

worst possible message at the worst possible time. I hope this House will reject the proposals from the administration.

NATIONAL MONUMENT FAIRNESS ACT

(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, today I rise to express my strong support for the passage of the National Monuments Fairness Act, which ensures the people's rights to public land are protected. For too many years the executive branch has abused the Antiquities Act by proclaiming thousands upon thousands of square miles of land as national monuments. Such actions do not reflect the original intention of the Antiquities Act, which was aimed to protect small areas of land and specific items of historical importance which were in imminent danger of destruction.

The National Monument Fairness Act will restore balance to the national monument designation process by requiring congressional approval and public input.

The people of America deserve input as to how their public lands are managed, and Nevadans can no longer afford to be left out of this process. Close to 90 percent of the State of Nevada is owned by the Federal Government. It is time to ensure the rights of the people to their land. I encourage my colleagues to support the National Monuments Fairness Act.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Ms. WATSON of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WATSON of California. Mr. Speaker, as of now, Medicare does not cover the cost of prescription drugs. Approximately 10 million Medicare recipients nationwide lack any prescription drug coverage. I want Members to support the Democratic plan for strengthening Medicare. The Democratic plan uses the collective bargaining power of Medicare's 40 million beneficiaries to guarantee lower drug prices. Medicare contractors will compete for enrollees by negotiating discounts. Drug prices will be reduced for everyone by stopping big drug company patent abuses.

Mr. Speaker, the plan the House adopts must lower the cost of drugs for all seniors. It must ensure senior coverage for all drugs their doctor prescribes. The plan should be an affordable and guaranteed Medicare drug benefit. It must not force seniors into HMOs or predatory private insurance. The Democratic proposal addresses each of these points.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic plan guarantees choice on prescription

drugs. I urge my colleagues to honor our seniors.

THE MEDICARE MODERNIZATION AND PRESCRIPTION DRUG ACT OF 2002

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

Mr. KENNEDY of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Medicare Modernization and Prescription Drug Act of 2002. This bill is important and overdue for our seniors.

An article in today's Minneapolis Star Tribune says that prescription drug prices in Minnesota are among the Nation's highest. For Minnesotans, and indeed for all Americans, we need to pass a prescription drug coverage bill now.

Yesterday Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson released a study showing that our plan would save seniors more money than our friends on the other side of the aisle's proposal. Our plan would give seniors immediately a 30 percent discount off the top on their overall drug costs, and, combined with traditional front-loaded insurance coverage, it would reduce the cost of prescriptions by half for the average senior.

But, in addition, we provide catastrophic coverage so that seniors do not have to deplete a lifetime of savings in order to be able to afford life-giving prescriptions, and we give 100 percent prescription drug coverage for low-income seniors, and give more Medicare and senior choices.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL

(Ms. BALDWIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, what are the priorities of this Congress? Recently, it seems that the primary concern of the majority is passing tax cuts costing trillions of dollars that benefit the very wealthy and do not even go into effect for 10 years from now.

Next week, the majority will finally bring to the floor a bill that is the ultimate concern of thousands of seniors in the United States, the Medicare prescription drug bill. Unfortunately, the Republican bill is such a sham that it will not even stand up to the scrutiny of a truth-in-advertising law.

If we put the concerns of seniors who desperately need help in paying for their prescriptions first, then we must pass a benefit that is affordable.

I recently received a letter from Donna O'Keefe, a retiree who lives in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Her drug bills total \$400 a month, and she receives only \$640 a month from Social Security. Seniors like Donna need a com-

prehensive prescription drug benefit that has no gaps and no gimmicks. They need real drug coverage under Medicare.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(Mrs. CAPITO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, the problem of the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs is one that requires both a short-term and a long-term solution. It is clear that seniors need a permanent, universal, and voluntary Medicare-based prescription drug benefit that provides more savings and more choice.

My hope is that Congress will implement what I call a two-tiered approach to the problem, immediate relief through a prescription drug discount card, in addition to a long-term benefit through Medicare.

The House Committee on Ways and Means has already passed a bill that uses this approach. Through a generous Medicare benefit and the use of an interim drug discount card, Congress will be able to provide seniors the savings that they need and deserve now and in the future. With the national Medicare-endorsed prescription drug card, seniors will be able to realize a savings between 10 and 20 percent, and once the more comprehensive Medicare benefit is fully implemented, seniors will be able to save 70 percent of their out-of-pocket costs.

America's seniors deserve a long-term benefit. An interim measure would help keep the cost down.

MAJORITY LEADER EXCUSES CORPORATIONS WHO FLEE AMERICA TO AVOID PAYING TAXES

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, many Americans wonder why this Congress has taken no effective action to stop another Enron debacle, and no effective action to prevent one multinational corporation after another from fleeing America in order to evade its taxes.

Yesterday, we received the explanation, with all of its customary sensitivity, from the Republican majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), who attacked those of us who have initiatives to stop these acts of disloyalty to America by saying, "This is akin to punishing a taxpayer for choosing to itemize instead of taking the standard deduction."

Most Americans may own a few pairs of Bermuda shorts, but they cannot become "Bermudan" on April 15 and remain American the other days of the year to enjoy the benefits of our American citizenship. I believe this Congress needs to speak and act firmly to prevent those who forget the maxim of

Thomas Paine, a great American patriot, who said, "Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom must undergo the fatigues of supporting it."

