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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

Chaplain Paul L. Sherouse, Wing Chaplain, Andrews Air Force Base, Air Force District of Washington, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, our gracious heavenly Father, we pause before the business of our Nation to remember that You have granted us a unique role at this moment in history.

Blessed with government committed to preserving individual freedoms; an abundance of natural resources that inspire our industry; and educational opportunities that have resulted in scientific and technological achievements, we are the most powerful and wealthiest nation on Earth. Grant us wisdom to use these gifts in service to our country and our world.

We give You special thanks for the Library of Congress, established 208 years ago today. May its example of research and scholarship continue to be an example for all. Send Your holy angels to watch over our military. Inspire their courage, protect them from danger, grant success to their missions and keep their families safe and secure in their absence; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, my Savior. 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 California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic 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 a bill and agreed to a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2324. An act to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) to enhance the Offices of the Inspectors General, to create a Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, and for other purposes.

S. Con. Res. 77. Concurrent resolution supporting the goals and ideals of National Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month 2008.

WELCOMING CHAPLAIN PAUL L. SHEROUSE

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GONZALEZ) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Madam Speaker, it is my honor and privilege to welcome Lieutenant Colonel Paul L. Sherouse this morning as he opened the United States House of Representatives with a prayer as our guest chaplain. Lieutenant Colonel Sherouse is a decorated member of the United States Air Force and has been honored with the Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Air Force Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Southwest Asia Service Medal, and the Air Force Achievement Medal.

He is the Wing Chaplain at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland and is endorsed by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Previously, Lieutenant Colonel Sherouse was on assignment in Baghdad, Iraq, in July 2003. As he prepares for his latest deployment to Kuwait on May 3, 2008, we wish him the best and

are honored to have him here with us this morning. On behalf of my constituents in San Antonio and the U.S. House of Representatives, we thank him and his family, including his wife, Pamela, and their children, Arynne and Oliver, for his honorable service to our country.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to five further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE AUTHORIZATION ACT

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

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Madam Speaker, every day and every night firefighters, police officers, and other first responders keep our communities safe and are ready to respond to emergencies as they arise.

Among all of the dedicated first responders in our cities and towns, several local agencies have taken their commitment a step further by sponsoring Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces. There are 28 Urban Search and Rescue Task Forces around the country, including one in my own district, sponsored by the Orange County Fire Authority.

These task forces stand ready to respond to natural disasters like earthquakes and hurricanes, and to terrorist attacks. For example, FEMA deployed 25 of the 28 on 9/11, and 28 of the 28 task forces to Hurricane Katrina.

Despite the fact that these task forces are deployed by FEMA, they

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have not been authorized by the Congress and as a result, the task force members are not eligible for Federal disability or death benefits if they are injured while federally deployed.

I have introduced H.R. 4183, the National Urban Search and Rescue Response System Act of 2007, which could give them the protections that they deserve. I hope all Members will join me in moving this legislation forward.

DENTON, TEXAS

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Denton County, Texas.

I grew up in Denton, a town where a mere 160 years ago there were more cattle than people. In fact, when my parents moved to the area in 1951, the town of Denton was a city of 20,000. Today it is well over 100,000 and the county is well over 400,000.

Denton is not the biggest county in America, but as long as I can remember, it is the kind of place where you knew the mayor, the local shop owners, the bank tellers, or the manager of the local grocery store. The fabric of the community was in the businesses that helped build the community and sustain life there. The same is true today.

Some of these Denton County businesses and the Chambers of Commerce that represent them are here in Washington today. I am pleased to welcome my friends and some of the local officials to the Nation's capital. I also want to thank them for helping make Denton County a place of entrepreneurship and economic opportunity, a friendly place where people are glad to see you, and I, for one, am very glad to call home.

I would like to submit the names of the Denton County delegation for the RECORD: Mandy Calvin, Jonathan Calvin, Gene Carey, Donald Combs, Cindi Howard, Mary Jacoby, Claude King, Matt McCormick, Stan Morton, Jody Smith, Katy Taggart, and Lori Walker.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

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

Mr. HARE. Mr. Speaker, April 28 marks the 20th annual Workers Memorial Day. I rise with other members of the Labor and Working Family Caucus to acknowledge the millions of workers who have been killed or injured on the job.

