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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. HUIZENGA of Michigan).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
August 1, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable BILL HUIZENGA 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 3, 2013, 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.

SENATOR PAUL SIMON WATER FOR THE WORLD ACT OF 2013 (H.R. 2901)

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago, if someone asked what a bow tie-wearing progressive Democrat from Oregon and my colleague TED POE, a cowboy, boot-wearing conservative Republican from Texas, could agree on, you would have said, Not much.

Today, we are partners on an issue, however, that makes sense regardless of your politics: ensuring sustainable, equitable access to clean water for nearly 800 million women, children, and men who don't have it and the 2.5 billion without even the most basic sanitation services. TED POE and I think that politics should stop with water. That's why, today, we are introducing the Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2013 (H.R. 2901).

Since Congress passed the Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act in 2005, the United States has become a global leader in efforts to increase access to clean water and sanitation, developing and implementing some of the most innovative approaches to help those in greatest need. We must not only maintain this progress but work to further refine and focus the efforts at USAID and at the Department of State by enacting the World Act.

We are committed because dirty water and a lack of sanitation affects all areas of development assistance. This is especially the case when it comes to women and children. More children are killed by waterborne disease than any other. Increasing access to clean water and sanitation has a significant multiplier effect on other areas of development, enabling us to do more with less—critical in a time of constrained budget resources.

Every day, the world has more people but fewer freshwater resources. Our bipartisan legislation will give the United States the capacity to avoid unnecessary loss of life and conflict in the future. It would ensure that water, sanitation, and hygiene programs are reflected in other development assistance; prioritize long-lasting impacts of United States foreign aid dollars; and increase the focusing on monitoring, evaluation, transparency, and capacity building.

Children cannot attend school if they're sick from dirty water. Half the world's hospital beds today are filled with people suffering from waterborne disease needlessly. Hours spent getting water are hours not working or in school.

A lack of clean drinking water has a disproportionate effect on women, who, in developing countries, walk an average of 3.7 miles a day to get water. The estimates are that 40 billion working hours are lost each year in Africa alone—200 million hours today.

Having water means girls can go to school and build a better future. It also reduces the risk of violence and sexual assault. A study by Doctors without Borders found that 82 percent of the women and girls treated for rape in West and South Darfur were attacked while they were gathering water or firewood.

The challenge is not getting easier, because 97 percent of the water on Earth is salty and unfit to drink. Of the 2½ percent, roughly, of the Earth's water that is fresh, two-thirds of that is frozen—locked away in the ice caps and glaciers. Although it's rapidly melting because of climate change, that's not going to help us, because it will be largely salty as well. We've got less than 1 percent of global freshwater available for human use; and because of the demands for growing food, energy and industry, only about one-tenth of a percent is available for people to drink. This tiny fraction is further diminished by deficient or nonexistent water infrastructure. Even in the United States, we waste 6 billion gallons of freshwater every day through leaky pipes. We are entering an era of severe water scarcity that the Department of Defense warns could lead to global insecurity.

In short, Mr. Speaker, there is nothing more fundamental to families and global health than clean water and sanitation. More needs to be done, and it needs to be done well. Taxpayers, understandably, demand better results and greater transparency from foreign aid. This bill provides the tools and incentives to do just that.

We urge our colleagues to adopt our motto—''politics stops at water''—and support this effort. This magnitude will take a team working together, united in the goal of saving lives and improving communities around the world. Please join us in this critical legislation, the Paul Simon Water for the World Act (H.R. 2901).

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.'S MARCH ON WASHINGTON

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

Mr. ROTHFUS. Mr. Speaker, from time to time in our Nation's history, people of faith have stepped forward to call this Nation to something greater. This is steeped in our culture, our tradition, and our founding documents. It goes back to the cross at Cape Henry and to the landing at Plymouth Rock. You see it in our Declaration of Independence and again in the movement to abolish slavery.

Then, in the 1950s and 1960s, it was people of faith who birthed the new civil rights movement. No figure cast a wider shadow on that movement than the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King. This month, we mark the 50th anniversary of one of the most iconic speeches in American history—Dr. King's address at the Lincoln Memorial. It is a great honor for me to stand here today to recollect the words of Dr. King, a man who stands among the heroes of our Nation.

