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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Rabbi Ronald D. Gerson, Congregation Children of Israel, Athens, Georgia, offered the following prayer:

O Lord, Ruler of our Nation and all nations, gathered in this hallowed Chamber, the indomitable spirit of Columbus, remembered this week, should move both legislators and constituents. It reminds us how the quality of exploration has crowned our country's past and emboldened its future with hope, enriched by the monumental vision of our Founding Fathers who were inspired by Thy holy word.

May we in this land continue our exploration. May we continue to reach new destinations of justice and peace in our Nation and in the world.

Heavenly Father, as we strive to new horizons in our country's glory, guide us through the admonition of the prophet Mica to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

Mr. LAMPSON 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. There will be 15 one-minutes on each side.

WELCOMING RABBI RONALD D. GERSON, GUEST CHAPLAIN

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

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, the prayer this morning was offered by Rabbi Ronald D. Gerson, who comes to us today from my district in Athens, Georgia, the largest city in the Eleventh District of Georgia. Rabbi Gerson has been a rabbi for a quarter of a century and now serves at Congregation Children of Israel in Athens, Georgia. I am delighted to introduce him to the House of Representatives and thank him for his inspiring words of prayer for today's session.

Rabbi Gerson has devoted his life to public and spiritual service, and I was honored to first meet Rabbi Gerson when I visited his congregation a couple of years ago. I want to also recognize his wife and daughter and brother-in-law who are visiting today also, and I have been informed that Rabbi Gerson's mother, who lives in California, is probably watching her son at the early hour of 7 a.m. on the West Coast.

His knowledge of the tradition of faith and his ability to share his understanding of it with others has found an appreciative audience in Georgia and today across the country and the world as he carries the eternal message to others. I am proud to share the floor with Rabbi Gerson because of his religious convictions, his commitment to the service of others, and his faithful devotion to his congregation. I join all my colleagues in the House in thanking our distinguished guest chaplain for bringing us an inspirational message to commence this day of the House session.

SAVE AMERICA'S SCHOOLS FROM VIOLENCE

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

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, all of us are duly concerned about the alarming rise in school violence, and I am pleased to report that the American Medical Association Alliance in conjunction with the New York State Medical Society is resolved to do something important about it. Today, communities throughout our Nation are joining in announcing this new program, Save America's Schools From Violence, which recognizes that guns in the playground are only a part of the problem. Solutions such as turning off violent television programs, ignoring music with violent or provocative lyrics, avoiding violent videos and computer games and engaging in constructive play will be encouraged throughout this 1-year initiative.

School violence takes many forms, from name calling, to pushing, to bullying. Over 3 million crimes were committed against teenagers in schools in 1996 including robbery, theft, vandalism, rape, sexual battery, and physical attacks. The American Medical Association Alliance's goal is to make our schools a safe place for our children to learn to play and grow by sending the positive message that violence in our schools is unacceptable.

COMMENDATION OF DR. BERNARD MILSTEIN

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

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago a person of vision saw a way to improve the sight of many residents. With his foresight and dedication the Gulf Coast branch of Prevent Blindness

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