

Speaker Pro-tempore of the Florida House of Representatives, Sandra Murman from Tampa, Florida, and it goes like this:

"When I hear the date September 11, images immediately flood my mind. I see the plane hit the second tower. I see the Pentagon on fire and I can hear the sickening crunch as the towers fall while throngs of people run to escape the thick gray cloud. I also remember the utter horror I felt when I realized this was not simply one plane off course but rather a planned attack. This was our generation's Pearl Harbor. But unlike Pearl Harbor, terrorists hijacked planes full of innocent civilians and crashed those planes into buildings filled with more innocent civilians. On that day we saw the face and felt the hand of evil, but we also saw extraordinary goodness through the lives of heroic Americans in Washington, New York, and a Pennsylvania field.

"As we gather here to mark the one-year anniversary of the attack, I would like to share my thoughts on what I have learned since last September," she writes.

"Lesson one: I have been reminded that life is short and precious. That argument with a spouse, the concern over which car to purchase on September 10, suddenly seemed so petty after the attacks. As I evaluated my own life, I realized what mattered most was my relationship with God, my family, loved ones and community. Everything I do now needs to have meaning, purpose, and positively impact those around me.

"Lesson two: Before September 11 we knew we had enemies and lived in a dangerous world, but September 11 we discovered that organized groups of terrorists had both the desire and the ability to create devastation within our country. We can no longer take this security for granted. There is our new reality.

"Lesson three: On September 11 America showed that we are still a nation of heroes. Incredible courage was shown by the New York City firefighters who slapped on their gear and charged into the burning buildings to help victims escape. New York lost 343 of its finest that day. Hundreds of workers in the World Trade Center helped one another escape. I remembered hearing the story of one man who, instead of escaping Tower Two, chose to remain behind with a disabled colleague who could not make it down the stairs. They both perished that day. And, of course, we all heard the story of Flight 93, those extraordinary men and women who said their good-byes to their loved ones, prayed the Lord's Prayer, and with the words of 'Let's roll,' charged the cockpit to save countless lives in Washington, D.C.

"In an instant these ordinary Americans became legends. All the sacrifices on September 11 have left us speechless with gratitude.

"Lesson four: We have the responsibility to ensure that the lives lost on

September 11 were not in vain. We were attacked because of who we are. The principles on which our country was founded, freedom, equality and the dignity of the individual, are a threat to Islamic extremists. They view open, democratic societies as the enemy and want to create a society where there is no religious freedom and no civil liberty. As defenders of liberty we stand in their way.

"At this very moment our servicemen and women are defending the cause of freedom throughout the world. Here on the home front we, too, have a responsibility. Our defense involves upholding the values of America. We have a civic duty to participate in our democratic institutions. We have a responsibility to instill in our children a love of liberty, a love of country, the difference between right and wrong and the willingness to make sacrifices in this ongoing struggle between freedom and tyranny.

"Let me close by reading President Bush's September 20th speech to the Nation:

"Great harm has been done to us. We have suffered great loss. And in our grief and anger we have found our mission and our moment. Freedom and fear are at war. The advance of human freedom, the great achievement of our time, and the great hope of every time, now depends on us. Our Nation, this generation, will lift the dark threat of violence from our people and our future. We will rally the world to this cause by our efforts, by our courage. We will not tire. We will not falter. We will not fail.

"Thank you. May God bless you all."

Sandra Murman, majority leader of the Florida House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCGOVERN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

POLITICAL SPEECHES IN CHURCHES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of Jan-

uary 3, 2001, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, it is kind of ironic that I would be following the gentleman from Florida (Mr. FOLEY) as he was paying tribute to those who have lost their lives and their families, and then he talked about our military who today are in Afghanistan defending the freedoms that we all enjoy, and our way of life.

□ 1300

My purpose today in asking for this time is that I have put in legislation, House bill 2357. It is called the Houses of Worship Political Speech Protection Act. I believe that the strength of this country depends on our spiritual leaders having the freedom to talk about issues of the day, whether they be the moral issues of the day or the biblical issues of the day or the political issues of the day, quite frankly.

When I started looking into this legislation and doing the research and the history on why there was a law in the Tax Code that would somehow prevent certain political speech, and the more I looked into it, the more concerned I became because I believe sincerely that the first amendment right of all the American people and all the groups in this country, I mean, must be protected and has been for years and years by men and women who have served this Nation and many who gave their lives for America.

As I looked into why there was some type of political speech restriction on our churches and synagogues and mosques, I found out that in 1954, Lyndon Baines Johnson, United States Senator from Texas, and actually the majority leader of the Senate, had the H.L. Hunt family opposed to his reelection. At the time, the H.L. Hunt family had two think tanks that were conservative in nature and they were not churches, but they were 501(c)(3)-type status.

What Mr. Johnson did on the Senate side, he introduced an amendment to a revenue bill that was never debated. The amendment was never debated, and the Republican minority at that time accepted the Johnson amendment on what they call "unanimous consent," or UC. Basically, what the Johnson amendment did was to put a gag order on any type of political speech by a preacher or priest or rabbi; and I would like to explain that just a little bit for practical reasons.

It happened in the 3rd District of North Carolina, which I have the privilege to represent, that a priest in a Catholic church was asked by a parishioner, a friend of mine named Jerry Schill, if the priest would just say at the end of the homily, or the sermon, on Sunday that George Bush is pro-life, not really anything more than that, but just that one statement. The priest