

REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR DAY AND OUR NATION'S HEROES

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, on this day in 1941, Japan attacked and launched a sudden stealth attack on the United States by bombing the naval base in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. This sneak attack on Pearl Harbor caused widespread destruction and death, similar to the devastation and destruction that would become an all too unfortunate characteristic of World War II.

This day, which will live in infamy, began our Nation's involvement in a war which Americans will never forget. Our World War II veterans served our Nation proudly and made great sacrifices to protect our country and our future. As a veteran myself, I greatly admire the courage and fortitude of those who served in World War II.

The United States is the leader of the world today because of their valiant contributions. On this solemn day, Mr. Speaker, I encourage every Member to take a moment and recognize the service and sacrifice of our veterans, especially those Americans who had to witness two world wars in one century. You made our Nation what it is today. We all thank you.

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TRIBUTE TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN NEW JERSEY

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride that I rise today and bring attention to a report that was recently released by the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. The report, entitled "Measuring Up 2000," found New Jersey is among the country's best places to live for families that have college-bound students in their household.

One reason is that New Jersey's elementary and secondary education rates are among the top in the Nation which is what prepares our college-bound students. In fact, New Jersey students have a 92 percent high school graduation rate and high SAT and advance placement scores. Fifty-four percent of high school freshmen enrolled in college after completion of high school and 39 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds enrolled in college.

New Jersey's institutions of higher learning also achieved high scores in categories such as preparation, participation, benefits, and affordability.

As a former teacher and Congressman for the Eighth Congressional District, I am very proud of this report. I ask all the Members to read it. I think it would be very worthwhile.

WORKING TOGETHER ON ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, despite years of record economic expansion, there are storm clouds gathering on the horizon. One of those dark clouds is American energy policy, which for the last 8 years has been, in effect, an anti-energy policy, thwarting domestic energy supplies and driving up costs with needless regulations.

As winter sets in, natural gas and crude oil prices are at record levels and it is the American worker who must shoulder these increases. As Governor Bush points out, we need to unite across party lines and work together for the American people. Formulating a new domestic energy policy is a perfect place to start.

Together we can ensure that new energy technologies receive proper R&D funding. We can reduce our over-reliance on foreign oil through environmentally sound domestic production. We can reduce pollution without resorting to flawed emissions trading schemes; and we can combine forces to see that clean coal, natural gas, nuclear, and hydro continue to provide the reliable and safe energy that drives the U.S. economy.

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ON ELECTORAL COLLEGE REFORM

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the election mess in Florida and the closeness of the election throughout the Nation has cemented the fact that we must reform the electoral college.

Today, I have introduced legislation to amend the Constitution to provide two middle-of-the-road options. Neither will totally scrap the system, yet both will allow the voters more of a voice in electing the President.

The first resolution, or the proportional plan, will change the electoral college system by awarding electoral votes in each State based on the percentage of the popular vote gained by each ticket in that State. For instance, if one candidate got 60 percent of the popular vote in a State, he would get 60 percent of the electoral votes of that State and the other candidate getting 40 percent would get 40 percent of the votes in that State.

The second bill, or the district plan, will award one electoral vote to the candidate who wins in each congressional district in the country with the additional two electoral votes of each State awarded to the winner of the popular vote in each State.

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This plan is already in place in Maine and Nebraska, and several State legislatures are going to be considering

adopting it. It just does not seem right, as we have the current situation in Florida, where all the electoral votes of that State hinge on a few hundred votes either way.

So I offer these two proposals as a way to begin the discussion and further this debate. There is a place for tradition in our country and a place for reform, and I think these proposals offer an equitable balance between the two.

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ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). The Chair will proceed to recognize Members for Special Order speeches without prejudice to the possible resumption of legislative business.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

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

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

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COMMENDING SOUTH DAKOTA'S WILL MERCHEN AND JOSH HEUPEL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the well of the House today to pay special tribute and recognition to two incredible South Dakotans.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with you and my colleagues the stories of two great young men from my great State. Both men have very different lives; but their actions, leadership and talents are far reaching, and I would like all of us to recognize them today.

First, Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with the body the story, the amazing story, about a young man from Aberdeen, South Dakota. Josh Heupel is the son of Ken and Cindy Heupel. Josh attends Oklahoma University in Norman, Oklahoma. This is the home district of my friend and colleague, our conference cochair, the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS). I point this out because I believe that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. WATTS) and I share the same appreciation for the type of person that Josh Heupel is.

