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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

February 2, 2012.

I hereby appoint the Honorable TED POE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 17, 2012, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

NEW MARKETS TAX CREDIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. NEAL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEAL. I rise today to speak about the New Markets Tax Credit program and the positive impact it has had on western Massachusetts.

I've been a leader of New Markets since its enactment in 2000 because it's a cost-effective way to create jobs and drive investment in low-income communities. Today, I want to highlight a few New Market Tax Credit initiatives in my State.

New Markets Tax Credit is designed to stimulate investment and economic

growth in areas that are traditionally overlooked by conventional capital markets. This program attracts capital to low-income communities by providing private investors with a 39 percent Federal tax credit for investments made in businesses or economic developments located in those areas.

In 2010, New Markets generated \$9.5 billion in capital for projects and businesses in low-income communities. This capital resulted in the development of 15 million square feet of manufacturing, retail, and community-related space throughout the country.

Last year, New Markets Tax Credits investments resulted in the creation or retention of 70,000 jobs, including 38,000 construction jobs.

Unfortunately, New Markets is a temporary program that expired on December 31. I am now and have been the lead Democratic sponsor of this legislation to extend the program for a predictable 5 years. I've now been calling on our colleagues to extend this initiative. So let me share with you a few successes from back home and explain why I think New Markets works so well.

Hot Mama's Foods in Springfield, Massachusetts, my hometown—it's a great success story. The company was created in the 1980s, and they manufacture and package fresh and frozen gourmet salsa and other spreads that are all natural and, indeed, organic. Hot Mama's was originally located in Northampton, but thanks to New Markets, they were able to purchase a larger USDA-certified food production facility on Avocado Street in Springfield. It has added 10 new jobs and retained 50 jobs in the current workforce.

Another success story is the River Valley Market in Northampton, Massachusetts, which moved into a former granite quarry. No one wanted this space because it was prohibitively expensive to renovate; but through New Markets and other financial support,

they opened a food cooperative that features local farmers and employs neighborhood residents.

Finally, let me highlight a more recent New Markets project that's currently under construction, the Massachusetts Green High Performance Computing Center in Holyoke, Massachusetts. Holyoke is a city in western Massachusetts with a population of about 40,000 people. From the late 19th century until the mid-20th century, Holyoke was known as the world's biggest paper manufacturer.

The High Performance Computing Center is a \$168 million technology hub that is being built at the former Mastex Industries site on Bigelow Street in the heart of Holyoke. Construction of the center began in the fall of 2010; and the two-story, 90,000 square foot complex is expected to be completed next year.

This facility will be New England's first high performance computing center. It will feature computers with high speed and the capacity to process extraordinary amounts of data. When it's complete, it will be among the 500 most powerful computer centers in the world.

The Holyoke Center is a partnership between local universities—University of Massachusetts, Harvard, MIT, Boston University, Northeastern University—and two private sector companies: the EMC Corporation, based in Hopkinton, and Cisco Systems.

The center also received a \$14.5 million New Market Tax Credit allocation, which is the critical component to financing this important project.

I believe the Holyoke Center will be a catalyst for economic development in Holyoke and in western Massachusetts. It will employ 13 permanent jobs and 130 research positions at various universities. It is expected to create 600 construction jobs.

Without New Markets and the leadership that I've tried to offer in this program, Hot Mama's Foods, River Valley

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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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Market, and the Green High Performance Computing Center probably would not have been possible. New Markets is a good example of how public and private investment can be used to spur community and economic revitalization.

I hope that we will stop wasting time, and with the other tax extenders that have to get taken care of, we will include an extension of the New Markets Tax Credit program as quickly as possible.

WHO CARES FOR THE POOR?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. MCCOTTER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, today we endure much discussion about who most cares for our poor. Some measure their compassion by spending their own money; some measure their compassion by spending other people's money. Yet compassion for the poor's true measure is premised upon this fact: You cannot empower a person by making them dependent, be it upon charity or be it upon bureaucracy.

Thus, let us strive to emancipate our poor from dependency's nightmare so that our suffering brothers and sisters may rise in self-reliance and awaken to the American Dream.

HOW MANY MORE GROUNDHOG DAYS IN AFGHANISTAN?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it's Groundhog Day. Phil saw his shadow this morning, and winter will last 6 more weeks.

But what comes to mind for me is that old Bill Murray movie called "Groundhog Day," where he wakes up and the same thing happens day after day after day. We're living our own version of "Groundhog Day" right now, because every morning, for the last 3,700-plus mornings, the American people have woken to a Nation at war.

