

Instead, we are debating a bill that includes a provision that would remove a modest, yet valuable, tool for Federal law enforcement to stop the illegal smuggling of firearms and the killing of thousands of innocent people. Where are our priorities?

I do want to thank Chairman WOLF and Ranking Member FATTAH for including \$12 million in the CJS bill to implement the NICS Amendments Improvement Act. It's a \$7 million increase over last year; that's progress. In fact, it's a program that assists States in the establishment and upgrade of information such as mental health records entered into databases that are used to determine eligibility for firearm purchases. If we had had that, perhaps our colleague, Gabby Giffords, would not have been shot. Increased funding is a step in the right direction, but the inclusion of the ATF provision is not. It will only serve to undermine Federal law enforcement's ability to stop illegal gun trafficking. Congress needs to stop weakening gun policy to serve the narrow interests of the gun lobby and start enacting laws to protect the safety of the American public.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 51 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker 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.

Bless the Members of this assembly as they set upon the work of these hours, of these days. Help them to make wise decisions in a good manner, and to carry their responsibilities steadily with high hopes for a better future for our great Nation.

Deepen their faith, widen their sympathies, heighten their aspirations, and give them the strength to do what ought to be done for this country.

May Your blessing, O God, be with them and with us all this day and every day to come, and may all we do be done for Your greater honor and glory.

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 New York (Mr. HIGGINS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. HIGGINS 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 PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Mr. Brian E. Pate, one of his secretaries.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I wear this pin today in honor of May as National Foster Care Month. At the end of fiscal year 2010, over 100,000 foster youth were eligible and waiting for adoption. Sixty-five percent of former foster children experienced at least seven school changes while in care. In 2010, almost 30,000 youth "aged out" of the foster care system without a permanent family. In some States, up to 50 percent of former foster and probation youth become homeless within the first 18 months of emancipation. In some cities, nearly 60 percent of victims of domestic minor sex trafficking are youth from the foster care system.

All children deserve safe, loving, and permanent homes. We must work together to create good policy for foster youth, and I would encourage anyone thinking about becoming a parent to consider changing a life through adoption and foster care.

POSTAL REFORM

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind this House of the far-reaching impact that proposed postal facility closures would have. In my Buffalo community, closing the William Street mail processing facility would affect 700 jobs. Closures would also adversely impact our printing and mailing industry, in addition to non-profit agencies in local municipalities who rely on regular mail service.

Last week, the Senate took the first step in postal reform by passing legis-

lation that would prevent the large-scale closure of postal facilities by requiring the postal service to maintain overnight delivery for at least 3 years.

Mr. Speaker, though the Senate bill is not perfect, we must bring it to the floor immediately in order to achieve real reform. This bill is our best path forward.

MEDICAL DEVICE TAX

(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, yesterday, the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee approved bipartisan legislation to reauthorize and reform the Food and Drug Administration user-fee program. This bill will smooth the process of reviewing medical devices and drugs, increasing transparency and predictability. It's a big step in the right direction for helping American companies continue to lead the world in medical research. Unfortunately, the medical device industry faces a huge setback starting next year.

Last week, Senator TOOMEY and I visited Precision Medical Products in Denver, Pennsylvania. In a roundtable meeting, we heard from a dozen medical device companies about how the new ObamaCare medical device tax will destroy jobs and stall research. This new 2.3 percent tax is on all revenue—and not just profits—meaning even if a company is struggling to break even or even losing money, they have to pay this hefty tax bill. This new tax is over and above the new user fees that they have agreed to pay.

Already, some companies have cut back. Yesterday, we took a big step forward. But if this new tax becomes reality next year, we could still lose the edge on medical device equipment. It should be repealed.

STUDENT LOAN INTEREST RATES

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Yesterday was President Harry S. Truman's birthday. One of his quotes is particularly appropriate today. He said:

The purpose of our society is to enable the individual to attain the highest achievement of which he is capable.

The highest achievements that have sprung from our education system have included harnessing the atom, claiming the high ground in space, and curing previously fatal diseases. But now, because of our failure to adequately fund education, tuition is skyrocketing. Graduates who wish to reach for achievement are anchored to Earth by thousands of dollars in debt. For us to also allow interest rates to double on these student loans is morally unacceptable and economically foolish.

To paraphrase President Truman: the extra bucks stop here.