

Roll Call

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Boehner Debuts as Statesman

New Speaker Engenders Unity, Not Partisanship

BY ANNA PALMER

This was not the first week on the job that Speaker John Boehner envisioned.

Rather than cheering his first legislative victory—the repeal of the Democratic health care reform law—the Ohio Republican marked his eighth day by delivering a tearful tribute on the floor to victims of the Arizona shootings. Instead of playing the role of a partisan, Boehner found himself practicing the art of a statesman.

“Our hearts are broken, but our spirit is not,” Boehner said Wednesday in floor remarks on the tragedy. “This is a time for the House to lock arms, in prayer for those fallen and wounded, and in resolve to carry on the dialogue of democracy. We may not yet have all the answers, but we already have the answer that matters most: that we are Americans, and together we will make it through this. We will have the last word.”

Later, during a closed-door bipartisan prayer service, Boehner told Members: “Our nation mourns for the victims. It yearns for peace. And it thirsts for answers.”

Boehner had been Speaker for just three days when the mass shooting occurred. Within hours, he issued a public statement condemning the attack and—along with Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-Va.)—canceled all regular House business for the week. As liberal and conservative outside groups and bloggers pointed fingers, Boehner joined his fellow Members in calling for unity.

Republicans and Democrats alike said Boehner has had a calming influence in a time of crisis.

Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, a former House Democrat who attended Wednesday’s prayer service, gave Boehner high marks for his handling of a difficult situation. She said, “We have to work together”

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Senate Sergeant-at-Arms Terrance Gainer looks down on the Cannon Rotunda on Wednesday as Members, staff and visitors sign condolence books for Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and others. He participated in a security briefing for Senate staff later in the day.

Bill Clark/Roll Call

Security Fears Color Day of Tribute

BY JOHN STANTON AND DANIEL NEUHAUSER

As lawmakers gathered in the House Wednesday to reflect on the assassination attempt on Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, grief was beginning to give way to frustration over a lack of security not only for themselves but also for their staffs.

Party leaders gathered in the morn-

ing in the House chamber to begin an emotional daylong tribute to the Arizona Democrat and the other victims.

Speaker John Boehner (R-Ohio) set the tone, giving an emotional speech prais-



Go to rollcall.com to watch a video of Members reflecting on the shootings in Arizona.

ing Giffords and Gabe Zimmerman, her outreach director who was killed in the attacks, and he called for the nation to come together.

But the somber floor speeches were a contrast to some of the anger and fear expressed in closed-door security briefings for Members, after which some began reverting to their partisan ways.

See **SECURITY**, Page 7

Republican Redistricting Efforts Bankrupt for 2011?

BY NATHAN L. GONZALES

Republicans are in danger of entering the next stage of redistricting at a significant financial disadvantage thanks to a cash-strapped Republican National Com-

mittee and a high-profile outside group that never got off the ground.

In 2009, former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.), former Speaker Newt Gingrich (R-Ga.) and GOP lobbyist Charlie Black were part of

a group that started Making America’s Promise Secure. The 501(c)(4) was supposed to handle the analytical and legal legs of the redistricting tripod for the GOP.

Traditionally, the RNC centralized the Republican redistricting effort using soft money donations. But the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002 banned soft money and left Republicans scrambling to reconfigure their redistricting strategy.

See **REDISTRICTING**, Page 8

MORNING BUSINESS

GOP Ready to Get Back on Track

Conference gathers in Baltimore to plan the way forward and restart its agenda for the 112th Congress. Page 3

Nomination Backlog

Senate Democrats are hoping to renew talks with Republicans to speed confirmation of nominees. Page 3

Obama’s Head For Business

New Chief of Staff William Daley has strong K Street connections that have business groups hopeful. Page 3

Turton Service Set for Friday

A memorial service for former Hill staffer Ashley Turton will be at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church. Page 3

Not Partying Like It’s 2009

RNC has a lot to feel good about as members choose a new chairman and look to improve on 2010 gains. Page 4

Conrad Rival Exploring Bid

North Dakota Republican Brian Kalk files paperwork for potential bid versus Sen. Kent Conrad. Page 4

Heard on the Hill

By Elizabeth Brotherton and Alison McSherry

Prom Season News. Christiane Amanpour will host the Washington Press Club Foundation’s Congressional dinner Feb. 9.

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DEAR MEMBERS of CONGRESS,

As Americans and members of the human family, we are grieved by the recent tragedy in Tucson, Arizona. As Christian, Muslim and Jewish leaders, we pray together for all those wounded, including Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords as she fights for her life. Our hearts break for those lives lost and for the loved ones left behind. We also stand with you, our elected officials, as you continue to serve our nation while coping with the trauma of this senseless attack.

This tragedy has spurred a sorely needed time of soul searching and national public dialogue about violent and vitriolic political rhetoric. We strongly support this reflection, as we are deeply troubled that rancor, threats

and incivility have become commonplace in our public debates.

We appreciate the sacrifices you make and risks you incur by accepting a call to public service, and we urge you to continue to serve as stewards of our democracy by engaging ideological adversaries not as enemies, but as fellow Americans.

In our communities and congregations, we pledge to foster an environment conducive to the important and difficult debates so crucial to American democracy. In our churches, mosques and synagogues, we come together not as members of a certain political ideology or party, but as children of God and citizens called to build a more perfect union. We pray that you do the same.

SIGNED,

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