

on Russia or other countries to provide us with the vital fuel that it takes to operate our nuclear power plants.

I do not know where the Vice President is today, but I hope he is watching C-SPAN. I do not know what the Secretary of the Treasury is doing today, but I hope he is watching C-SPAN. These individuals and others have an obligation to protect this Nation and to keep their word to these communities. I fought privatization and I lost that battle, and as a result, we find ourselves in these dreadful circumstances. But it is imperative that the Congress pay attention to this matter. We cannot let this situation continue as it is.

People who are a lot smarter and better well-informed than I am say that we ought to repurchase this industry and, thereby, protect the energy security and the future of this Nation.

SEND EDMOND POPE HOME

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

Mr. PETERSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to make sure today that everybody in this body understands a serious problem for a family in State College, Pennsylvania; and a problem for, I think, the security of this country.

On my left is Edmond and Cheri Pope. They are a couple who have lived for many years in State College, finished raising their family there, highly regarded and respected there. Edmond Pope was a businessman who traveled the world, often went to Russia to do business. Eleven weeks ago, Edmond Pope was arrested and thrown in a Russian prison. For 11 weeks, Cheri, his wife, had no communication, could not get a letter to him, could not get a phone call to him, could not get any kind of communication from him; really did not know what was happening to her husband. Visas were canceled. Finally, last week, I helped arrange a trip where two of my staff went with her. She went to visit her husband for the first time in 11 weeks. I will just read to my colleagues a little bit of a news story on that.

"On Tuesday, they met for the first time in 3 months, just a few feet from a watchful prosecutor in a Lefortovo prison. Edmond and Cheri Pope hugged and belatedly wished each other a happy 30th anniversary. Then Cheri Pope said the first thing he said to me was, 'Cheri, I didn't do anything wrong. I didn't,' and I said to him, 'I never thought for a minute you did.'"

In an emotional interview on Tuesday after that reunion, Cheri Pope said that her husband, whom the Russians had accused of spying, was strikingly thinner, and he had a rash. He had lost a lot of weight, and he has a pallor about him and some skin problems. She said, "Even though he didn't look well, he still looked beautiful to me."

The last time she saw her husband was March 14 as he was leaving their home in State College, Pennsylvania on what seemed to be another routine trip to Russia, his 27th. While Redmond Pope remained cut off from the world in one of Russia's most infamous maximum security prisons, Cheri Pope struggled through months of anguish, grasping morsels of information while trying to cut through an international maze of red tape to visit him. Over the weekend she was minutes away from boarding a plane for the long-awaited meeting, when her son called her to tell her her 74-year-old mother had passed away. What a decision Cheri had to make. She knew that she had to go and encourage her husband, and that is what she did.

Edmond Pope needs to come home. He needs to come home to his wife, to his children, to his seriously ill father of 75 years; he needs to come home so his health can be monitored and maintained. He has had cancer that was arrested, he has Graves' disease, but he needs to be monitored closely. He is not a spy. His itinerary was printed and available, his visa explained why he was there. It was his 27th trip. In fact, his friends and neighbors tell me that he spoke fondly of the Russians. He wanted to help build a business relationship between these two countries. He was helping take Russian technology and helping them commercialize it.

Edmond Pope is no spy. He does not belong in a Russian prison. I will be sending a letter to be delivered to Mr. Putin the first of this week, and it will say, President Putin, if you value our friendship, send Edmond Pope home. It will say, President Putin, if you value the growing business relationships beneficial to both of our countries, send Edmond Pope home. It will say, President Putin, if you value the many ways we aid you financially, send Edmond Pope home.

I will be asking this body, Mr. Speaker, next week to get unanimous consent to pass a Sense of the Congress resolution, again, for this Congress speaking to Mr. Putin and the Russian leaders that it is time to send Edmond Pope home.

Edmond Pope is a man who was there on sound financial business reasons. He is not a spy. He needs to be home with his family to help his grieving wife. He needs to be home to visit his father, who is seriously ill. He needs to be home to have his own health monitored, and he needs to be home so that the relationships between Russia and America continue to grow and prosper to the benefit of both.

