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House of Representatives

The House met at 9 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Reverend Patrick Riffle, St. Peter's Catholic Church, Washington, D.C., offered the following prayer:

God, our father, You guide everything in wisdom and love. "You are good and forgiving, full of love to all who call upon You."

We now praise You for that love and rejoice in Your abundant blessing. You call us today to grow in the knowledge of that love and invite us to receive Your blessings.

Accept the prayers we offer for our beloved Nation; protect it and keep it ever in Your sight. Fill this House of Representatives with Your holy wisdom, and may that wisdom lead to right action.

Strengthen these Representatives and their staffs as they labor for the common good and for what is just in Your eyes. May true harmony, lasting freedom, and justice be secured for all so that there may be lasting peace.

We ask this in Your most Holy Name. 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 Pennsylvania (Mr. MARINO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. MARINO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 5 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

FAREWELL, VERONICA KALTRIDER

(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, I am grateful to express my appreciation for Major Veronica Kaltrider. Veronica has been on loan to the office of the Second District of South Carolina from the United States Marine Corps for the past year serving as a military fellow.

Major Kaltrider enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in 1997 and received training the following year at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. As the former Representative of this base, I know firsthand of the proficiency that Veronica has because of her training by the highest Marine Corps standards. Veronica's ability to connect with veterans has been a tremendous asset to our office.

Beginning this month, Veronica Kaltrider will serve as the manpower and personnel officer of the Marine Corps Office of Legislative Affairs. I wish her and her husband, Eric, a military police officer in the Marine Corps, all the best in the future. Godspeed.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and the President, by his actions, must never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism. Our sympathy for the citizens of France fighting terrorism.

RECOGNIZING JONATHAN STIVERS

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to celebrate the unanimous Senate confirmation of a public servant of integrity, energy, expertise, and ability; a person of deep dedication to our country, to ending poverty, fighting disease, and advancing democracy; someone I have had the privilege to have on my staff for the past 15 years, the new assistant administrator for Asia at USAID: Jonathan Stivers.

Over the years, Jon worked closely with USAID and congressional committees to promote our national interests, fight poverty and disease around the world, and address ongoing challenges in global development across Asia.

He played a central role in advancing foreign policy priorities of our country, especially in the fields of human rights, appropriations, HIV/AIDS, international trade, and in countries across the Asia-Pacific region. Many of our Republican colleagues know that Jon worked very much across the aisle on all of these issues.

Jonathan's professionalism and attention to detail were unparalleled, and I can say with confidence on the most challenging and critical issues of our day, Jon Stivers consistently exhibits the leadership needed to improve the global community.

Though we will miss his expertise and his experience, I am proud that he is serving these critical issues in his new position, and I wish him; his wife, Ramsey, who is here with us; his baby daughters, Josephine and Parker, all the best in their new adventures.

Thank you, Jonathan Stivers. Congratulations and good luck.

LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

(Mr. GOODLATTE asked and was given permission to address the House

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

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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for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, on Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, I want to extend my support and gratitude to the law enforcement officers across the country who serve our communities and the American people daily.

Our Nation was founded on the rule of law, and every day law enforcement officers carry out this legacy. They protect our neighborhoods from criminals, fight crime, ensure justice, and keep the peace.

Sadly, many law enforcement officers have died in the line of duty. Last year 118 law enforcement officers died, including three from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Last year's murder of two NYPD officers is a sober reminder that our Nation's law enforcement officers face danger every day as they carry out their duty to protect the American people.

In the Gospel of John, we are told that there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends, and this is true of our Nation's law enforcement officers. Every day they risk their lives so that you and I may be safe from harm.

These brave men and women are heroes and deserve to be recognized and honored for their service to our country.

TAR SANDS TAX LOOPHOLE ELIMINATION ACT

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, while I do not support the development of tar sands—an environmentally destructive and carbon-intensive process—we should not continue a loophole that lets oil companies off the hook for covering destruction from oil spills.

In 1990, we authorized the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund for the immediate costs of cleaning up oil spills, and it is funded by an excise tax on crude oil and petroleum products, but the oil derived from tar sands that would be transported through the Keystone XL pipeline is not subject to this tax.

