

be touched by Your word and rise to new life.

Our land and its children believe in the approaching spiritual solstice; and readies itself for the surprises of goodness and generosity which You alone can bring; both in this life and forever. 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 South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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 a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3678. An act to amend the Public Health Service Act with respect to public health security and all-hazards preparedness and response, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 107-12, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the appointment of William Pickle of Virginia to serve as a member of the Medal of Valor Review Board.

OCCUPIED TERRITORY

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

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, several nations are involved. These nations, with their thousands of peoples, have occupied someone else's sovereign country. They moved in silently over a long period of time. Some of the infiltrators were organized, some were not. They crossed national boundaries without regard for the rule of law. The migrant peoples began to colonize the new land because it was flowing with milk and honey. And the inhabitants did not resist the infiltration. The inhabitants of the occupied land paid little attention to the invasion. The inhabitants and their leaders were too busy. After all, they were protecting the borders of other nations. The colonists from the foreign nations began to take from the new land. They demanded and received benefits from the inhabitants. The locals suddenly became alarmed and asked, how can this be happening?

These foreign nations were uninvited. They cared little about the sovereignty of the occupied nation. They came and brought another culture, another language. They moved in and lived on the land because they could.

Mr. Speaker, this ought not to be. But it is. It is the occupied territory of the United States of America. And that's just the way it is.

DEMOCRATS SIX FOR 2006 WILL BE IMPLEMENTED EARLY NEXT YEAR

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Madam Speaker, last month the American people demanded change from Washington, and in January they are going to get it.

Over the last couple of years, the American people have grown increasingly disillusioned with a government that was not working for them. It is time that Washington stop listening exclusively to the elite special interests and start listening to the people who send us here.

That is why Democrats want to repeal billions of dollars in tax breaks for big oil companies to instead invest in new energy technologies. Rather than handouts to Big Oil, we should be working to make America energy independent. The inclusive Democratic agenda starts us down that path.

Our agenda also looks out for American seniors over the interests of drug companies. There is simply no reason why our government shouldn't negotiate for lower prices. The government already negotiates on behalf of our veterans, and they are now enjoying a 42 percent savings on their drugs. Democrats and Republicans have heard the loud voices of Americans. Their voices should be echoed in this people's House by every Member of this new Congress.

CONFIRMATION OF DR. ROBERT GATES

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, with the recent resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, I urge my Senate colleagues to work swiftly in a bipartisan manner to confirm President Bush's nominee, Dr. Robert Gates, as soon as possible. I was pleased to learn that the Senate Armed Services Committee unanimously agreed to forward Mr. Gates' confirmation to the Senate floor for final approval.

We are currently fighting a global war on terror and it is essential to have a Secretary of Defense at the helm in the Pentagon to oversee and effectively utilize the vast resources of the Department of Defense. A Nation at war needs Dr. Gates' leadership at this time.

He is a superb choice and is highly qualified. He recently left his position

as president of Texas A&M University, the seventh largest university in the Nation, after serving 27 years in the intelligence community. He has a distinguished record of public service, having served six Presidents of both parties, and most recently as the director of the Central Intelligence Agency from 1991 to 1993. He is the only career officer in the CIA's history to rise from an entry-level employee to the director. He is highly regarded and extremely qualified.

I urge my Senate colleagues to act swiftly to confirm Dr. Gates.

A NEW CONGRESS AND A NEW DIRECTION IN IRAQ

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, the American public did not vote for the Iraq Study Group. They voted for a new Congress and a new direction in Iraq: Out.

Now, many who voted for change will be surprised to learn that there are some who say they oppose the war and will continue to fund it in the name of supporting the troops. We will not abandon our troops in the field, some solemnly pronounce, while continuing to fund a war that even generals say cannot be won militarily.

Well, then, we have already abandoned our troops in the field. We have abandoned them to lies about why the war was being fought. We have abandoned them to getting shot at from all sides. We have left them in a type of hell where we profess a strange love for them by keeping them there.

The money is in the pipeline right now to bring the troops home now; \$70 billion was appropriated for Iraq on October 1. The administration will ask for another \$160 billion in the spring. That is a total of \$230 billion for the Iraq war. In less than 2 years the war on the so-called defense budgets will cost more than \$1 trillion.

Stop wasting money. Stop wasting lives. Bring the troops home now and cut off funds for more war.

GODSPEED TO ERIC DELL

(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. Madam Speaker, today I rise with mixed feelings. As the 109th Congress draws to a close, my longtime chief of staff, Eric Dell, will complete his tenure on Capitol Hill.

Eric and I have worked together for the past 14 years. More than a trusted, competent staff member, Eric is a good friend. While I know he will go on to great things, his counsel and leadership in the office will be missed. I am happy about his new opportunities.

Raised in Ridgeland, South Carolina, by his loving parents, Wayne and Ouida

Dell, Eric has a distinguished career in South Carolina public service. He served as an intern to Senator Strom Thurmond and Governor Carroll Campbell. He managed the final campaign of my predecessor, the late Congressman Floyd Spence. He was the first-ever Republican chief of staff of the State Senate Transportation Committee.

