

States have already negotiated discounts with the pharmaceutical companies. We know who these individuals are because they are already getting discounts on their premiums and co-payments and deductibility.

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We could simply give them a card that would enable them to access the State formulary for their State Medicaid drug programs free for those individuals, at no cost for them. We could pay for it through the Federal side. Estimates are that that would probably cost about \$60 to \$80 billion over 10 years. It might be more than that, but that is a lot less than what we are talking about with the other plans. We can afford that. It would be an important first step.

We ought to also fix the funding formula in which some States, particularly rural States, have such low reimbursement rates that Medicare HMOs are never there. We ought to raise that floor, reduce the gap between some States and other States, so that we have an equitable benefit through the Medicare plan. And that would require a floor of at least \$600. We already have Medicare HMOs that are leaving areas where they are getting paid \$550 per month per beneficiary. Raising it to \$480 or \$450 is never going to induce those Medicare+Choice plans to go into the rural areas.

And in response to my constituents who want to purchase their drugs from Canada or Mexico or Europe, we started to address that problem in Congress this year, and it has been signed into law, and that is on the reimportation of drugs that are made in this country, packaged here, shipped overseas, whether or not they can legally come back into the country. However, we need to go back to that issue, because there were some loopholes in that legislation that passed the House and the Senate that we need to fix. We need to strengthen that law. That would help a lot. That would increase the competition. In my opinion it would automatically result in lower drug prices, not just for senior citizens but for everyone.

I think we should enact full tax deductibility for the self-insured. I think that we should look at those 11 million children that do not have any health insurance and, consequently, do not have any prescription drug coverage. Roughly 7 million of those kids already qualify for Medicaid in the State Child Health Insurance Programs. Those children should be enrolled. We should do things to help those States get those kids enrolled.

Many pharmaceutical companies do have programs to help low-income people afford prescription drugs. Both physicians and patients need to be better educated to take advantage of those discounted drugs. Currently, 16 States have pharmaceutical assistance programs targeted to Medicare beneficiaries different from the Medicaid solution.

My colleagues, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) and the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON), have a bill, the Medicare Beneficiary Prescription Drug Assistance and Stop Loss Protection Act, which would allow beneficiaries up to 200 percent to get into programs like that. But that would require, in many States, the creation of whole new bureaucracies. I think there is a simpler solution. The solution is to utilize the State Medicaid drug programs.

I think that we should revise the FDA Reform Act of 1997, and we should restrict direct marketing to consumers in a way that does not limit their free speech but at least requires that they provide equal time to discussing the possible complications of those new drugs as they do to the benefits.

Finally, I think the new Congress could actually get signed into law a combination of the above in a bipartisan fashion. Yes, it is more limited than what the Clinton-Gore administration has proposed; it is more limited than what passed this House, but it has many advantages in that it is a step-by-step progression and it is something that I think is common sense and responsible until we are able to look at a more comprehensive prescription drug benefit in the context of making sure that Medicare stays solvent when the baby boomers retire.

This is a complicated subject. At the beginning of the speech, I said there was not yet a consensus on how we go on this. But I know this: On something this important, the only things that get done in Washington are done in a bipartisan way. There will be some on both sides that say it does not go far enough; there will be some that say my proposal goes too far, that we do not want to expand Medicare beneficiaries into State Medicaid drug plans. But I think I am hitting a down-the-middle approach to this, and I am going to be reintroducing my bill in the beginning of this next Congress. I sure hope that a lot of Members will take some time, listen to this special order speech, look at the bill and the information that we will be providing to them, and think about this as a solution that we can do for now.

Finally, I want to say this: For a long time, in its wisdom, Congress has gone through what is known as "regular order" with legislation. That means a bill, and all of its details, is dropped in that bin over there. It is made public. We have hearings on those bills. We compare language to other bills. We look at the implications of the legislative language. We have subcommittee markups with amendments and debate. And then we have a full committee markup with amendments and debate. Then we have it go to the Committee on Rules to be brought to the floor. The Senate does the same thing. It is an orderly process. That was not done this year. That was not done. And I think the legislation was not as strong as it should have

been because we did not go in regular order.

