

Administration, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, I joined the President and Health and Human Services Secretary Shalala today at the White House to call on Congress to approve a prescription drug benefit in Medicare. We also called on private health plans to continue providing coverage for medicine that doctors prescribe.

The problem is twofold. Millions of Americans, young and old, cannot afford the high costs of prescription drugs. And the majority in Congress refuse to lift a finger to reduce these prices and help protect public health.

Unlike other industrialized nations, the U.S. does not regulate drug prices. So drug companies charge us the highest prices of any nation by multiples of two and three and even four times what citizens in other countries pay.

Within the United States, drug companies are charging the highest prices to those with the least bargaining power, the elderly and those without health insurance. Drug companies are diverting also huge sums of money, money that comes from inflated drug prices, into advertising.

From a market perspective, drug companies are doing everything they should be doing. We cannot blame drug companies for maximizing their profits. They make more money than any other industry in America. That is their job. Nor can we blame the President and many of us in Congress for taking steps to protect seniors and the uninsured and to address the ramifications of what drug companies are doing to the disadvantaged. That is our job.

I have introduced an initiative that would bring down prices without taking away the industry's incentive to act like an industry. My bill promotes good old-fashioned American competition.

The Affordable Prescription Drug Act, H.R. 2927, does not use price controls or regulations to bring down prescription drug prices. What my bill does is reduce drug industry power and increase consumer power by subjecting the drug industry to the same competitive forces that other industries bear. It is a means of moderating prices that are too high without inadvertently setting prices too low.

Drawing from intellectual property laws already in place in the U.S. for other products in which access is an issue, pollution control devices as one example, legislation would establish product licensing for essential prescription drugs.

If a drug price is so outrageously high that it bears no semblance to pricing norms for other industries, the Federal Government could require drug manufacturers to license their patent to generic drug companies. The generic companies could sell competing products before the brand name expires, paying the patentholder royalties for that right. The patentholder would still be amply rewarded for being the first on the market, and Americans would benefit from competitively driven prices.

Alternatively, a drug company could lower voluntarily their price, which would preclude the Government from finding cause for product licensing. Either way, Madam Speaker, the price of prescription drugs would go down.

The bill requires drug companies to provide audited, detailed information on drug company expenses. Given that these companies are asking us to accept a status quo that has bankrupt seniors and fueled health care inflation, they have kept us guessing about their true cost for far too long.

We can continue to buy into drug industry threats that R&D will dry up unless we continue to shelter them from competition. That argument, however, Madam Speaker, falls apart when we look at how R&D is funded today.

Long story short, most of research and development dollars are provided by U.S. taxpayers. Get this: fifty percent of all the research and development for drug development in this country are paid for by taxpayers and the National Institutes of Health and other Federal and State agencies; and of the 50 percent that drug companies actually spend, they get tax deductions from Congress for that.

Yet, prescription drug companies reward American taxpayers by charging Americans consumers two times, three times, four times the price for prescription drugs that people in other countries pay.

Madam Speaker, we can do nothing in this body, or we can dare to challenge the drug industry on behalf of seniors and every health care consumer in this country.

I urge my colleagues to support lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. COBURN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from North Carolina (Mr. ETHERIDGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ETHERIDGE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. WEYGAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WEYGAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP: LEAD BY EXAMPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. STRICKLAND. Madam Speaker, I have introduced today a sense-of-Congress resolution. This sense-of-Congress resolution simply says that if we are going to engage in an across-the-board cut in all the Federal agencies, then Members of Congress should accept a similar cut in their salaries.

I would like to share the contents of my resolution:

"Whereas, Congress may pass an across-the-board funding reduction for Federal agencies to bring closure to the debate on Fiscal Year 2000 funding levels;

Whereas, lawmakers voted themselves a 3.4 percent cost-of-living adjustment this year;

Whereas, salaries of Members of Congress would not be affected by an across-the-board reduction;

Whereas, the rest of the Government's payroll would be affected by the proposed reduction, which would likely result in layoffs and temporary furloughs;

Whereas, it is estimated that the reductions could force layoffs of 39,000 military personnel; and

Whereas, programs at the Department of Education, Department of Labor, and the Department of Health and Human Services, programs such as Meals on Wheels, the National Institutes of Health, Head Start, and the Safe and Drug Free Schools program would be reduced.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that any across-the-board funding reduction for agencies in Fiscal Year 2000 should also include the same reduction for salaries of Members of Congress."

Why have I introduced this resolution? It is because a 1.4 percent reduction, as is being discussed, would lead to approximately 103,000 fewer women, infants, and children from benefiting from the food assistance and nutrition programs offered under the WIC program.

Title I, which provides educational benefits for disadvantaged students, would be cut by \$109 million. Head Start would be cut so that some 6,700 fewer children would be able to benefit from Head Start programs.

The Centers for Disease Control would be cut by approximately \$6.7 million. And a reduction of \$35.7 million would take place in the area of substance abuse and mental health services, thereby denying over 5,000 American citizens access to mental health treatment and drug abuse services.

Vital programs for our farming community would be cut by \$124 million. A 1.4 percent reduction would result in \$3.9 billion being cuts from defense. This cut would require that military services make cuts in recruiting and engage in force separations of up to 39,000 military personnel.

Madam Speaker, I think blanket cuts are unwise and unnecessary. But if the leadership of this House is intent on forcing such cuts indiscriminately on good programs as well as bad, then they ought to be willing to bear some of the burden themselves and take a pay cut.

