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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. YODER) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Loving and Gracious God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

We ask today that You bless the Members of this assembly, to be the best and the most faithful servants of the people they serve. Purify their intentions, that they will say what they believe and act consistent with their words.

Help them, indeed help us all, to be honest with themselves, so that they will be concerned not only with how their words and deeds are weighed by others, but also with how their words and deeds affect the lives of those in need and those who look to them for support, help, strength, and leadership.

May all that is done this day in the people's House be for Your greater honor and 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.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HAHN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. HAHN 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 PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests

for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

KEYSTONE XL

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, before Congress left Washington in December, we asked the President a simple question: Will he stop blocking the Keystone XL pipeline?

Congress established laws to govern pipeline approval; the State Department published regulations; and typically, approval takes 18 to 24 months. However, Keystone has been sitting on the shelf for more than 40 months now. The President, ignoring standard procedures, ordered duplicative environmental reviews that would extend the approval process to more than 52 months.

Is this because Keystone is unprecedented? No. TransCanada has already built and operates a pipeline that crosses the U.S. border. Additionally, thousands of pipelines already crisscross the proposed route.

The difference is the political pressure brought by extreme environmental groups. Politics is blocking tens of thousands of new jobs. Politics is blocking a reliable new source of energy. It's time to stop letting politics stand in the way of a project that could help grow our economy.

STREAMLINING GOVERNMENT

(Ms. HOCHUL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HOCHUL. Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks, I have traveled constantly throughout my 26th District of New York, meeting business owners and talking to them about the challenges that they are facing in this particular economic climate. Right now, they are frustrated with the various levels of government they have to go through to get an answer out of their Federal Government. It has become so burdensome that there are actually 80 different economic development agencies, four different departments, and in fact, there are 47 different job training programs. These businesses have enough on their minds and have enough challenges before them without having to solve this problem.

Fortunately, the President has come up with a plan. Last week, President Obama proposed consolidating six various entities into one, a one-stop shop for businesses, for trade so that they can get their questions answered without having complications. This is something I support, my local Chambers of Commerce support, and that's why I'm calling on this body: Let's take up this plan. Let's give the people in my district—a Republican district, I might add—what they're looking for. Streamline our government, reduce the

cost of government, save taxpayer dollars, a one-stop shop for our businesses; and once and for all, let's demonstrate to the American people that we have the capability to work together.

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR JOBS

(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, in early 2009, the President assured the Nation that with the passage of his stimulus bill, which has failed, the borrowing and spending would reduce unemployment and that it would not exceed 8 percent. January marks the 35th straight month that the Nation's unemployment rate has remained above 8 percent.

Last year, House Republicans followed through with their commitment to the American people and passed 28 job-creating bills, most with bipartisan support. All of these pieces of legislation remain stalled in the liberal-controlled Senate, where bills are denied debate or a vote.

Because of the gridlock in the Senate and the President's failed policies, the American people are losing faith in government officials. As we begin a new year, I hope the Senate will take immediate action for the American people by passing legislation that promotes jobs.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11th in the global war on terrorism.

CONGRESS AND THE ECONOMY

(Ms. CHU asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CHU. I came here today wanting to wish everybody a happy new year. But when I came, I found out that our Republican Congress wanted to give everybody an unhappy old year, continuing last year's agenda of no jobs for you. They ended last year not with a bang, but a whimper, as they walked out on a deal to stop a tax hike on the middle class right before the holidays. Even though Senate Republicans had agreed to a compromise, House Republicans were willing to abandon you, just as you were trying to figure out how to pay for gifts for your children.

They were serious about letting the payroll tax and unemployment benefits expire. Thank goodness you expressed your outrage and they were forced to change their position. They gave a 2-month extension. Now in just over a month, they'll be faced with the same choice: to raise taxes for the middle class or finally work together with Democrats to give real relief to Americans like you. Make sure they do the right thing.