So I very much hope that when we look at this issue again this coming year, 2001, that instead of just rushing something to the floor, that we have full debate and discussion; that people know what the provisions mean when the bill reaches the floor; that it does not become just a "Republican bill" or a "Democratic bill," but in our wisdom we debate the various provisions in a free way, debating amendments to improve the bill, voting them up or down, and doing things in a regular order.

Mr. Speaker, we did not get it done this year, at least I certainly do not think we are in these last few days of the 106th session, but I think we have a good chance to do something on this next year. So I urge my colleagues to look over my proposal, and we will be getting information to my colleagues.

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TURKISH GOVERNMENT MUST RECOGNIZE BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS OF KURDISH PEOPLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULSHOF). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today I want to speak about the need for the Turkish government to recognize the basic human rights of the Kurdish people, and I rise this afternoon to condemn recent, though ongoing, violations of these rights in Turkey.

I have always said the Kurds must be respected as a people, the world must finally listen to and respect their aspirations, and that they should enjoy the same right of choosing their representatives as other people do all over the world. The Turkish government has not accepted the validity of the Kurdish struggle or even of the Kurdish people. They have jailed leaders, but the message of these leaders continues to ring loud and clear.

Mr. Speaker, in the past few weeks, the Turkish government has extended a 13-year-old state of emergency in four mainly Kurdish provinces for an additional 4 months, and who knows what will happen at the end of those 4 months in terms of another extension. Further, the extension of emergency rule occurred despite the European commission's formal expression that the lifting of emergency rule is an objective for Turkey to achieve.

On December 4, The Washington Post reported that the director of a Kurdish linguistics institute in Istanbul is facing a trial on charges that the institute is an illegal business. The charges come despite the fact that Turkish security courts have hired interpreters from this very institute for the past 8 years. This incident illustrates the type of human rights violations infringements that continue to occur but that must be halted immediately against the Kurdish people.

I call upon my colleagues to join me, Mr. Speaker, in urging the Turkish

government to immediately grant basic rights to Kurdish citizens in Turkey and more formally and fully recognize the Kurdish people. This should include lifting the extension of emergency rule, lifting all bans on Kurdish language television, cinema, and all forms of fine arts and culture.

Bans on language and culture are particularly disturbing because the lands of Kurdistan are considered by many to be the birthplace of the history of human culture. It saddens me that there is still a need to be on the floor protesting violations of these most basic yet essential human rights.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1997, I addressed the American Kurdish Information Network on the cultural oppression of Kurds by the Turkish government and on the Turks' squelching of Kurdish language and culture. At that time, 153 Members of Congress expressed their disapproval of the antidemocratic treatment of elected Kurdish representatives in the Turkish parliament.

In April of this year, a number of my colleagues joined me in introducing a House Resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release from prison of certain Kurdish Members of the Turkish parliament and for prompt recognition of full Kurdish cultural and language rights within Turkey.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am continuing the fight on behalf of the Kurdish people, because their voices are still repressed, although the conflict between the government and separatist Kurdish guerrillas in the southeast has subsided significantly since the arrest last year of the Kurdish Workers Party leader, Abdullah Ocalan. Fears by hard-line Turkish nationalists that any recognition of Kurdish identity will fragment Turkey and strengthen separatism seem unwarranted based on the decline in tensions.

Mr. Speaker, Turkey must negotiate with the Turkish leaders. Turkey must lift its blockade of Armenia also. Turkey must end its military occupation of northern Cyprus. Such a change in behavior would benefit everyone in the region, including the Turkish people.

I hope my colleagues will join me in delivering these important messages to the Turkish government at every possible opportunity.

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ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON CRIME DURING THE PAST 6 YEARS

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

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to take the full 60 minutes, but I do want to take a portion of this time to take this opportunity to comment on something that I think is very important. I have had the privilege of serving as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Crime of the Committee

on the Judiciary in the House of Representatives for the last 6 years. I will not have that privilege further. My tenure normally would come to an end, rotating under the rules of the House at the end of this Congress in any event, but as many of my colleagues know, I will be leaving this body, and it has been a great privilege to have served in that capacity.