You see, Mr. Speaker, Josh Heupel is not your ordinary student. From age 4, he has been submerged in the world of

football. He would go with his father, Ken, then assistant coach at Aberdeen's Northern State University, to watch hours of football game film with other coaches.

After playing football in high school, Josh considered himself lucky to play for Weber State in Ogden, Utah. There he red-shirted in 1996 and suffered a knee injury in 1997. He threw himself into two-a-day workouts, hoping to win the starting spot at Weaver, but injured himself again.

Josh moved on to Snow Junior College in Ephraim, Utah, where he shared the starting quarterback position with the leading juco passer in the Nation. In just 10 first halves that season, Josh completed 153 of 258 passes for 2,308 yards and 28 touchdowns. That was more than good enough for the University of Oklahoma. They took on Josh Heupel. And today, as leading quarterback, Heupel, or "Hype" as his teammates call him, Josh has led Oklahoma to a 12 and 0 record and a trip to the Orange Bowl for the national championship showdown. He has completed 280 of 433 passes for 3,392 yards and 20 touchdowns. He has at least one touchdown pass in all 24 of his career games at Oklahoma, and has passed for more than 300 yards in 14 of them.

He has already been named the Big 12 Conference Player of the Year, the Walter Camp Player of the Year, and the Sporting News College Football Player of the Year, and today he was named the Associated Press College Player of the Year.

Today, he and his mom, Cindy, his dad, Ken, and his sister, Andrea, spend the day at ceremonies. Josh is in the running for the Maxwell Award, which goes to the best player in college football, and the Davey O'Brien National Quarterback Award.

It is not surprising that Josh Heupel is one of the four finalists for the naming of the best quarterback in the country. This Saturday, Heupel will be accompanied by his family and will be awaiting the announcement of the next Heisman Trophy winner. He is the only South Dakotan ever to be considered and nominated for such a prestigious award.

His coach, Bob Stoops, calls him "the factor" for Oklahoma's number one ranking, and "the heart of the team." Others say he is the biggest reason that the Sooners are going to the Orange Bowl for a shot at the national championship against Florida State.

But I want you to listen, Mr. Speaker, to what his mom, Cindy, says. "These individual awards are very prestigious, but if you know Josh, they're not what matters. The opportunity to play for the national title is what really matters. You've got to know Josh. He is for real. The team goals are what he wants." She goes on to say that Josh will pass the credit for his awards to his coaches and teammates, that the awards are team awards.

But there is more to Josh Heupel than just football. Josh is a good stu-

dent at the University of Oklahoma. He attends Bible study twice a week with his sister, Andrea, a freshman at the university. Josh has dedicated himself to civic duty. He makes visits to sick children. And just last year, Josh came up with an idea to help area families in Norman, Oklahoma, with a food drive. In the second year, they received more than 1,500 pounds of food and more than \$5,000, all spearheaded by Josh Heupel.

A representative from the University of Oklahoma told my office that one of the things that most impressed him about Josh was that on Media Day, Josh Heupel stayed until every child and fan who wanted one got his autograph.

I think that his talent and skill on the football field cannot overshadow this young man's character. Josh Heupel is an outstanding young man who is humble and deeply committed to his faith.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, everyone from South Dakota, and I believe from Oklahoma as well, will be rooting for Josh Heupel on Saturday as the last votes for the Heisman Trophy are counted. But in my book, the score is already final. Josh Heupel has won our hearts and our hopes. He does not need a Heisman Trophy to prove it. Josh Heupel's mom was right, Josh really is the real thing. And for that, I wish him, his family and his team the very best.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to commend this afternoon another inspiring South Dakotan. I would like to recognize a 20-year-old man by the name of Will Merchen of Rapid City, South Dakota.

Will graduated from Rapid City Central High School in 1999, married his high school sweetheart, Bethany, and started a family. But Will was always stirred by a sense of adventure. He earned the highest position of Eagle Scout, and it was not a surprise to his parents when he thought about joining the United States Navy. In January 1999, Will raised his right hand and made a decision that would change his life dramatically.

You see, Mr. Speaker, 20-year-old Will Merchen was assigned as a damage controlman third class aboard the U.S.S. *Cole*. We have all seen the pictures of the 40-by-40-foot gaping hole in the hull of the U.S.S. *Cole* after the apparent terrorist attack on October 12. We have all seen the grief on the faces of the wounded sailors and their families. But in all this tragedy, I would like to tell you a story about a brave young soul who made it his duty to make sure that all the wounded were rescued and that the ship was saved. This, Mr. Speaker, is Will Merchen's story.

