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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook, Believers' Christian Fellowship Church, New York, New York, offered the following prayer:

Our God and our Creator, we come to You this day, rejoicing in our hearts for life and life more abundant. We ask You to guide us throughout this day, throughout all of our proceedings, that we may go forth with purpose, passion, and perseverance, representing the people who have both elected and put their trust in us. Please also bless our families as we are absent from them. Let no hurt, harm, nor danger come their way this day. May we now place our trust in You.

We ask also, God, that You keep ever before us our mission, our missives, and keep our minds focused, clear, and convicted to be servants as we represent our Nation, the United States of America.

Thank You for this opportunity to serve. Thank You for Your grace. Thank You for Your wisdom. Thank You for the honor and privilege to serve.

Bless also those amongst us who are candidates for office. Give them strength and keep them grounded in Thee. We also ask, O God, that You bless not only us, but those around this world, especially those who live in fear, poverty, and with injustice. May what we say and do make a difference that we may be a light to this world, as You shine through us.

This is our prayer in Your name and for Your sake. 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 New York (Mr. TOWNS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. TOWNS 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.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2429. An act to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide an exception to the 60-day limit on Medicare reciprocal billing arrangements between two physicians during the period in which one of the physicians is ordered to active duty as a member of a reserve component of the Armed Forces.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a concurrent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 42. Concurrent resolution recognizing the need to pursue research into the causes, treatment, and eventual cure for idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis, supporting the designation of a National Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis Awareness Week, and for other purposes.

WELCOMING DR. SUZAN JOHNSON COOK

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

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Rev. Dr. Suzan Johnson Cook. Rev. Cook is the pastor at the Believers' Christian Fellowship Church, which she founded in 1996 after serving as pastor of the Mariners' Temple Baptist Church in downtown Man-

hattan for 13 years. In 2002, Rev. Cook became the first woman elected president of the 10,000-member Hampton, Virginia, University Ministers Conference, which represents all the historically African American denominations. Her list of other "firsts" includes: first woman appointed Chaplain of the New York Police Department and the first female baptist minister from the Bronx to receive a White House fellowship.

A woman of promise, passion, diligence, and determination, Rev. Cook is the author of eight successful books. In 1997 Rev. Cook was featured by Ebony Magazine as one of the Nation's top 15 women in ministry.

Rev. Cook has toured nationally with Bishop T.D. Jakes and the "God's Leading Ladies Conference." Her motto is "If I can help somebody, then my living is not in vain."

A faculty member and graduate of Harvard University, she also received a doctorate of ministry degree from Union Theological Seminary, a master of divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary, and a master of arts degree from Columbia University.

Rev. Cook is married to Ronald Cook, and they reside in New York City with their two sons.

Dr. Cook is a powerful orator and was recently described in the New York Times as "Billy Graham and Oprah rolled into one." Her mentoring and leadership skills have now charged her to form The Woman in Ministry International Summit, which supports and advocates for women church leaders.

Madam Speaker, I would like to recognize this magnificent minister, scholar, and dynamic leader, and urge my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to this outstanding member of the clergy.

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 one-minute speeches on each side.

THE FARM BILL

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, we will face a very stark choice on the farm bill this week. The hollow claims of reform are exposed by the fact that it hardly saves any money at all and retains the complex system with special provisions to avoid what we say we want to do: concentrate on our family farms.

It preserves a system where five commodities, rice, cotton, wheat, soy beans, and corn, will continue to claim most of the money and dominate our farm policy. It is perverse because it continues to enrich those experts at farming the taxpayer while continuing to squeeze out the family farmers, driving up land prices and giving the big guys a competitive advantage. That is why the overwhelming majority of farmers favor a strict cap of \$250,000 a year. You can ask independent experts, not lobbyists and associate members. Ask your own farmers.

Let's amend the committee bill, currently the least that can be done, with a vote for a series of amendments that will strengthen it and provide the sort of support our farmers deserve.

INVITE ILLEGALS TO NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, New Haven, Connecticut, has become exactly that: a new haven for illegal immigrants.

The city will be granting illegals an ID card that will allow them to access city services, such as parks, the library, and the ability to open bank accounts. This ID card for illegals will become the first of its kind in our Nation issued by a city.

