak in the House this afternoon.

Reverend Dr. Jim Birchfield is a man whom I have known over the past nearly decade that I have known my wife and her family. They are here with us in the gallery this afternoon. He is a man of utmost integrity who has devoted his life to, as he said, serving those among us that are most in need.

Through his ministry at First Presbyterian Church and, prior to that, in Newport Beach, California, and the Greater Los Angeles area, he and his family have consistently dedicated themselves to spreading the Word of God and making sure that we, as a community and a country, remain focused on those who need our help most.

He has spread that Word throughout the entire world, from Sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt, and Malawi, to recent trips to Israel, and literally the world over, as he continues to expand his ministry and touch those who are in need of additional services.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful today to be with my father-in-law, Reverend Dr. Birchfield, and to have this moment to share with him and his family this morning.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING ACT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, under the leadership of Senator CORNYN and Senator WYDEN, the Senate has unanimously passed the bipartisan Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act. This bill will help stop modern-day slavery here in America. The House has passed a similar bill under the sponsorship of CAROLYN MALONEY and myself.

We have acknowledged international human trafficking for years. Now, we acknowledge and put sufficient resources behind the fight against the buying and selling of human beings. Slavery in America is not going to be tolerated.

The bill penalizes traffickers and buyers. Mr. Speaker, buyers have escaped the long arm of the law for too long. The bill also treats trafficking victims as victims and not criminals.

We can no longer deny the scourge of rape and abuse of our children. I strongly encourage the House leadership to immediately bring up the Senate compromise, Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act, for a vote.

Victims are people, too. Let it be known that America's kids are not for sale, and woe be to anyone that sells them or buys them in the marketplace of slavery.

And that is just the way it is.

BLACK APRIL

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

Mr. LOWENTHAL. Mr. Speaker, 40 years ago, the fall of Saigon ended the war in Vietnam and began the journey for hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese who were forced to flee their land for foreign shores like America.

This April, we remember those Vietnamese, Americans, and their allies who lost their lives in Vietnam and for the many thousands of boat people who perished while fleeing Vietnam on the ''journey to freedom.''

Today, in communities throughout our Nation, Vietnamese Americans contribute daily to the tapestry that we call American life.

On this 40th anniversary of Black April, we also cannot forget the continuing struggle in Vietnam for democracy, freedom, and basic human rights.

Today, I am introducing a resolution commemorating this historic event, remembering those who gave their lives, and honoring the Vietnamese community in the United States.

CLEAN POWER PLAN IN MINNESOTA

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise awareness about the questionable requirements the State of Minnesota has been given by the Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan.

The Clean Power Plan mandates that Minnesota reduce carbon emissions for power plants by 41 percent by the year 2030, while requiring lower reductions in other States. The EPA has failed to recognize and credit Minnesota for already decreasing its emissions by 13 percent between 2005 and 2011.

Not only is this plan patently unfair to Minnesotans, but it will hurt consumers across our Nation. Electricity prices will increase for many businesses and families, disproportionately impacting those who are already struggling to make ends meet.

Additionally, according to the Cato Institute, the plan will only reduce the average worldwide temperature by about two-hundredths of a degree Celsius, and that will take almost 100 years.

I encourage the EPA to reconsider the Clean Power Plan, while keeping in mind the work many States have already done on their own to reduce emissions.

TRIBUTE TO EARL HARGROVE

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I will place a statement into the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD paying tribute to the memory of my dear friend, Earl Hargrove, who passed earlier this month.

Earl was a very respected figure in Maryland's Fifth District; in Maryland; and, indeed, nationally. He built a successful specialty decorations and event planning business and served our Nation in the Marine Corps.

Everyone has seen Earl Hargrove's work in America because he did many of the inaugural floats for our Presidents; so when you watched television, you were watching the work of Earl Hargrove, his family, and coworkers.

I am honored to celebrate his life and legacy today, and I hope my colleagues will join me in offering condolences to Earl's wife of six decades, Gloria Love