Edmond Pope is no spy. Edmond Pope does not belong in a maximum security prison in Russia where he got very little care. Edmond Pope needs our help and our support. Mr. Putin, send him home.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN NEEDED NOW FOR OUR SENIORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, we will be considering a prescription medication plan very shortly, and there is a great need for assistance with our seniors for prescription drugs. I hope that as we do that we will consider a meaningful prescription drug plan that looks at affordability, looks at accessibility, and also looks at simplicity.

Both in rural America as well as urban America, we know there are a large number of our seniors who are making decisions about whether they can afford to buy their prescriptions, pay their rent, or buy food. They are making decisions between acquiring very basic needs. So hopefully, as we craft a bill to speak to these critical needs, we are not playing politics with the needs of seniors, that we are really designing a meaningful bill that will be helpful, easy to assess, and affordable by seniors, both in urban America as well as rural America.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak a little bit about rural America, because that is where I come from. There is a difference. The difference comes primarily because of economies of scale, and therefore, we do not have the infrastructure that depends on the market-driven economy. We do not have large hospitals because we do not have a large accommodation of patients to support that. We do not have a mix of sophisticated specialists in those areas. So we rely on a combination of regional hospitals or tertiary hospitals or relationships with community health centers, a variety of networks to put together kind of a patchwork in providing health care to our citizens. It costs us more in rural areas just because of the lack of the economies of scale. So already, there is built in to the health services that we receive through the market system, but also the current health system assistance we receive from the Federal Government.

Now we are about to craft a prescription drug bill supposedly to help seniors who are having to make these critical decisions between being able to take their medicine that they desperately need and the food that they must have to survive, or paying their bills. So when we do this, hopefully, we take into consideration structure, affordability, and simplicity.

Mr. Speaker, if I am hearing correct, the plan that came out of the Committee on Ways and Means yesterday has a structure where it is predicated on private providers, that HMOs would be the carriers for getting the prescription assistance to rural areas.

Now, nothing would be wrong with that, because I have an HMO myself; I am fortunate enough to use an HMO that I get through my employment. But I can tell my colleagues that there

is not the large number of HMOs in rural areas. There are many rural areas where there is no HMO whatsoever. So if one is planning a system that is based on having HMOs, already we have denied rural areas from having it.

Again, when I look at the plan, it says that if there is not more than two, we would increase the incentive to have two HMOs so that there would be some competition.

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A lot of people are going to fall through the cracks if indeed we do not put a structure there. For that reason, the Medicare structure certainly is simple, it is already known by providers, people are using it, individuals are comfortable with it, so it is a familiar assistance plan that people will use and the accessibility will be there.

The other is the cost. Again, we are going to provide senior citizens between 125 and 150 percent of poverty. Those are critical areas, but I can tell the Members that there are many people in eastern North Carolina, rural America, who are between 135 and 150 percent. If we are going to have a sliding scale based on poverty, and we are going to have a variation of a cost of those premiums, that is going to give the whole issue of affordability some serious concerns.

I doubt whether we could make the case that this would be affordable in urban areas, much less in rural areas. The variation of premium costs are more likely to be substantial, and if they are substantial, I can tell the Members, in rural areas we have lower incomes, in the same instance that persons receive their social security and they more likely are lower-income seniors, so that would also give them a problem.

So as we consider the prescription drug plan, I hope we will consider having those elements in principle that will mean affordability, accessibility, and simplicity.

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

(Mr. FOLEY 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 Michigan (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

GOVERNOR ROBERT P. CASEY, A LEGACY OF PUBLIC SERVICE, COMPASSION, AND COURAGE

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, at the end of our journey in this life, if we can answer a few questions in the affirmative, then I believe by most measures we will have led a blessed and well-lived life: Did we try to do our best? Did we try to do the right thing? Did we try to leave this world a better place than when we entered it?