Those who flee and abandon America, denouncing their American citizenship, are rejecting all our democracy represents.

THE FACTS ON AMERICA'S OIL RESERVES

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, when one is going to make a decision and embark on a course of action, it is always nice to have the facts straight. This is especially important in our debate on energy.

Let us look at some of those facts. The United States uses about one-fourth of all the world's oil use, about 20 million barrels a day. Now, we have only about 2 percent of the known reserves of oil in the world, but we are pumping that 2 percent pretty fast, because out of that, we are getting about 44 percent of all of our oil needs. That means we are importing about 56 percent of our oil, up from 34 percent at the Arab oil embargo, much of that from countries like Iraq.

Every year since 1970, with only a tiny blip from Prudhoe Bay, oil production in this country has gone down. How much oil remains in the world? About 1,000 gigabarrels remain in the world. Pretty simple arithmetic will show that at present use rates, that is about 40 years of oil in the world. We will find more, but we will also use more. What these facts mean is that those portions of our bill that deal with conservation, that deal with efficiency, that deal with alternatives and renewables are very important portions of the bill.

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PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE FOR SENIORS

(Ms. WOOLSEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, now that Republicans are back from their party with the pharmaceutical industry, we may be able to legislate prescription drug coverage that will be good for our seniors. Unfortunately, the plan being developed by the GOP is one more payback for their buddies in the drug industry and another ploy to privatize Medicare.

The reason Medicare was created was because the free market could not take care of seniors, their health care and health care of some disabled. To think that the private sector will step up and help them now is unrealistic.

In the Republicans' sham proposal, the party will be over if anyone is

counting on Congress to pass a real prescription drug benefit, because we need a benefit that can be relied upon. We do not need a benefit that serves only the drug industry and only the free market.

NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the need for Congress to pass a comprehensive energy plan. Last August, with the support of President Bush, this body passed a responsible and balanced energy plan, a plan that frees us from the burden of dependence on foreign oil.

It is time for this Congress to decide whether we are going to choose to be proactive or reactive. Are we going to wait until we are faced with an oil crisis similar to that of the 1970s? Should we simply sit by, or should we act on a plan put forth and passed by this House more than 9 months ago?

H.R. 4 is a commonsense approach to our Nation's energy crisis. It is a plan that balances the need for production with conservation, as well as measures to protect the environment. H.R. 4 strengthens our Nation's energy infrastructure to ensure that energy gets to the consumers who need it. Further, H.R. 4 also will use tax incentives to encourage energy production, research efficiency, and conservation.

All in all, H.R. 4 provides the energy for those who need it while at the same time making sure that it is cleaner, cheaper, and more dependable.

Mr. Speaker, August will be the 1-year anniversary of H.R. 4 by this body. It is time for us to stop sitting idly by and enact the President's energy plan.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. I represent the fastest-growing community in the United States, the fastest-growing senior population. Every weekend I go home, and every weekend I hear story after story from my seniors who simply cannot afford the prescription medication that their doctors have prescribed.

For so many of these older Americans, Medicare is the only health insurance that they have. It does not make sense to deny them a benefit for prescription drugs. Prescription medication is the least expensive, most cost-effective way of dealing with illness. Seniors are demanding relief now, and we ought to give it to them.

Older Americans need a Medicare prescription drug benefit that is comprehensive, guaranteed, and affordable.

Every senior should have access, no matter where they live or what their income.

Let us pass a prescription drug benefit that will work for all the American people and ensure that our Nation's seniors will have the medications they need to keep them healthy, active, and vital. In the long run, a prescription medication benefit will not only save the lives of millions of older Americans, it will save billions of taxpayers' dollars.

TRIBUTE TO EVELENA THOMPSON

(Mrs. MYRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, Ms. Evelena Thompson retires from the United States court system, probation office, in Charlotte, on June 30 of this year after 27 years of service.

She was born in Bennettsville, South Carolina; grew up in Scotland County, North Carolina; graduated salutatorian of her class in 1964; and graduated from Barber Scotia College in 1968.

She started with the U.S. probation office, again in Charlotte, in 1975 as a clerk, and she rose to the position of supervising U.S. probation officer in 1991, a true success story.

After the tragic death of her son in 1992 by a drunk driver, she became very active in the organization of Mothers Against Drunk Driving, and she received the 1994 Citizens Activist Award presented by the National Commission Against Drunk Driving.

A devout Christian, Ms. Thompson served with her late husband, himself a pastor, in the West Central Conference of the AME's Zion Church.

Whether through her work as a U.S. probation officer or the many civic duties that she performed, Evelena has always exhibited those very treasured American characteristics of integrity, dedication, devotion, and perseverance.

AMERICAN CORPORATIONS MOVING HEADQUARTERS OVERSEAS TO AVOID PAYING TAXES

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Republican majority leader, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARMEY), defended the actions of corporations that moved their headquarters overseas to avoid taxes. He said it is just like families taking an itemized deduction. Well, I have got to say it is not exactly like that because Americans who take itemized deductions are paying taxes at a much higher rate than these corporations.

Citizenship has its privileges. It also has some obligations. In a time of crisis, for some of the largest and most profitable corporations in this country to be engaging in a tax dodge to avoid their obligations to our Nation, at the