

percent of our future. The perseverance and dedication of our teachers challenge and shape students to dream, and to work hard to make those dreams come true.

Unfortunately, educators work with little public thanks or appreciation, even though topnotch teachers are essential to a strong future. These educators in particular go beyond the call of duty and selflessly make for our children and our country a better place.

It is my distinct honor to present the Third District of Texas's teacher of the year.

In the Allen Independent School District, Jackie Schornick and Maridee Ryan;

From McKinney Independent District, Tom Flurimonte and Ms. Lisa Stout;

From the Plano Independent School District, Mrs. Be Janet Tang and Ms. Diane Davey;

And from the Wylie Independent School District, Ms. Janet McMillen and Ms. Tricia Gent.

As a former Air Force instructor, a father, a grandfather, and the highest ranking Texan on the Committee on Education and the Workforce, I know firsthand the importance of a quality education. However, it is outstanding teachers like these who strive for excellence.

I thank the hometown heroes, the excellent educators, for all they do for our children, for America, and for our freedom. God bless them.

#### THIS YEAR CONGRESS SHOULD PASS AND THE PRESIDENT SHOULD SIGN H.R. 1862, GREATER ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE PHARMACEUTICALS ACT OF 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, when large employers, unions, and progressive Members of Congress and governors and senior groups and consumer advocates join forces on the same issue, Congress listens. What is the issue? Prescription drugs and prescription drug prices. What is the remedy? Legislation pending in the Senate and House that would close loopholes in the Waxman-Hatch bill Congress passed in 1984.

Overall, the law, which was intended to help consumers gain access to blockbuster drugs and to, eventually, lower-cost generics, has worked well. Waxman-Hatch ensured brand name manufacturers almost 2 decades of patent protection, promoting important innovation and ensuring huge profits for the prescription drug industry.

Between 1983 and 1995, drug companies increased their R&D investment, in large part because of Waxman-Hatch, from 14 percent to 19 percent of sales. They earned quite a healthy

profit on that investment. U.S. pharmaceutical sales rose 200 percent, from \$17 billion to \$57 billion. The act streamlined the generic drug approval process to help bring lower-cost prescription drugs to the market. Last year, generic drugs accounted for 42 percent of all prescriptions dispensed.

But the big drug companies have been greedy; smart, but greedy. The industry has perfected the practice of attaching questionable patents to their drugs for the purpose of preventing generic drugs' entry into the market. As a brand drug nears the end of its 20-year patent life, the company will file what they deem a "new and improved patent" on the same drug, to keep out the generic drug and to keep out competition.

A patent, for example, was filed on a pill that could be divided into three parts instead of in half, instead of in two parts. This new and improved patent pill, patented pill, that does not affect the way the pill metabolizes in the body, which is what matters, keeps the generic drug that can be divided in half off of the market. While the generic company fights this outrageous patent in court, the brand name company, the big drug company, retains its market exclusivity at the cost of tens of millions, sometimes even billions of dollars, to consumers. The drug industry manipulates the law with relative ease.

I will share another example. Neurontin is a prescription drug for seizures. Its two main patents, one on the drug's ingredients and one on the use of the drug, expired in 1994 and in 2000. Right before the second patent expired, the company listed two new patents, one of which was on an unapproved FDA use to treat Parkinson's disease.

The industry did not ask the FDA to approve the drug for use in Parkinson's patients. The industry did not do any research to assert whether the drug actually is effective in Parkinson's patients. But the drug company, the generic drug company, the competitor that forces prices down, that would compete with the name brand company, the generic drug company still had to go to court to argue that its generic drug is not intended for use for Parkinson's patients.

When the generic and the brand name company go to court, the FDA is automatically required, must be required to withhold approval of the generic for 30 months, 2½ years. After those 30 months, the industry filed a new patent, forcing the generic industry to go back to court, starting the 30-month clock over.

The two delays in the case of Neurontin, the two delays, equalling 5 years, delayed generic access to the market, delayed consumers getting the less expensive drug, delayed the marketplace competition, and it cost consumers \$1.5 million every day because of the big drug companies' greed. Industry profits continue to soar.

Now a group of large corporations, labor unions, governors from both sides

of the aisle, and consumer groups want to stop the patent abuses. Unfortunately, Republican leadership does not. All of us know that loopholes in the law are contributing to spiraling prescription drug costs and that this level of spending is unattainable.

The gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. EMERSON) and I have introduced legislation, H.R. 1862, to close the loopholes and to release the billions in consumer savings that are being stifled by the big name drug companies and by Republican leadership.

General Motors supports our legislation, and so do the United Auto Workers. Verizon and the other Baby Bells support our legislation, and so do the Communication Workers of America. The AARP supports it, the AFL-CIO supports it, and Governor Deane from Vermont, a Democrat, Governor Foster from Louisiana, a Republican, supports it. The only people who do not are the Republican leadership in the House.

Congress should pass this legislation and the President should sign it this year. Tens of billions of dollars, consumer dollars, are at stake.

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#### INDOOR AIR QUALITY KIT FOR SCHOOLS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CULBERSON). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I am here today to share with my colleagues that May is Asthma Awareness Month. Last Wednesday on May 1, here on Capitol Hill, we held an entire day of related activities including a hearing and free screenings. I thank my colleagues that participated and found it rewarding and informative.

Meanwhile, Asthma Awareness Day was observed nationally and many cities around the country hosted screenings and festivities to foster awareness about this startlingly increasing health condition in the United States.

As you may know, some 15 million Americans have asthma, and also 50 million suffer from allergies. The incidence of asthma is increasing at an alarming rate, doubling over the last decade and a half. Of particular concern is that the group diagnosed with the highest increase of asthma is children under five years old. I hope that we in Congress can all do our part by promoting knowledge about some simple steps that can be taken to alleviate suffering of asthma and allergy symptoms in our Nation's schools.

To begin, I would like to share what I do for my constituents in the Sixth Congressional District of Florida. In February working with a wonderfully resourceful group called the Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics and the Environmental Protection Agency, I mailed this Indoor Air Quality, IAQ, Tools for

Schools Action Kits. As you can see, this is a very fine kit and has lots of wonderful things to help schools. I mailed it to all 236 schools in my district, elementary through high school, public and private. These kits provide explanations and suggestions for identifying air quality problems and suggestions for their improvements.

Now, why is indoor air quality important? This is from the EPA: "The EPA studies of human exposure to air pollutants indicate that indoor level of pollutants may be two to five times and occasionally a hundred times higher than outdoor levels." Of course, most of people spend their time indoors. So here are our school children and our teachers captive inside a building all day, charged with building the foundation for their future, the children's future, potentially trapped in a state of dusty or moldy or other respiratory discomfort.

This kit walks a school through setting up an indoor air quality program to make the school an environment of comfort and well-being for all the children and all the adults inside. Let me share the contents of this kit. To begin with there is a video tape with two short episodes. Hosts from the award winning PBS home improvement series, "This Old House," show how one school successfully implemented this kit and explains the importance of healthful indoor air quality and properly maintained school ventilation systems. They point out that many indoor air quality problems can be easily and inexpensively prevented or solved by school maintenance professionals using basic techniques outlined in this video.

Moving along, there is an IAQ coordinator guide check list and sample memos to the school, parents, contractors, and the media. There are also insightful start-up hints. To be most successful, a school would want to assemble a multidisciplinary IAQ team. This might include the school nurse, maintenance staff, teachers, food service staff, housekeeping, air conditioning and heating contractors and someone from the school district or superintendent's office. There is an IAQ problem-solving wheel. It combines identification of symptoms (blue), type, severity, and frequency and timing with environmental factors to finger through on the chart: odors, temperature or humidity problems, exhaust problems, grounds or building sources such as recent paint or pesticides, to arrive at instructions most applicable and helpful.

I am glad to report that most of the suggestions in this kit are inexpensive to implement. Often just planning and organizing can make a monumental difference to indoor air quality in our schools. Finally and encouragingly, the kit reminds the IAQ coordinator that "implementing an IAQ management program is an ongoing process and not an overnight miracle. Be patient, stay consistent, organize and never forget that you are doing something important for staff and students in your school."

Mr. Speaker, we have a responsibility to our children and their teachers with asthma who also have allergies to ensure that our schools do not worsen their condition. I am pleased that my schools have this tool at their disposal and hope that they might give me some feedback to the progress in implementing it. If any Member would like information on obtaining these kits for your district schools, please contact my staff who will be delighted to help.

Finally, I think something worth checking out, a recent book has come to my attention called "My House Is Killing Me," the home guide for families with allergies and asthma by Mr. May and Mr. Samet is available. It is chock-full of extraordinary information. This is just one of many books. Let us all resolved to help overcome indoor air quality challenges.

Mr. Speaker. I rise to share with all members that May is Asthma Awareness Month. Last Wednesday, May 1, we held an entire day of related activity, including a hearing and free screenings. We heard from physicians, a respiratory therapist, and a school nurse, all experts in diagnosing and treating asthma. We heard from a professional in air quality, from the Environmental Protection Agency, who discussed issues of air quality, dust, mold and other contributors to respiratory distress. We listened to an overseer of the States' Medicaid program to talk about drug formulary and disease management program issues with us. Most importantly, three courageous asthma sufferers came to relate their stories: two enthusiastic school children, Kyle Damitz and Allison Smith, and one hardy NFL football player, Jerome Bettis of the Pittsburgh Steelers. I think my colleagues that participated found it rewarding and informative.

As you may know, some 15 million Americans have asthma, and also 50 million suffer from allergies. The incidence of asthma is increasing at an alarming rate, doubling over the last decade and a half. Of particular concern is that the group diagnosed with the highest increase of asthma is children under five years old. I hope that we in Congress can all do our part by promoting knowledge about some simple steps that can be taken to alleviate suffering of asthma and allergy symptoms in our Nation's schools.

I myself have experienced bothersome allergy symptoms for much of my adult life, so I understand how critical it is to assess and modify, if necessary, your environment, and to have knowledgeable, reliable professionals on your healthcare team. I think many of us will agree that it can take patience, creativity, family support, and a sense of pure resolve to tackle your asthma or allergy symptoms, and find the regimen of medication, exercise, household adjustments and overall lifestyle that works for you.

One point I would like to address is how, unfortunately, occasionally works of fiction or media portray the suffering of asthma in a negative light, or a reason for exploitation of a character. For example, in the classic book "The Lord of the Flies" a boy who is overpowered by other young men is identified as asthmatic, among other traits, and is therefore thought weak. Also, in a feature movie out last year, "Pay it Forward," schoolyard bullies beat up on a child who helplessly watches his in-

haler fly from his pocket. Finally, I understand from the most recent newsletter of the patient advocacy group Allergy and Asthma Network Mothers of Asthmatics that a character in the animated movie "Jimmy Neutron, Boy Genius" is similarly exploited and mistreated by his classmates. All of us can help promote awareness and understanding of this physical ailment so as to combat any stereotyping about it. To that end, I would like to end my statement marveling at how one young asthmatic schoolboy conquered his labored breathing and went on to a wonderful role in history. I like to call this a story of "respiration inspiration." It is about a little American boy in the 1870's who had very severe asthma. Back then, there were no inhalers or other medicine as we have today. He was often sick and generally very weak as a young boy. Well, he wanted to grow up and go to Harvard University and to hunt and to be in the military and to do many great things with his life. Luckily, he had a wise doctor and loving parents, who suggested he exercise his body along with his mind. His parents installed a sort of "home gym" for him, and he devised a strenuous regimen for himself. Today, we can read in a "Sporting Calendar" preserved, that from August 21 through December 11, 1871, this young fellow competed with his brothers and make cousins in "fifteen athletic contests—running, jumping, vaulting, wrestling, and boxing—and won fourteen of them, drawing the other one." [From *The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt*, Edmund Morris, 1979.] He still suffered some asthma attacks, but less frequently, and less fearfully. This little boy grew up to become the governor of New York, and the leader of the most famous cavalry unit in the Spanish-American War, and finally, the President of the United States: Theodore Roosevelt. I think that with the attention to medical access, environment, and lifestyle that our hearing will showcase, that any of the children here with us today might follow in Teddy Roosevelt's footsteps. Let asthma slow no-one down!

#### AMERICAN HEALTH SECURITY ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I was sitting over in my office looking at today's calendar and could not help but get up and come over here.

In 460 B.C. the father of medicine, Hippocrates, wrote: "Healing is a matter of time but it is also sometimes a matter of opportunity."

Now, for 2,500 years we have been talking about this opportunity or in modern times access to good health care coverage in our country. For decades now we have been talking about improving access to health care coverage, yet the problem continues to grow. We argue about how best to provide the coverage; but no matter what you say, uncovered people are one of the biggest economic and human problems in our society.

Many people are locked into jobs. They would like to change jobs, but