When he passed from this life on May 30, surrounded by the love of his wonderful wife of 47 years, Ellen, his children, and his many grandchildren, there was no doubt that my friend, the former Governor of Pennsylvania, Robert Casey, had lived a blessed, full, and well-lived life. Those of us touched by it should count ourselves fortunate.

As both a private citizen and a public servant, Governor Casey leaves a rich legacy that all of us should strive to emulate. He was caring, compassionate, committed, idealistic, principled, honest, devoted, articulate, tenacious, and, of course, by any measure, he was courageous.

In the famous passage from Profiles in Courage, Senator John Kennedy, whom the Governor and I both admired, wrote, and I quote, "For without belittling the courage with which men have died, we should not forget those acts of courage with which men have lived. A man does what he must, in spite of personal consequences, in spite of obstruction and dangers and pressures, and that is the basis of all human morality."

Courage, Mr. Speaker, was a recurring theme throughout Robert Casey's life. The son of a coal miner, Governor Casey put himself through law school and won a seat in the Pennsylvania State House at the age of 30 before winning two terms as State Auditor General.

He overcame three early, unsuccessful campaigns for Governor, at a time when lesser men would have quit, to win that position not once but twice, the last victory by the largest margin in the history of Pennsylvania.

In the twilight of his career, he battled a rare disease that devastated his body but never, never extinguished his spirit. In June, 1993, he became only the sixth person in the United States to undergo a heart-liver transplant. Thereafter, he not only returned to the Governor's office, but also proposed and signed one of the most comprehensive State organ donor laws in the country.

Since 1994, more than 4,000 people in Pennsylvania and surrounding regions have received lifesaving organ transplants, due in large part to Governor Casey's leadership.

No one ever doubted that Governor Casey had the courage of his convictions. He never wavered from the principles that guided his life, including his core belief that government could level the playing field and protect the most vulnerable in society. He maintained to the end a deep commitment to education, the environment, workers' rights, and the underprivileged.

The Governor took heart from Franklin Delano Roosevelt's observa-

tion that, "In our democracy, officers of the government are the servants and never the masters of the people."

During Governor Casey's service, Pennsylvania enacted mandatory recycling reform, auto insurance reform, and the Child Health Insurance Program, which, as we know, became a national model. The State also broadened special education programs, rebuilt aging water and sewer systems through the PENNVEST program, and enacted a State Superfund to reclaim hazardous waste sites.

Governor Casey, Mr. Speaker, was also instrumental in bringing family and parental leave to Pennsylvania, initiating economic development and high-tech efforts from the Philadelphia port to the new Pittsburgh airport, and overhauling the workers' compensation system.

He did not seek public service for fame or glory, he sought simply to help people. In an era of unabashed cynicism towards public service and public servants, Governor Casey reminded us of why we serve. It is fitting that upon his passing, the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette wrote that Governor Casey left an example for all Pennsylvanians: to fight for what they believe in, to be unafraid of the odds, and to nobly accept the defeats along the way.

Governor Casey's legacy endures not only in the principles he stood for and the improvements he brought to his beloved Pennsylvania, but also in the wonderful family that he and Ellen have raised. They, too, carry their father's commitment to public service and community.

Mr. Speaker, it is proper to remember a man of such worth and dignity and character. Our Nation was blessed by Governor Casey's service.

REPUBLICANS SHOULD ABANDON PRIVATE HEALTH AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG INSURANCE SCHEME

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. Mr. Speaker, I have an idea. What if we, say, break Medicare apart and ask seniors to shop in the private insurance market if they want to piece it back together. Seniors could buy one private plan to cover doctors visits, another to cover hospital stays, a third to cover home health services, and maybe a fourth to cover prescription drugs. Perhaps they could purchase an Aetna plan for outpatient care, a Kaiser plan for the physical therapy coverage, and maybe Golden Rule will offer insurance for medical equipment.

Does this sound absurd? Why is it less absurd to isolate prescription drugs and require Medicare beneficiaries to carry a separate private stand-alone you-are-on-your-own policy for that benefit?