

many others like him, take over some of the more mundane duties to free up deputies for other work. Mr. Karibo visits the elderly, works on crime investigations, helps with traffic patrols and minor accidents as well as other activities.

The Citrus County Sheriff's Office has a very active Citizens' Academy program which allows ordinary citizens to learn more about the inner workings of the sheriff's department and feeds into their volunteer program. According to Sheriff Dawsy, "The concept of the Citizens' Academy involves opening up the Sheriff's Office to the public and showing citizens exactly what we do and how we do it." As a result, graduates of the 10-week course are better equipped to assess safety issues and share with others their knowledge of law enforcement practices and policies.

Given Sheriff Dawsy's commitment to the philosophy of community-oriented policing and proactive problem solving, he says he sees the Citizens' Academy as an effective way of bringing law enforcement and the public together in an informal, educational forum.

The benefits of such a partnership can only strengthen the entire community in terms of public safety and quality of life. Last year alone, volunteers clocked in over 90,000 hours working for the betterment of the community. Volunteers drove 561,000 miles, made more than 44,000 house checks and assisted more than 3,400 citizens at community offices.

Sheriff Dawsy and the Citrus County Sheriff's Office volunteers program have been an outstanding service to our community, and I would like to thank them all for their efforts. Their program is a model for others to follow, and I am honored to stand here and recognize them today. Congratulations to all of them on a job well done.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

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, early Friday morning, under cover of night, the Republican plan to create a Medicare prescription drug benefit was forced through the Committee on Energy and Commerce on strict party lines.

The prescription drug proposal made by the Republican leadership in Congress is so farfetched and so inadequate that it is an insult to the seniors it alleges to help. This legislation calls for private insurance companies to deliver drug coverage, and the coverage is minimal.

We sought to improve the bill, but our efforts were stymied by a coalition of the Republican leadership and their corporate sponsors, the brand name drug industry.

Democrats insist that any prescription drug plan for seniors should be ad-

ministered through Medicare, the program seniors know and trust. We have insisted the benefits be at least as generous as the coverage enjoyed by Members of Congress, and we sought to lower drug prices, ending drug industry patent abuses and enhancing competition in the prescription drug marketplace.

The need for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare is undisputed. Twelve million American seniors lack any form of drug coverage. This situation is made worse by the fact that American seniors and others without drug coverage pay the highest prices in the world for their prescriptions.

This is not the first time Republicans have attempted to capitalize on the need of America's seniors for a drug benefit but is the most blatant. Republican after Republican will come to the House floor in the next 3 days, saying seniors deserve a drug benefit as good as Members of Congress have. Unfortunately, though, according to the non-partisan Congressional Research Service, the Republican plan is 40 percent less than the coverage offered to Members of Congress.

During last week's markup, I offered an amendment that would replace the standard coverage in the Republican bill with the same coverage offered to Members of Congress.

□ 1930

But the night before the amendment was offered, Republicans adjourned the committee markup early so that they could attend a \$30 million fundraising dinner underwritten by Glaxo-Wellcome, a British pharmaceutical company which gave \$250,000 that night to the Republican Party. When Republicans returned from that fundraiser in which the drug companies gave well over a million dollars in total, when they returned from that fundraiser the next day, it came as no surprise that Republican colleagues voted my amendment down, meaning that the House will be forced to vote this week on legislation that would provide seniors with a significantly less drug benefit than Members of the Congress. In other words, Republicans are going to give Members of Congress a much better drug benefit than seniors will enjoy.

The Republican bill is not designed to ensure that seniors and disabled Americans gain access to drug coverage. It is designed to ensure that seniors and disabled Americans lose access to what they want to do, which is privatize Medicare. Unless the goal is to phase out Medicare and phase in an insurance voucher system, it makes no sense to maintain a public program for medical and surgical benefits but for seniors to purchase private coverage for prescription drug benefits. If this bill is not about privatizing Medicare, if it is actually meant to provide seniors real drug coverage, why is there a hole in the plan's coverage? Why do the benefits decline as an enrollee's drug

costs go up? Insurance is supposed to protect individuals with high health care costs, not to desert them. So why this kind of Republican plan that serves the insurance interests and drug company interests but not seniors?

On May 8 the United Seniors Association, a group funded by the prescription drug industry, announced it would begin a \$3 million television ad campaign touting the GOP drug prescription drug plan. Guess who is paying for the media blitz? The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America are paying for the media blitz, a trade group representing major drug companies. In other words, the drug industry is using dollars they gouge from American consumers to advertise the Republican drug bill.

What should that say? Would they advertise a bill they thought would be hard on the drug companies and drive a hard bargain with America's drug companies? Drug companies do not like the Democrats' bill because we harness the collective purchasing power of 40 million Medicare beneficiaries to demand discounts, volume discounts, to demand fair prices. Our bill gives seniors good coverage, real coverage, reliable coverage just like Medicare, plus we are tough on the drug companies. Glaxo-Wellcome, the company that sponsored the major Republican fundraiser last week, charges Americans the highest prices in the world for prescription drugs. Listen to that again. Glaxo-Wellcome, British-owned prescription drug company, charges seniors the highest prices of any country in the world. The Republican plan is written by and for the drug companies. The Democrats' plan supports seniors.