I want to comment a few minutes about the work of the Subcommittee on Crime these past 6 years and to pay tribute to those committee staffers on that subcommittee who have worked so hard to make it possible for many of the legislative products and the oversight hearings to be accomplished, and to also pay tribute to some of the committee staff who worked for me while I have served in various capacities in years gone by on the House Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

Over the last three Congresses, the Subcommittee on Crime has compiled a tremendous record of accomplishment. In that time, 884 bills were referred to the subcommittee. The subcommittee had formal hearings on 75 of those bills and, after markup, reported 71 of them to the full Committee on Judiciary. Of those, 41 bills eventually were passed by both Houses and signed into law by the President. Some of those bills that did not get signed into law in their own right, were incorporated into appropriations bills and then signed into law.

So in more than 41 different ways, over the past 6 years, legislation crafted by the members of the Subcommittee on Crime have contributed to our country, making it a better place to live; one that is safer and more just for all our citizens.

Over the last 3 years, the Subcommittee on Crime has also held 111 days of hearings on a wide variety of subjects. I take pride in the fact that the subcommittee has held a hearing on almost every bill that it has marked up in order to ensure that the Members of the subcommittee were fully informed about that bill.

The subcommittee has also a distinguished record of achievement in the area of oversight. And the vast majority of these 111 days of hearings have been oversight hearings into specific problems in criminal justice or hearings into activities and operations of the executive branch law enforcement agencies over which the Committee on the Judiciary has jurisdiction. These oversight hearings included hearings on the work of the FBI, the Federal Bureau of Prisons, the DEA, the Secret Service, and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Perhaps foremost and most remembered of the hearings that the subcommittee held in the last number of years were the 10 days of hearings it held into the activities of law enforcement agencies towards the Branch Davidians at Waco. These were joint hearings we held in conjunction with another subcommittee of the House. I think those hearings are remembered

for a good reason. The hearings made the public aware of the many errors in judgment and tactics of the Federal Government during the investigation of the Branch Davidians, as well as dispelling the rumors as to the true cause of the fire that took the lives of the Davidians.

Just recently, there has been a special commission the President set up to study this measure, review it once more, and the conclusions of that effort that was undertaken have resulted in precisely a confirmation of the findings of this joint committee hearing that my subcommittee took part in.

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I was very pleased with the extensive report and findings and recommendations prepared by the committee. I note that the subsequent investigations have not altered those basic findings, which I think proves the thoroughness of those hearings. I would also note that the hearings were the occasion for observing, even in the midst of tragedy, the valor of Federal law enforcement agents.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take a few minutes to note some of the legislation that was passed by the subcommittee. Many aspects of the Contract with America in 1995 involved the Subcommittee on Crime. Provisions of legislation that were crafted and revised by the subcommittee that are in effect today from that Contract with America are the local Law Enforcement and Block Grant Program, which gives localities millions of dollars each year in flexible grants that they can direct resources to the places of greatest need for law enforcement purposes, where the decision making is done at the local level not at the Federal level but how those monies are spent; the Truth in Sentencing Prison Construction Grant Program, which encourages States to ensure that violent prisoners serve most of their sentence imposed by a court and provides them with monies and resources to build a prison space and to support those prison beds in return for agreeing to require at least 85 percent of a sentence be served; the Federal Mandatory Minimum Restitution Law that requires victims in Federal criminal cases to make restitution to their victims; and the historic changes in the habeas corpus process which has helped ensure certainty and finality in our criminal justice system and provides a sense of closure to victims of crime.

Over the last 6 years, the subcommittee has worked on a great number of bills which have become law and have helped to protect our citizens. It has worked extensively to reinvigorate the war on drugs with a goal of increasing prospects of all of our children leading drug-free, productive lives.

The subcommittee has helped to enact legislation that increases the penalties for trafficking of methamphetamine, one of the most dangerous drugs facing our society today;