It is unseemly for this Congress to ask the American people to tighten their belts while not doing the same itself. With this sense-of Congress-resolution, I am simply asking that Members of Congress be consistent. If they really think it is wise to make blind cuts, then they should not be exempting their own salaries.

Quite frankly, I am sick and tired of the leadership up here treating themselves as special people while imposing hardships on ordinary Americans.

As we say in southern Ohio, what is good for the goose is good for the gander.

□ 2000

SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. WILSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

ON PASSING OF SENATOR CHAFEE

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I would like to begin by expressing my words of recognition and condolences to the family of Senator CHAFEE. He clearly distinguished the legislative branch of government with service that was bipartisan, common sense, moderate, centrist, and simply was a personal example of integrity and honesty and courage, the like of which some suggest we have too little of around here at this time. In any event, he set the bar very high and it would do well for all of us as we mourn his passing to reflect carefully on his example and embrace it in our own lives to the extent we can. Again, that would be a tall order. Senator CHAFEE in my last visit with him was leading a bipartisan discussion on how we might somehow form a breakthrough in a knotty health policy issue that had divided the parties, divided the Chambers. It was just one example I got to see up close and personal the kind of bipartisan,

nonideological, let-us-solve-the-problem leadership that Senator CHAFEE brought to his work, and clearly the work of the legislative branch was distinguished as a result of his efforts.

Tonight, I am leading a special order about Social Security. In the course of our discussion, I want to provide background about the nature of the program. I also want to discuss the debate that is waging at the moment relative to the budget discussions between the two political parties, and I want to focus on really the missing element of what has captured much of the present discussion, and that is the steps we must take to preserve the solvency of the program, to make certain that it is there not just for us but for our children and our grandchildren as well.

As will be the course in the course of this hour, as commonly happens during these special orders, I have invited several Members of the Democratic Caucus to join me on the floor this evening, and while many will no longer be available in light of the hour, I am very pleased to see the gentleman from Florida here.

Madam Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BOYD).

Mr. BOYD. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding so that I might have an opportunity to address the Nation on this very important issue of Social Security.

Madam Speaker, the district that I represent, which is like many other congressional districts across the Nation, has more than 76,000 people over the age of 65 who receive Social Security. Tens of millions of people across the country rely on this important program for their long-term retirement needs. This makes Social Security one of the most important programs administered by the Federal Government. Everybody in Washington has concluded that finally.

Madam Speaker, I am very troubled by much of the rhetoric that we have been hearing on Social Security over the last few weeks. The rhetoric over Social Security basically has been over what we do with surplus dollars. It really has nothing to do with extending the life of the Social Security trust fund, and that is what we should be talking about.

Now, Madam Speaker, the last time I checked, the law says that the only way we can spend surplus dollars or use the surplus dollars is invest them in treasury notes. And this Congress has made no attempt to change that, nor has that been suggested in any of the rhetoric that has been going on for the last several weeks. All of this fighting and rhetoric over the surplus tends to hide the fact that no action has been taken to extend the life of the Social Security trust fund. According to the Social Security trustees, beginning in the year 2014, the Social Security trust fund will take in less taxes than it pays out in benefits. This means that Social Security will need to redeem the treasury notes it holds starting in the year

2014. By the year 2034, all of those treasury notes will have been paid in full, with interest. Once those notes are repaid, the Social Security trust fund will not have any additional revenue coming in other than the payroll taxes paid in that year to pay the promised benefits, and this will result in a significant decrease in the benefit of about 25 percent. Again, that starts under current projections in the year 2034. This long-term crisis is what Congress should be addressing now, not arguing about the surplus dollars of today. Because the longer we wait, the harder it will be to financially address and solve this very serious long-term crisis.

There have been several plans suggested by both Democrats and Republicans to address this crisis, and my Republican colleagues in the majority up to this point have not considered any of them. At the State of the Union address, President Clinton put forward his plan. The Kolbe-Stenholm plan, a Democrat and Republican, has been introduced. It is a bipartisan plan. The Archer-Shaw plan has been proposed, as well as other plans which Congress should be considering. While no action has been taken on any of these plans this year, at a minimum this congressional leadership and the President should work together to set aside funding to enact Social Security reform, meaningful, substantive Social Security reform. This idea was first proposed in the Blue Dog budget back in the spring as a way to provide the funds necessary to ensure the long-term fiscal viability of the Social Security trust fund. That budget, I might say, enjoyed bipartisan support. Under our plan, the Blue Dog plan, we would set aside \$83 billion over the next 5 years of non-Social Security surplus to help pay for any reform proposal that Congress might adopt. Again, this does not exclude any reform option. All it does is ensure that we can pay for whatever plan that the Congress and the President ultimately agree upon.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I want to urge the congressional leadership and President Clinton to include these provisions which will fund substantive Social Security reform in any final budget agreement that they reach. After all of the rhetoric has ended, I believe that laying the groundwork for Social Security reform is the best thing that we can do this year to address the crisis facing the trust fund and ensure that Social Security and its benefits are there for our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mr. POMEROY. Reclaiming my time from the gentleman from Florida, I want to thank him for an excellent discussion which really is reflective of a great deal of work the gentleman has provided and leadership on this issue. I thank him very much for his contribution.

Madam Speaker, as I discussed in the opening, what I want to do over the next few minutes is talk about Social