Since that oil is a thick, sticky form of crude, more difficult and costly to clean up than other types of oil, the exemption makes no sense, especially if it is as safe as some allege. That is why yesterday I reintroduced the Tar Sands Tax Loophole Elimination Act, which would ensure that oil pays into the Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund that travels through this pipeline if it is ever constructed.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

READING THE CONSTITUTION

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, in just a few minutes my colleagues and I will be

following a tradition that we began when Republicans regained the majority in 2011 of reading the Constitution during the first week that we are back into session. I think this is a very important tradition that we have established here in the House of Representatives.

Our Speaker reminded us the other day that this is the first time in the history of the country that this has been done. This is our third Congress in a row to do this.

All of us, or almost all of us, carry a copy of the pocket version of the Constitution with us to remind us why we are here and what undergirds everything that we do in this House and in this Congress.

In the front of the copy I have, it says, "The Declaration of Independence was the promise; the Constitution was the fulfillment," and there is a quote from Alexander Hamilton: "The sacred rights of mankind are not to be rummaged for, among old parchments, or musty records. They are written, as with a sunbeam in the whole volume of human nature, by the hand of divinity itself; and can never be erased or obscured by the mortal power."

CAMPAIGN FINANCE LAW

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call on this body to take up legislation to repeal the last-minute changes to campaign finance law that were tacked into a 1,600-page bill to fund the government this December.

As a result of this legislation, the wealthiest donors can now each contribute more than \$750,000 per year to a political party, more than seven times the previous cap. Worst of all, these changes were buried in a bill with no hearing and no public debate. In fact, Mr. Speaker, this body never even got a chance to vote on this provision since the bill was not considered under an open amendment process.

In all the conversations that I have had with residents throughout Washington State, I can tell you I have never heard anyone, Democrat or Republican, argue that the wealthy can't spend enough on politics or that those with the deepest pockets don't have enough influence in our Nation's Capital.

That is why I have introduced the Close the Floodgates Act, to protect the interests of "We the People" and make sure that the wealthiest donors don't get another chance to flood our elections with even more money and to undermine our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, let's take up this legislation, strip out those loopholes, and get to work restoring the faith and trust of American voters.

DR. KENNETH COOPER

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

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a remarkable individual from Dallas, Texas, to recognize him for his introduction into the National Football Foundation's Leadership Hall of Fame last night, January 8, 2015.

I would like to thank Chairman Archie Manning, football player Troy Aikman, Mayor Tom and Laura Leppert, and football player Roger Staubach for recognizing Dr. Kenneth Cooper for his dedication to health and fitness and his continuing leadership to health care for all.

Throughout Dr. Cooper's career in the United States Air Force and in a medical career in Dallas, Texas, he has continued to revitalize health care and fitness. He is also the father of preventive medicine and known as the father of aerobics, trying to make sure that the American people and the world understand how important fitness is to our life and our health.

I want to express my hearty congratulations to Dr. Cooper on receiving this outstanding award on behalf of the National Football Foundation, and I hope the American people and, today, the United States Congress will do so as well.

FUNDING COLLEGE EDUCATION FOR ALL

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, today the President will be speaking in Knoxville, Tennessee, on extending college educations to Americans.

I share with the President the goal of giving more Americans the opportunity to go to college, but I would submit to him he should not be holding up the Tennessee Promise plan in Tennessee as an example. He should be holding up the Tennessee HOPE Lottery Scholarship program, which I worked 20 years to achieve in Tennessee and has provided over \$3 billion to education, \$250 million a year.

Scholarship programs such as the President is talking about should have standards for students in high school to achieve to get a scholarship. They should have strong standards in college to maintain them. They should be in addition to Pell grants and in addition to other scholarships to pay for books and tuition.

The Promise plan takes from middle class and lower income students and gives to higher income students, doesn't have standards in high school to get the scholarship, and doesn't have high standards to keep it. It is a last dollar scholarship.

The President's plan should be more like the Tennessee HOPE Lottery Scholarship: assure students have an incentive in high school to get it and incentives to keep it with high grade standards, and it shouldn't go to for-profit schools, for that is an invitation to abuse.