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Every morning, we've woken up to the same scenario—thousands and thousands of our fellow Americans in harm's way, occupying a foreign nation as part of a reckless policy that is costing us at least \$10 billion a month.

There was some encouraging news, however, just yesterday as Secretary of Defense Panetta said that our combat role in Afghanistan would be over as soon as the middle of next year, which is a year earlier than we've been talking about. That would be a long overdue but welcome development, a belated recognition that this war is doing more harm than good in every way we're involved.

I'll believe it when I see it, though. The goalposts have been moved too

many times to put much confidence in a single statement. What I've heard so far is a little too vague to take to the bank, especially since Secretary Panetta maintains that some troops would still remain through 2014 in an advisory role and that the commander on the ground, just this morning, is reported on the news as sounding less than enthusiastic in his response.

What I'd like to hear, perhaps in conjunction with Secretary Clinton and the head of USAID, is that, as our military role recedes, we will use all the civilian tools at our disposal to improve the lives of the Afghan people, because the real challenge and the best way to advance our national security interests is to eliminate the crushing poverty and to address the overwhelming humanitarian need in Afghanistan.

That is what's at the heart of my SMART Security proposal. Instead of military force, instead of unmanned, amoral drones that don't know the difference between killing an insurgent and killing a child, how about we send American compassion to Afghanistan? How about we send our very best experts in education, health care, energy, agriculture, legal reform, government transparency, and whatever else we have to offer that they may want to learn from?

Even if Secretary Panetta sticks to this timetable, under the best case scenario, we have another 500 or so mornings and perhaps another Groundhog Day ahead of us, at least 500 more days of the same old, same old—Americans dying on a mission that is not making America safer or Afghanistan freer.

The time has come. In fact, it came a long time ago. Let's make tomorrow different from the thousands of days that preceded it. Let's end the war in Afghanistan now and finally bring our troops home.

USMC PRIVATE FIRST CLASS VICTOR DEW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. McCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. McCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced a bill to name the United States Post Office in Granite Bay, California, in honor of United States Marine Corps Private First Class Victor Dew.

This young man was only 20 years old when he left his family and friends in late September of 2010 for Helmand Province, Afghanistan. Just 3 weeks later, on October 13, Private Dew was killed in action when his convoy was ambushed.

Victor grew up dreaming of becoming a marine. He loved military history. He was fully aware of the mortal dangers he would face. Yet, when he was offered a posting to a ceremonial position stateside, he turned it down. He believed his duty and destiny was to keep the fight away from our shores, away from his family and his country, and so

he chose combat even when he had been offered safe and honorable service at home.

What did he sacrifice in order to give our country a little more security and to give another country a fleeting chance at redemption?

He had everything in the world to live for. He was engaged to be married to a devoted young lady named Courtney Gold. Courtney said, "We had life in the grasp of our hands, and we were ready to take on the world." They would have. She had already picked out her wedding dress. There is a picture of her wearing that dress. It's in Victor's casket.

Victor was one of those sunny personalities who lifted the spirits of everyone around him. That's the recurring theme in all of the recollections of everyone who knew him. They'd be feeling down, and Victor would lift them up. I didn't know him, but I think I caught a glimpse of him in his little brother, Kyle. At the funeral reception last year, I found Kyle sitting at a table with his friends. When I went to offer my condolences, one of his friends said, "You know, we came to cheer him up, and instead, he's been cheering us up."

Victor lives on in the lives of those he touched, and he touched quite a few. He is remembered in his community as a faithful friend and as an inspiring teacher. Before he'd enlisted, he'd already become a popular martial arts instructor at a local dojo. Some of his students—and some of them a lot older than he—came to his service that day.

It has now been over a year since he returned to Granite Bay. In that year, he would have celebrated his 21st birthday. He would have returned safely home with his unit. He would have been married. And as Courtney said, he would have taken on the world. Instead, he rests in an honored grave. His family does what every Gold Star family does—they cope with their grief with a mixture of fond memories and faith but, most of all, of pride for the life of their son.

There are many graves in that cemetery that are etched with lifetimes much longer than the 20 years recorded on Victor's, but none of them comes close to his in this most important respect: what they did with those years. The most iconic work of art on the Titanic was a great carving that depicted Honor and Glory crowning Time. Victor Dew's time may have been short in this world, but he crowned that time with honor and glory that the rest of us can only marvel at.

Every morning since he was 12 years old, Victor Dew awoke under a Marine Corps banner over his bed that was emblazoned with the words "Semper Fidelis." In his life, we can see the full measure of those words. Every day in this majestic Capitol, we walk in the footsteps of the giants of our Nation's history. The oratory of Henry Clay and Daniel Webster still echoes through these Halls. At arm's reach of where I