



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 110th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 154

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2008

No. 149

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. TAUSCHER).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 18, 2008.

I hereby appoint the Honorable ELLEN O. TAUSCHER to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Reverend Chuck Coffelt, Gillett United Methodist Church, Gillett, Arkansas, offered the following prayer:

Most gracious God, as the Members of this great Chamber gather to conduct the business of our Nation, we pause to remember the lives of the women and men who fought and died on the battlefields of wars at home and abroad so that we may have the privilege of open talk and debate. We honor their sacrifice today by setting aside differences and working for the common good of humanity. Guide the hearts and minds of these before You now that they may govern with their hearts set on love and justice, compassion and peace. Strengthen them for the weighty decisions that they face. Empower them to serve You by faithfully serving the people they represent, including those whose voices are rarely heard. These things we pray to You today, Father, through Your son, Jesus, by the power of Your holy spirit. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. BARRETT 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.

WELCOMING REV. CHUCK COFFELT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BERRY) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. BERRY. Our prayer is offered this morning by Pastor Chuck Coffelt, my pastor from my home church, the United Methodist Church of Gillett, Arkansas. He pastors a community where they still know when you are born and they care when you die, where happiness and sorrow are shared by the community and where a helping hand is offered when needed. We are delighted to be joined this morning online by the Gillett School and their mascot, the Wolves, to show support for our special community.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 10 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

DRILLING IN ANWR

(Mr. LATTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LATTA. Madam Speaker, the time to act is now. After we've seen the devastation of the hurricanes in the Gulf Region, it's time for this Congress to act and to allow drilling and to permit drilling in ANWR.

What is ANWR?

ANWR is 19 million acres in Alaska. We're talking about a section that was set aside in 1980 by Congress of about 1.5 million acres. Where the oil is, about 10.3 billion barrels, all we're really looking at is about 2,000 acres. To put it in perspective, it's about 3.5 square miles. We've got to get in there and get it now. Why? Because we can be bringing out 1 million barrels of oil down that 800-mile pipeline to serve this country, and we've got to make sure that this country can still be a manufacturing giant in the world.

Next year, we lose our manufacturing status to China. If we don't have the energy to run our factories, to fuel our vehicles, to run our trucks or to run our tractors, this country is going to fail.

If you look at this, you're only talking about a pin drop when you're talking about this area. It is time that we act. It is essential. If we don't get it done now, this country is going to fail.

MCCAIN'S ASSESSMENT OF ECONOMY SHOWS HE REALLY IS NOT AN EXPERT ON THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Madam Speaker, with all of the economic troubles on both Wall Street and Main Street, it's hard to believe that there are still people out there who think everything is going all right.

□ 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.



Printed on recycled paper.

H8399

On Monday, the stock market fell 500 points, the biggest fall since the terror attacks of September 11. Lehman Brothers, one of the world's oldest financial institutions, filed for bankruptcy while another financial giant, Merrill Lynch, was bailed out of trouble by Bank of America. Former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said this was part of a once-in-a-century crisis.

I wish President Bush and Senator McCain felt that way. Stubbornly clinging to the belief that his economic policies are succeeding, President Bush described the events Monday as merely an adjustment. Senator McCain declared, once again, that the fundamentals of our economy are strong.

Well, Madam Speaker, President Bush and Senator McCain have to be two of the only people in the country who think the economy is just fine. How can they fix the crisis when they don't even realize it exists?

CONGRESS, AN INCLUSIVE BODY

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

Mr. WITTMAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, we have a number of challenges in this country. We see the energy challenge we have before us. We've heard here in recent days of all of the challenges in our financial markets. I would suggest that we need to make sure that we use this opportunity to be inclusive when we make decisions.

Just the other day when an energy bill passed this body, there was a great opportunity there to make sure that we had the best ideas coming forward, to make sure that we worked on things in a bipartisan manner, to make sure we did what was in the best interest of this country. Unfortunately, that didn't happen. Unfortunately, those best ideas didn't all make it to the table, and that's not what this country is built on.

This country is built on making sure that this body makes decisions in an inclusive way, and I hope the Speaker will hold true to her words that she said earlier, that this was going to be the most inclusive body in the history of this body. You know, I'm concerned when that doesn't happen. It leaves out those great ideas. It leaves out segments of America who want their voices heard here to make sure that we do things in a fair and equitable way.