Dr. King was a pastor. He received a divinity degree from Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. His call to the ministry led him to the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama, where, in the church's basement, he helped to plan the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955. That Dr. King's actions were motivated by his faith in a just God is evident when you read his words.

From the marble steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he used the words of the prophet Isaiah to articulate his dream of an end to injustice and oppression:

> That one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low; the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

Martin Luther King, Jr., looked not for a revolution but for an affirmation of the country's founding principles when he declared:

> That we have come to our Nation's Capital to cash a check. When the architects of our Republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men would be guaranteed the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It was not the first time that Dr. King had alluded to the promise of our founding documents. Just 4 months before the March on Washington, in writing from a Birmingham jail, he wrote that African Americans had waited for more than 340 years for their constitutional and God-given rights.

King's letter from a Birmingham jail could not be clearer in its articulation of the moral status of law and the role that religion plays in a just society:

> Now [King wrote] what is the difference between a ''just'' and an ''unjust'' law? How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a manmade code that squares with the moral law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law.

Yes, Dr. King appealed to the Nation's religious roots to encourage social change, and from a Birmingham jail, he encouraged individuals to confront unjust laws:

> [T]here is nothing new [King wrote] about this kind of civil disobedience. It was evidenced sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar, on the ground that a higher moral law was at stake. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions . . . rather than submit to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. . . . In our own Nation, the Boston Tea Party represented a massive act of civil disobedience.
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> We should never forget [King continued] that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was ''legal'' and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was ''illegal.'' It was ''illegal'' to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure [King proclaimed] that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers. If today I lived [King continued] in a Communist country, where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I would openly advocate disobeying that country's anti-religious laws.

King's letter from a Birmingham jail and his ''I Have a Dream'' speech should be required reading for every American high school student and for every Member of Congress.

With the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's speech upon us, it is good to remember his words. It is good to appreciate all that faith in God and the moral law have done to advance the cause of freedom in our country. It is good to reflect on whether policies enacted by government in our time are a step back from, or show a rising intolerance of, the religious freedom that has been instrumental in defining our country and defending our rights.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, AN UMBRELLA ON A RAINY DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman who preceded me for that very powerful message; and it reminds us generally of, really, the elements of our presence here in this House. When we represent the people of this country, it is important that we are lawmakers and that we have the compassion that was evidenced by the movement that Dr. King led and by the movement that he was leading at the time of the tragedy of his death and that was, of course, the Poor People's March in 1968.

I rise today to discuss that capacity and to say that I know that our friends, Republicans and Democrats, can come together around important service elements that this Nation engages in. The Federal Government is an umbrella on a rainy day. It is the engine of the economy. It is the answer to issues such as transportation and housing. It really provides housing to working families. It boosts the middle class and poor families, and it gives jobs to builders and contractors. So that is why, I think, it was quite appropriate for this, unfortunately, poorly driven and constructed Transportation, Housing and Urban Development appropriations bill to go to its timely death.

How can you with any compassion cut so much money that you cut even the amount of money under the present budget, and you cut 9 percent below the level now mandated by the across-the-board spending cuts by sequestration?

You went below that. This bill was $44.1 billion—shameful—cutting public housing, cutting housing vouchers, cutting opportunities for the homeless, and particularly for our young people. As the cochair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, every day, I note that children in America suffer for a variety of reasons. The Senate, of course, had a bill, which they are pushing through, that was at the $54 billion level—still very far short of the great needs of this community.

So I rise today to say that it landed with a thud, and I think, more importantly, my colleague from Texas—again, from Houston—spoke on the floor of the House about some untimely language on page 52—I remember it—that cut into the light rail system of Houston. It would impact my district. It would stop students at the University of Houston and at Texas Southern University from being able to have access to rail by cutting down on their travel costs because there was a provision in the bill that did not fund just a sector of that light rail.

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My colleagues, how can you build light rail when you cut it in the middle, almost like the western movies, where the train rushes up and finds a big hole over the mountains where something has happened and it can't go any further?

It was a bill that was destined to die and should have died because it lacked compassion. I stand here opposing any language that does not fund or find an alternative route in any community's light rail new starts on which that community chooses to move forward. In Houston, we should not be attacked, if you will, for that kind of singular targeting. Our light rail should proceed.