Even though the American public is opposed to free-pass amnesty, this city doesn't understand it is still against the law to be in the United States illegally.

But New Haven doesn't seem to care. They have already recruited banks that will allow use of these cards. Yale Law School volunteered free legal services. All in the name of helping people get away with breaking the law.

New Haven, Connecticut, flaunts its encouragement of illegal entry. So since the Feds won't adequately enforce immigration laws and don't seem to know what to do with illegals, let's just invite all illegals to go to New Haven, Connecticut, where the city wants to have a safe sanctuary for them.

Mr. Speaker, there should be consequences for cities like New Haven,

Connecticut, that are bastions for illegals. Cities that openly promote violations of Federal law should lose Federal funds.

And that's just the way it is.

COMBAT TERRORISM, REDEPLOY FROM IRAQ

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, the National Intelligence Estimate makes it clear that the United States confronts grave challenges to our national security. Al Qaeda grows stronger with each passing day and remains intent on inflicting harm on the American people and others around the world.

The NIE confirms what many of us in this Chamber already know: the war in Iraq has stretched resources thin and continues to distract from the global war on terror. It is nearly 5 years since President Bush proclaimed "mission accomplished." In that time, over 3,600 Americans have lost their lives and 26,000 more have been wounded. Despite the courageous efforts of our men and women in uniform, Iraq today is a distraction from our mission to destroy the al Qaeda network. How many more lives must be lost until the President and our colleagues realize that we must change course?

Mr. Speaker, around the world right now, our brave troops are fighting to protect this country and win this war. If we are going to prosecute the war to the best of our ability, it is time to face facts and reevaluate our strategy and begin a gradual redeployment of our troops.

SUCCESS FOR BULGARIA AND LIBYA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, after serving nearly 8 years in a Libyan prison, five Bulgarian nurses yesterday were joyously released home to Sofia, Bulgaria, escorted by Cecilia Sarkozy, wife of the President of France, America's first ally. These nurses and a Palestinian doctor were sadly sentenced to life in prison for allegedly contaminating children with the AIDS virus.

This successful outcome could not have been achieved without the diligent efforts of the state of Qatar; the European Union; and the President of the French Republic, Nicolas Sarkozy. I commend their efforts to reach a peaceful result with Libya. This is positive for the people of Libya and the people of Bulgaria. This is a crucial achievement of extraordinary advances for North Africa and Southeast Europe, who will be partners with America.

As the co-Chair of the Congressional Bulgaria Caucus along with Congress-

woman TAUSCHER of California, it is my privilege to work with Ambassador Elena Poptodorova. God bless the nurses of Bulgaria.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th and the terrorist attack on Glasgow Airport.

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHAMP ACT SHOULD RECEIVE BIPARTISAN SUPPORT IN HOUSE

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday House Democrats introduced legislation that will provide additional low-income children with health insurance coverage they need and deserve. The Children's Health and Medicare Protection, or CHAMP, Act would reauthorize an extremely effective State Children's Health Insurance Program, known to many as the SCHIP program, which will expire September 30 if Congress does not act.

If SCHIP is allowed to expire, millions of our American children could lose their health insurance. In a letter issued last weekend, bipartisan Governors at the National Governors Association meeting called for urgent action to reauthorize SCHIP. They know, as do Democrats in Congress, that this program is vital for ensuring children in low-income families to have better access to health care. That is why passing the CHAMP Act is so important.

Mr. Speaker, SCHIP was created almost 10 years ago by this Congress with bipartisan support and now enjoys the support of many Governors across the other aisle. I hope Republicans in this body will listen to their gubernatorial colleagues and join us in passing the new CHAMP Act.

THE NEW STRATEGY; IRAQ IS WORKING

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

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, traveling to Iraq this past weekend to see firsthand how the surge is working, I really expected the worst. Instead, I am very encouraged.

Communities all across Iraq are turning against al Qaeda and working with Iraqi and coalition forces to take back their cities. Half of Baghdad is no longer safe for insurgents. Al Qaeda is not down and out but clearly back on its heels, rejected by the very communities and religious leaders it claims to fight for.

Now make no mistake, there are still serious challenges, including high-profile bombings, the need for Iraq's Government to resolve key issues now, and Iran's continued support for terrorism. But I am convinced the new strategy is working, and we have impressive leaders and impressive troops in place to see even more progress.