As the number one nozzle man, Will was a specialist at putting out fires and stopping flooding at sea. But he never dreamed that his skills and knowledge would be tested just 3 months into his first 6-month cruise on a destroyer.

Will was in a compartment 15 feet from the site of the explosion. After being thrown to the floor, Will and his crewmates raced to retrieve their emergency equipment and began looking for others. Donned in scuba gear, gloves and fire helmets with headlamps, the three damage controlmen worked their way toward the site.

Amidst the screams, the men helped friends and officers, many of them wounded, to safety. They could not save a senior chief, who spent his last seconds alive with the men. Will and his team used the Jaws of Life to cut half a dozen wounded sailors from wreckage and debris. Then they began the task of removing bodies of their shipmates. In his words Will said, "We called it search and rescue, but that was optimistic. Everyone knows what we were doing. I will never, ever, forget."

Will himself lost three very close friends in that tragedy.

But Will and his team's job was not yet finished. They still needed to stabilize the ship from the rushing waters. Will Merchen and damage controlmen worked for 48 hours straight after the blast to empty flooded compartments and save their shipmates. In the end, 17 sailors died, more than three dozen injured, but because Will Merchen survived, many of his shipmates are alive today.

Retired General William W. Crouch, a member of the special commission investigating the attack on the *Cole*, said this of the damage control teams: "It was an inspired performance and one which every American should be proud of. Those sailors saved themselves, their shipmates, they saved the U.S.S. *Cole*." That is exactly what Will Merchen did. This young man went beyond the call of duty.

Mr. Speaker, when Will took some well-deserved time off with his wife Bethany, their 17-month-old daughter, Ellen, his parents, Bill and Betty, and his brother, Scott, in Black Hawk, South Dakota, he shared this with a local reporter: "I joined the Navy because my father was a first class petty officer on board the U.S.S. *Seattle*. The Navy helped him become a great man, and I hope the same for myself. I am proud of the core values, honor, courage and commitment which the Navy has taught me, and I plan to apply them to all aspects of my life."

Mr. Speaker, I draw attention today to Will Merchen and to his colleagues on that ship, and perhaps particularly fitting on this anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, as our country remembers, recognizes, the great sacrifice that is made by these young men and women on a daily basis to keep America safe and strong and secure.

Will Merchen, you already have demonstrated the values of honor, courage and commitment in your life; and for that, many of your crewmates and their families and our country can be

grateful. We are honored to have you continue in serving our great country in the United States Navy.

Mr. Speaker, Will Merchen and Josh Heupel are young men that have already accomplished much, and they have very promising futures ahead of them; and they are an example of the type of character, the type of values, the type of principled commitment to action that I believe is reflective and represented in my great State of South Dakota. For these young men's efforts in their particular fields, I am particularly grateful and proud; and I know that South Dakota is very, very proud as well.

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PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to talk today about the high cost of prescription drugs and a little bit about what happened on this issue this year, both here in Congress and why this issue became an important issue in the presidential election, and talk about some proposed solutions to this problem as we look forward to the 107th Congress next year, because, Mr. Speaker, I am afraid we will end up this 106th Congress without addressing at least in a major way the high cost of prescription drugs. We have done something on this which I will talk about a little bit later.

Mr. Speaker, what is the problem? Why do we have such high prescription drug costs? How are those high prescription drug costs affecting people in the country?

Mr. Speaker, this is a photo of William Newton, who is 74 years old. He is from Altoona, Iowa. He is a constituent in my district whose savings vanished when his late wife, Juanita, whose picture he is holding, needed prescription drugs that cost as much as \$600 a month. Mr. Newton said, "She had to have them. There was no choice. It's a very serious situation and it isn't getting any better because drugs keep going up and up."

Mr. Speaker, when James Weinman of Indianola, Iowa, just south of Des Moines where I live, and his wife, Maxine, make their annual trip to Texas, the two make a side trip, as well. They cross the border to Mexico and they load up on prescription drugs, which are not covered under their MediGap plan. Their prescription drugs cost less than half as much in Mexico as they do in Iowa.

This problem is not localized to Iowa, it is everywhere. The problem that Dot Lamb, an 86-year-old woman in Portland, Maine, who has hypertension, asthma, arthritis, and osteoporosis, has paying for her prescription drugs is all too common. She takes five pre-

scription drugs that cost over \$200 total each month, over 20 percent of her monthly income. Medicare and her supplemental insurance do not cover prescription drugs.

Mr. Speaker, I recently received a letter from a computer-savvy senior citizen who volunteers at a hospital that I worked in before coming to Congress.