Madam Speaker, I call on you to make sure that we do have an inclusive process in this body.

FILIPINO VETERANS EQUITY ACT

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

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge Congress to restore U.S. veteran status to the surviving soldiers

of over 250,000 Filipinos who were called into military service to the United States Armed Forces by President Roosevelt on July 26, 1941.

Every year, I meet with the Filipino World War II veterans who walk the halls of Congress seeking to undo the injustice of the 1946 Recession Act which denied these veterans of their rightful benefits. Of all the Filipinos ordered into combat, only 18,000 are alive today, with each passing day bringing another funeral. These veterans remain loyal to this country. You know in your hearts that these veteran soldiers who fought under our flag deserve the promise we made to them six decades ago. We are a country of promise makers, and therefore, we should be a country of promise keepers.

America's greatness is in its strength of character. Now it is our turn in the House to right this injustice. This is not just about the benefits for a few surviving heroes; it is also about our honor as a country and as a legislative body.

Let's do the right thing and return to the Filipino World War II veterans their due—recognition of a grateful nation that their service to our country is just as equal as the soldiers with whom they stood shoulder to shoulder on the field of battle.

COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY BILL

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, there was an energy bill brought to the floor yesterday, but unfortunately, it was not a comprehensive bill or open for debate, and no Member was allowed to offer any amendment expanding the scope.

The bill passed restricts miles of coastal States like my State of South Carolina. It tells us what we can explore, and it prohibits the States from sharing any revenues. That's a bad deal for coastal States, and it's a bad deal for this country.

It imposes a new 15 percent renewable energy requirement on utilities, but it leaves out energy sources like nuclear, most hydro and even clean coal. South Carolina gets about 50 percent of its power from nuclear energy, and this legislation will penalize my State. So it's a bad deal for South Carolina, and it's a bad deal for this country.

Madam Speaker, what I also left out of this so-called comprehensive bill is coal-to-liquid technology, increased refinery capacity, domestic exploration in ANWR, and nuclear energy—our cleanest and safest supply of energy that we have.

Madam Speaker, the bill passed is a bad deal for America. There is a smarter way. Let's bring comprehensive energy legislation like the American Energy Act to the floor.

REPUBLICANS ARE IN THE POCKET OF BIG OIL, NOT INTERESTED IN HELPING STRUGGLING AMERICANS

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

Mr. ARCURI. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, Democrats passed a comprehensive solution to the country's energy crisis, but for all of their talk about solving this problem, Republicans still oppose the effort. It's no surprise the Republicans are against this commonsense energy plan. The plan makes Big Oil pay royalties on land they've leased for years so Americans can start benefiting from oil companies drilling on our land. That's only fair. It is the American people's land. Shouldn't they get some of the benefits?

Our legislation also repeals tax breaks and subsidies that Big Oil has been getting for years, thanks to the Washington Republicans. Every quarter, Big Oil is announcing larger profits. They don't need corporate welfare. This comprehensive energy legislation will help people—those middle class Americans suffering from high gas prices and dealing with the failed Bush-McCain economy at the same time.

Madam Speaker, Tuesday's energy vote shows that Democrats are working to help the American people, not lining the pockets of Big Oil.

A PRETEND BILL

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, there is a song in a Broadway musical that reads "there's a fine, fine line between reality and pretend." That signifies, I think, what this House has been doing this last week.

There is a real energy crisis that's harming people. There was a real energy solution, an all-of-the-above, that was not allowed the courtesy of an open debate. Instead, we passed a pretend bill that pretended to open up the offshore when it did not, that pretended that the oil in ANWR does not exist, that pretended that coal and nuclear is not a part of our solution, that pretended that there is enough money to develop alternative sources when there is not, that pretended to be a serious solution, but all it did is allow anybody, whether they voted for or against it, to go home to his or her district and say, "I did something on energy."

We were on the cusp of doing something great, but instead, the reality is all we did is legitimize the cynicism people have of this particular body. We could have done so much more. The fact that we did not is a sad indictment of the process of this Congress.