I appreciate Eric's success and his training of his successor, Dino Teppara, who has served capably as legislative director for the Second District.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

CUTS TO MEDICARE PHYSICIAN REIMBURSEMENT

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, we have a problem. Without immediate congressional action, there are seniors in our country who will not receive medical care from their doctor next year. Payments to physicians who provide health care services to Medicare patients will be cut by over 5 percent as of January 1, 2007. If Congress fails to act before we adjourn this year, this cut will automatically go into effect. The result will be reduced access to care for Medicare patients across our Nation. Older Americans should not have to worry that their doctors will be forced to stop treating them because Congress did not act.

At a time when physician costs are skyrocketing, we cannot expect our doctors to lose money when they treat Medicare patients. There is still time to act, but the clock is ticking, and seniors are looking to Congress for leadership on this important issue.

The 109th Congress will soon end. It would be an outrage and a dereliction of duty if the Republican Congress, in its final days, does not fix this serious problem to avert a potential health care crisis for millions of our fellow Americans.

I urge that we pass a Medicare reimbursement fix before we leave this week.

□ 1015

COMMEMORATING THE 175TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE RABBIT HASH GENERAL STORE

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

Mr. DAVIS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Rabbit Hash General Store. Rabbit Hash, located on the banks of the Ohio River, has a very special place in the heart of Kentuckians. I have a picture of the legendary general store hanging here in my office on Capitol Hill, and it seems that near-

ly every constituent that visits has a story to share about this very unique place.

After all, how many towns can say that they have elected a dog as their mayor twice. Rabbit Hash General Store traces its roots back to 1831 when it was first constructed to store goods awaiting the arrival of steamboats traveling on the Ohio River. The general store has remained in continuous operation since then, withstanding the test of time and of Mother Nature. The unique engineering of a blacksmith in the 1880s locks the structure of the general store in place when the waters of the Ohio begin to rise.

Rabbit Hash has been listed on the Register of National Historic Places, and in 2002 was sold to the Rabbit Hash Historical Society to ensure preservation for future generations of Kentuckians. I am extremely proud of those who kept this small community vibrant over the years and am excited to share in their celebration of the 175th anniversary of the Rabbit Hash General Store.

"FLAT STANLEY" PROJECT

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about a project that a student in our district is participating in. Emily Leal is a first grade student and an excellent student at Roosevelt Elementary School and contacted me about the Flat Stanley project. Roosevelt is a recognized school for its quality and also happens to be the elementary school in our district that I went to.

This national project, originally designed by Arthur Brown in his book, Flat Stanley, encourages communication and education among children around the world. Students make a Flat Stanley and start a journal for him. Then he is sent around to schools, professionals, persons in different geographic locations where Flat Stanley is treated as a guest for a few days and this journal is completed.

Flat Stanley and his journal are then returned to the original student who can plot his travels and share the journal for educational purposes with his or her fellow students. Since Emily's first grade class is participating in this project, she is a constituent of mine, and she chose to send Flat Stanley to me so he can visit the floor of Congress in Washington, DC.

Before I return Flat Stanley to Emily this next week, I am going to bring him to the House floor where America's elected officials participate in democracy. I hope that Flat Stanley will have a safe trip back with me to our district, and that Emily's class enjoys reading about his visit to Congress.

CONGRATULATING LISA KAPLAN AND BRAD SHERMAN ON THEIR RECENT WEDDING

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise to congratulate our colleague, BRAD SHERMAN, and his wonderful new wife, Lisa Kaplan, on their recent wedding. On Sunday, I happily joined Lisa and BRAD at the beautiful Calamigos Ranch in Malibu, where they exchanged their vows surrounded by family and friends.

The groom, as we all know, is a fine and thoughtful gentleman who serves his constituents in southern California with great distinction, and is a dear friend to many of us. The bride is also a charming and wonderful individual. She does important work in the Office of Global Anti-Semitism at the State Department.

Now, I am sorry the newlyweds must spend their honeymoon here in the lame duck session, but I know they have a more romantic trip planned in the near future. I want to congratulate Lisa's father and stepmother, Robert and Peggy Kaplan, and honor the memory of her mother, Carol Weisberg.

I also want to honor the memory of BRAD's father, Maurice Sherman, and congratulate his mom, my dear friend Lane Sherman. To Lisa and BRAD, we wish you a life together of health and happiness. Mazel Tov.

THE ECONOMY AND THE DEFICIT

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

Mr. CARDOZA. Madam Speaker, the past few years the Republican rule in Washington has left our Nation severely crippled with debt. Reckless fiscal policies have turned record surpluses into record deficits in 6 short years. Democrats believe that fiscal responsibility is a crucial ingredient in good government.

When we assume the majority in Congress next year, Democrats in this body will implement a pay-as-you-go plan for spending that will put our Nation back on the right financial path. Pay-as-you-go is the policy that helped us create those record surpluses in the late 1990s, surpluses that have been eliminated with tax breaks for the wealthiest few over the last 6 years. We must be accountable for every dollar that is allocated through this Congress, not constantly passing massive debt on to our children and grandchildren.

Madam Speaker, after Republicans refused to live up to their promises of fiscal restraint, the American people turned to Democrats to get our Nation's books out of the red. When the next Congress begins, we will start the process by using commonsense measures such as pay-as-you-go.