Dear Congressman Ganske . . . after completing a University of Iowa study on Celebrex 200 milligrams for arthritis, I got a prescription from my M.D. and picked it up at the hospital pharmacy. My cost was \$2.43 per pill with a volunteer discount!

He goes on:

Later on the Internet I found the following:

A. I can order these drugs through a Canadian pharmacy if I use a doctor certified in Canada or my doctor can order it "on my behalf" through his office, for 96 cents per pill, plus shipping;

B. I can order these drugs through PharmaWorld in Geneva, Switzerland, after paying either of two American doctors \$70 for a phone consultation, at a cost of \$1.05 per pill, plus handling and shipping.

C. I can send \$15 to a Texan,

which may interest the Speaker,

and get a phone number at a Mexican pharmacy which will send it without a prescription . . . at a price of 52 cents per pill.

This constituent closes his letter to me by saying,

I urge you, Dr. Ganske, to pursue the reform of medical costs and stop the outlandish plundering by pharmaceutical companies.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear, I am in favor of prescription drugs being more affordable, not just for senior citizens but for all Americans. Let us look at the facts of the problem, and then we will discuss some solutions.

There is no question that prices for drugs are rising rapidly. A recent report found that the prices of the 50 top-selling drugs for seniors rose much faster than inflation. Thirty-three of the 50 drugs rose in price at least 1½ times inflation. Half of the drugs increased at twice inflation. Sixteen drugs increased at least three times the inflation rate, and 20 percent of the 50 top selling drugs for senior citizens rose at least four times the rate of inflation in the last year.

The prices of some drugs are rising even faster. Furosemide, a generic diuretic, rose 50 percent in 1999. Klor-con 10, a brand name drug, rose 43.8 percent.

That was not a 1-year phenomenon. Thirty-nine of these 50 drugs have been on the market for at least 6 years. The prices of three-fourths of this group rose at least 1.5 times inflation, over half rose at twice inflation, more than 25 percent increased at three times inflation, and six drugs at over five times inflation. Lorazepam rose 27 times inflation and furosemide 14 times inflation in the last 6 years.

Prilosec is one of the two top-selling drugs prescribed for seniors. The annual cost for that 20 milligram GI drug,

unless one has some type of drug discount, is \$1,455. For a widow at 150 percent of poverty, the annual cost of Prilosec alone will consume more than \$1 in \$9 of that senior's total budget.

Let us look at a widow living on \$16,700 a year. That is 200 percent of poverty. That is a lot more than a lot of widows have. If she has diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol, so she is taking a glucophage, Procardin, and Lipitor, her drug costs are going to be 13.7 percent of her income. If she is just taking that drug Prilosec for acid reflux disease, we can see that one drug alone even at this income represents about 8.7 percent of her total income.

My friend from Des Moines, the Iowa Lutheran hospital volunteer senior citizen, as do the Weinmans from Indiana from their shopping trips in Mexico for prescription drugs, know that drug prices are much higher in the United States than they are in other countries.

A story from USA Today comparing U.S. drug prices to prices in Canada, Great Britain, and Australia for the 10 best-selling drugs verified that drug prices are higher here in the United States than overseas.

For example, that drug Prilosec for acid reflux is 2 to 2½ times as expensive in the United States. Prozac was 2 to 2½ times as expensive. Lipitor was 50 percent to 92 percent more expensive. Prevacid was as much as four times more expensive. Only one drug, Epogen, was cheaper in the United States than in the other countries.

High drug prices have been a problem for the past decade. Two GAO studies from 1992 and 1994 showed the same results. Comparing prices for 121 drugs sold in the United States and Canada, prices for 98 of the drugs were higher in the United States. Comparing 77 drugs sold in the United States and the United Kingdom, 86 percent of the drugs were higher in the United States, and three out of five were more than twice as high.

Look at this chart that shows some of the high drug prices in the United States, that is the first row, compared to the European price: Prozac, \$36.12 in the United States; the European price, \$18.50. Claritin, one of the most popular antihistamines: in the United States, \$44; in Europe, \$8.75. We can go right down this list. Here is one, Premarin. In the United States, it is \$14.98; in Europe, \$4.25.

Mr. Speaker, the drug companies claim that drug prices are so high here because of research and development costs. I do want to say that there is a great need for research. For example, around the world, we are seeing an explosion of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, like tuberculosis, and we are going to need research and development for new drugs.

A new report by the World Health Organization outlines that concern on infectious diseases. However, data from PhRMA, the pharmaceutical trade organization, that I saw presented in Chicago several months ago showed little