Since 1970, OSHA has been a driving force in improving workplace safety across the country. However, the Bush administration has sought to downsize the agency. A weakened OSHA has real life-or-death consequences for workers, such as Cintas employee Eleazar Torres-Gomez who died last year when

he was dragged into an industrial dryer.

Mr. Torres-Gomez's fate is, unfortunately, too common. Sixteen workers die every day in our country from work-related injuries.

Last year, along with Representative LYNN WOOLSEY, I introduced the Protecting America's Workers Act, which amends OSHA to cover more workers, and strengthens protections and accountability. During Workers Memorial Week, the best way to honor our workers is to quickly send this bill to the President's desk.

HERE COMES THE HORSE CAVALRY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, Canada is the largest crude oil supplier to the United States. About half of that crude is derived from what is called oil sands. Also, the military wants to buy Canadian "unconventional fuels" instead of buying fuel from rogue dictators. The Air Force wants to use Canadian "coal to liquid fuel" and turn it into jet fuel.

But the nonenergy bill passed by Congress prohibits such purchases because of absurd environmental restrictions.

Now, not only is it harder for Americans to obtain affordable gasoline, our military is at risk of having a fuel shortage to carry out its mission in Iraq and Afghanistan.

This Nation is at war. Our troops need fuel. The latest congressional attempt to hurt the military as a way of appeasing environmental fear mongers could result in what happened to General George Patton in World War II. On August 31, 1944, General Patton was charging toward Germany and just outside of Metz, France, his tanks ran out of gas because bureaucrats here in the United States denied him fuel.

So unless Congress acts, our troops may be charging into battle riding cavalry horses, while our tanks and planes rust and gather dust because they are out of gas.

And that's just the way it is.

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RECOGNITION OF WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, this coming Monday, April 28, millions of people worldwide will recognize Workers Memorial Day.

Each year, in this country, thousands of workers are killed due to workplace related injuries, and tens of thousands more die of occupational illness. It is staggering to think that each day an average of 16 workers are killed due to the injuries on the job.

The bottom line is that everyone deserves a safe and healthy workplace. Many of us take this basic right for granted, but for millions of Americans, the threat of being permanently disabled or even killed on a job is very real.

Workers Memorial Day not only recognizes and honors those who have been killed or injured on the job, it also reminds us of the overwhelming need to improve health and safety standards in our Nation's workplace.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday I introduced a resolution to recognize Workers Memorial Day, and I certainly encourage all my colleagues on Monday to pay respect for those who have lost their lives this past year.

COUNTY PAYMENTS FOR DESCHUTES COUNTY, OREGON

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

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon. Mr. Speaker, in Deschutes County, Oregon, 78 percent of the land is owned by the Federal Government. That's an area 50 percent larger than the State of Rhode Island. Yet the Federal Government has pulled the plug on its commitment to this central Oregon county, by allowing the county timber payments program to expire.

A full 10 percent of Deschutes County's annual budget is comprised of county payments. Faced with the possibility of losing those funds, the county last year laid off employees and cut services in its road department. This year the county's grappling with a similar choice, lay off more employees, cut vital services, or find a balance of the two.

Deschutes County Commissioner Dennis Luke said, "It's not only our roads that will take a hit. More importantly, it affects our ability to reduce the threat of wildfire, provide search and rescue services to folks who enjoy recreating on the vast stretches of federal lands."

All the while, the House has had a solution in waiting in H.R. 3058, a 4-year reauthorization, but its approval has been stymied by the Democratic leadership, which, for some reason refuses to allow it to come up for a vote.

H.R. 3058 languishes while we name post offices, honor sports teams and rename roads. There's time for that, but not time to vote on H.R. 3058.

I hope the health of rural America can find a spot somewhere tucked in among those priorities, and that the leadership will allow the House to vote to reauthorize county timber payments.

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

(Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning