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No. 76

House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 11, 2002.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN BOOZMAN to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 4775. An act making supplemental appropriations for further recovery from and response to terrorist attacks on the United States for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 4775) "An Act making supplemental appropriations for further recovery from and response to terrorist attacks on the United States for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2002, and for other purposes," requests a conference with the House agreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints

Mr. BYRD, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. REID, Mr. KOHL, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. DORGAN, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. JOHNSON, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. REED, Mr. STEVENS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SPENCER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BOND, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. BURNS, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CAMP-

BELL, Mr. CRAIG, Mrs. HUTCHISON, and Mr. DEWINE, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) for 5 minutes.

REPUBLICAN PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Here we go again, Mr. Speaker. Americans are still paying two and three and four times more for their prescription drugs than consumers in any other nation in the world. Twelve million seniors lack any form of prescription drug coverage, and millions more have inadequate coverage.

My Republican friends are poised to introduce prescription drug legislation that does not address either of these concerns. That is because the goal of their legislation is not to deliver meaningful prescription drug benefits to seniors or get a grip on unjustifiably high prices. Their goals are, one, to try to look responsive to the concerns of senior voters and their families, without actually investing enough to be responsive to their concerns; second, to do the bidding of the prescription drug industry, which is what my Republican friends always do; and, third, to privatize Medicare, the best health care system this country has ever seen.

How do they win political points? By mimicking some of the features of a

real drug benefit but investing only about one-third of the dollars needed to deliver real drug coverage. By starting with 80 percent coverage, which makes their plan look generous, then increasing the cost-sharing, the cost that seniors actually pay, dramatically as a senior's prescription drug price costs rise. Under the Republican plan, seniors who spend more than \$2,000 lose their coverage altogether, no more coverage for the next \$2,500 in expenses. Find me a single health insurance plan in the private sector that increases the cost-sharing burden as an enrollee's costs go up.

The Republican plan is so skeletal that seniors would still need supplemental prescription drug coverage if they wanted protection against high drug prices. The majority may dress up their plan in appealing rhetoric, but it is still a cheap imitation of real prescription drug coverage.

The Republicans' second goal is to do the bidding, no surprise here, of the prescription drug industry which, of course, favors the private plan approach. Remember the Flo ads from a couple years back, the ones where Flo said she did not want the government in her medicine cabinet? Those ads were funded by the drug industry. They were intended to demonize the idea of adding a drug benefit to the existing Medicare program. The drug industry favors bypassing Medicare and forcing seniors into private prescription drug plans.

Be prepared for the majority to claim its plan cuts drug prices by 30 percent per prescription. The Republican plan does not cut drug prices by 30 percent, in spite of what they say. Their plan reduces drug spending, not prices, and they do that mostly by restricting seniors' access to higher priced necessary medicines.

They are not doing seniors any favors with that strategy, and they certainly are not challenging their corporate

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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sponsors, the drug industry's ugly habit of charging American consumers the highest prices in the world for drugs our tax dollars, our research, our NIH helped produce.

I recently received a letter from a constituent who last year took a bus and purchased his medicines in Canada. He said the only side effect from those drugs was that he saved \$2,000. Same medicines, same quality, \$2,000 less. The savings is significantly more than most seniors would save by signing up for the Republican prescription drug plan.

The second goal of my Republican colleagues is not to rock the boat when it comes to drug industry pricing. Never upset the prescription drug company, one of their biggest contributors.

The third goal is to privatize Medicare. The Republican prescription drug plan not only bypasses Medicare by promoting private prescription drug plans, it would phase out Medicare as an entitlement and phase in a privatized, defined contribution program. Medicare beneficiaries would receive a voucher to cover part of the cost of the private insurance. Wealthier citizens would supplement that voucher to get better coverage. Lower income seniors will just have to take what they get.

If the majority want to end the Medicare entitlement and abandon the principles that all Medicare beneficiaries, everyone in this country over the age of 65, are entitled to good health care coverage, they should not hide behind prescription drug coverage to do that. They should say, yes, we want to privatize Medicare.

I am working with other interested Members on legislation that adds a real prescription drug benefit to Medicare, that harnesses the collective purchasing power of Medicare beneficiaries to drive drug prices down, which is what other countries, especially Canada, do to get lower drug prices and that does not use prescription drug coverage as their method to privatize Medicare.

We are the richest country in the world. We owe our prosperity to the retirees who built this country. If we can afford trillion dollar tax cuts, which my friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS), will talk about in a moment, if we can afford trillion dollar tax cuts that go overwhelmingly to the richest people in this country, we sure can afford a real drug benefit for our seniors.

Let us not trivialize the concerns of Medicare beneficiaries and every American by sugarcoating paltry coverage plans. The American public hired us to address their concerns, not to co-opt them. Let us, for a change in this body, do our job.

TAX LIMITATION AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOOZMAN). Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gen-

tleman from Florida (Mr. STEARNS) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I was not going to comment on the speech of the previous speaker, but since he mentioned my name, I will say that the plan that he is proposing is basically a new government program operating out of HCFA, which is the government body that administers this program for prescription drugs. What Republicans want to do is provide a drug program like we, as Members of Congress and the Senate and the President, have. It is patterned after the Federal Employee Health Benefit program, which is a private program. So the whole gist of what he is saying comes down to a new government agency versus a program similar to the one Members of Congress have. I really think the people of America, our constituents, would like to have the same health care I have, the same prescription drug program I have, and not a new government program.

Mr. Speaker, as the gentleman mentioned, I am here to talk about the Permanent Death Tax Repeal Act this body passed. Actually, Mr. Speaker, we have passed 22 tax cuts bills for the 107th Congress. Now some of these tax cuts were not passed by the Senate, were not signed by the President, but we passed all of these in the House, for example, foster care. We had a tax credit for foster care. We had an adoption tax credit. We had a tax credit in the energy bill. We had a tax credit for victims of terrorism. We had a tax cut for pension plans. The Marriage Penalty Relief Tax Acceleration Act was passed on May 21 of this year. We had an adoption tax credit and we had Holocaust victims tax credits.

Mr. Speaker, all of these 22 tax cut bills passed by the House are as follows:

22 TAX CUT BILLS PASS THE HOUSE—107TH CONGRESS, 2001-2002

March 8, 2001—Across-the-Board Income Tax Relief: H.R. 3, the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 230-198 (Republicans 219-0, Democrats 10-197).

March 29, 2001—Marriage Penalty Tax Relief: H.R. 6, the Marriage Penalty and Family Tax Relief Act of 2001, by Rep. Jerry Weller; passage vote 282-144 (Republicans 217-0, Democrats 64-143).

April 4, 2001—Death Tax Repeal: H.R. 8, the Death Tax Elimination Act of 2001, by Rep. Jennifer Dunn; passage vote 274-154 (Republicans 215-3, Democrats 58-150).

May 2, 2001—Retirement Savings and Pension Reform: H.R. 10, the Comprehensive Retirement Security and Pension Reform Act of 2001, by Rep. Rob Portman; passage vote 407-24 (Republicans 219-1, Democrats 187-22).

May 15, 2001—Foster Care: H.R. 586, the Fairness for Foster Care Families Act of 2001, by Rep. Ron Lewis; passage vote under suspension 420-0 (Republicans 215-0, Democrats 203-0).

May 16, 2001—Across-the-Board Income Tax Relief: 1836, the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 230-197 (Republicans 216-0, Democrats 13-196).

May 17, 2001—Adoption Tax Credit: H.R. 622, the Hope for Children Act, by Rep. Jim

DeMint; passage vote 420-0 (Republicans 213-0, Democrats 205-0).

May 26, 2001—Bush Tax Cut (Signed into law by President Bush): Conference Report on H.R. 1836, the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 240-154 (Republicans 211-0, Democrats 28-153).

July 19, 2001—Tax Provisions in Faith-Based Initiative: H.R. 7, the Community Solutions Act of 2001, by Rep. J.C. Watts; passage vote 233-198 (Republicans 217-4, Democrats 15-193).

August 2, 2001—Tax Provisions in Energy Bill: H.R. 4, the SAFE Act of 2001, by Rep. Billy Tauzin; passage vote 240-189 (Republicans 203-16, Democrats 36-172).

August 2, 2001—Tax Provisions in Patients' Bill of Rights: An amendment to H.R. 2563, the Bipartisan Patient Protection Act, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 236-194 (Republicans 217-2, Democrats 18-191).

September 13, 2001—Terrorist Victims Tax Relief Bill (Signed into law by President Bush): H.R. 2884, the Victims of Terrorism Relief Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 418-0, (Republicans 214-0, Democrats 202-0).

October 24, 2001—Economic Stimulus Package: H.R. 3090, the Economic Security and Recovery Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 216-214 (Republicans 212-7, Democrats 3-206).

December 20, 2001—Economic Stimulus Package: H.R. 3529, the Economic Security and Worker Assistance Act of 2001, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 244-193 (Republicans 214-2, Democrats 9-190).

February 14, 2002—Economic Stimulus Package: An amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 622, renamed the Economic Security and Workers Assistance Act of 2002, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 225-199 (Republicans 214-1, Democrats 10-197).

March 7, 2002—Tax Provisions in Unemployment Benefits and Jobs Bill (Signed into law by President Bush): An amendment to the Senate Amendment of H.R. 3090, renamed the Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act of 2002, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 417-3 (Republicans 218-0, Democrats 197-3).

April 11, 2002—Tax Provision in Pension Reform Bill: H.R. 3762, the Pension Security Act of 2002, by Rep. John Boehner; passage vote 255-163 (Republicans 208-2, Democrats 46-160).

April 18, 2002—Make Permanent the Bush Tax Cut: An amendment to the Senate amendment on H.R. 586, renamed the Tax Relief Guarantee Act of 2002, by Rep. Bill Thomas; passage vote 229-198 (Republicans 219-1, Democrats 9-196).

May 21, 2002—Acceleration of Marriage Penalty Relief and new WOTC Reforms: H.R. 4626, the Encouraging Work and Supporting Marriage Act of 2002, by Rep. Amo Houghton; passage vote 409-1 (Republicans 211-0, Democrats 196-1).

June 4, 2002—Make Permanent the Expanded Adoption Tax Credit: H.R. 4800, to repeal the sunset of the Economic Growth and Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2001, with respect to the expansion of the adoption credit and adoption assistance programs, by Rep. Dave Camp; passage vote 391-1 (Republicans 204-0, Democrats 185-1).

June 4, 2002—Make Permanent the Holocaust Victims Tax Benefit: H.R. 4823, the Holocaust Restitution Tax Fairness Act of 2002, by Rep. Clay Shaw; passage vote 392-1 (Republicans 205-0, Democrats 186-1).

June 6, 2002—Make Permanent the Death Tax Repeal: H.R. 2143, the Permanent Death Tax Repeal Act of 2001, by Rep. Dave Weldon; vote not held yet.

Prepared by the Office of the House Majority Leader, 6/4/02

Mr. Speaker, there is no greater defining principle of our party than letting taxpayers keep what they earn.