#### INTRODUCTION OF CAPITOL POLICE RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT LEGISLATION

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, since last year's terrorist and anthrax attacks, Capitol Police officers have faced extraordinary challenges. For months after the attacks, most worked twelve-hour shifts, six days a week, to assure that Congress could continue its work. Such grueling shifts were required even with help from the District of Columbia National Guard, whose members stood watch with our Police for five months. The Guard has resumed its normal duties, and the twelve-hour shifts have eased, but Capitol Police still confront extraordinary challenges.

Unfortunately for Congress, its staff and visitors, Capitol Police also confront extraordinary opportunities—to seek employment elsewhere. As trained law-enforcement professionals, Capitol Police officers are always in demand by other law-enforcement agencies. However, in these times of heightened security, overall demand for trained personnel has never been higher. As a result, the Capitol Police are losing officers at an alarming rate. As of June 1, the Capitol Police had already lost 78 officers

to other law-enforcement agencies in fiscal 2002, and had three more such separations pending. This is more than twice the number lost on average to other agencies during the last three years. If this rate continues, the Capitol Police will by September 30 have lost 122 officers to other agencies. This does not include retirements and separations for other reasons. This tremendous attrition comes as Capitol Police strive to increase manpower to recommended levels.

One federal agency in particular, the new Transportation Security Agency, is attracting trained officers from the Capitol Police and elsewhere to serve as sky marshals and other airport-security officers. TSA is offering compensation that can surpass the pay of the average Capitol Police officer by more than 80 percent. An 80 percent pay raise is tough for anyone to refuse.

There is no doubt that TSA's work is vital. But the security of the Capitol complex is also vital. Congress has a responsibility to take every reasonable step to ensure that the Capitol Police can attract and retain the people needed to make the Capitol safe, so today, the distinguished chairman of the House Administration Committee (Mr. NEY) and I have introduced the Capitol Police Retention, Recruitment and Authorization Act. In addition to sundry authorization matters, the Act proposes a number of reasonable steps to reduce Capitol Police attrition and encourage recruitment.

First, the bill would schedule 5 percent pay raises for each of the next five years for officers through the rank of captain. Raises for higher-ranking officers would be discretionary with the Capitol Police Board. This provision would give officers who may be considering leaving the prospect of regular increases for the foreseeable future. The bill would also increase from six to eight hours the amount of annual leave earned per pay period by all officers with at least three years' service.

Second, as a matter of fundamental fairness, the bill would authorize the Board to make whole officers adversely affected during the recent months of sustained overtime by the limits on Sunday, holiday and other premium pay. This provision will restore to the officer roughly \$350,000 that they earned but could not receive due to those limits. The bill authorizes extra pay for officers in specialty assignments as determined by the Board, and lets the Board hire experienced officers and employees at salaries above the minimum for a particular position, as needed.

Third, the bill also provides important new benefits for officers. It authorizes establishment of a tuition-reimbursement program for officers taking courses on their own time leading toward a degree in law-enforcement field, and authorizes bonuses upon completion of such degrees. This will give officers ongoing opportunities for professional improvement, which should lead to more rapid advancement. For Congress, it will create a more educated and better Capitol Police force.

To help provide manpower needed to avoid the punishing overtime of recent months, the bill authorizes bonuses for officers and employees who successfully recruit others to join the force, encouraging the entire agency to become recruiters. It allows the Board to employ retired federal law-enforcement officers without reduction to their annuities, and temporarily extends the mandatory retirement age from 57 to 59, but only through fiscal 2004, by which the Police intend to reach full strength.

Finally, the bill recognizes that as important as these tangible benefits are, there are other, less tangible aspects that can make a job more interesting, and help persuade veterans to remain and others to seek it. The bill encourages the Chief of Police to deploy officers in innovative ways that maximize their opportunities to rotate among the various posts and duties, be cross-trained for specialty assignments, and generally to utilize fully the skills and talents of individuals. This will do much to enhance the appeal and satisfaction of the job, and make retention and recruitment easier. If done smartly, it will also make the Capitol, and those who visit and work here, much more secure.

I urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that I will be joined this evening by some of my Democratic colleagues as we discuss the need for a real Medicare prescription drug benefit.

I have been on the floor many times in the evening during Special Orders criticizing the Republican leadership in the House because of their failure to address the issue of prescription drugs and even bring a bill to the floor. So I want to start out by saying I hoped since they have promised that they are going to bring up a prescription drug bill to the floor of the House before the July 4 recess, which would be by this Thursday or Friday, I am hopeful since they made that commitment to do so that we will see some bill come to the floor, and there will be a debate on the prescription drug issue by end of the week.

I am still somewhat skeptical that we are going to see that from the Republican leadership because initially they said this was going to happen Wednesday, and now we hear Thursday and now we hear maybe even Friday. So certainly if they do not bring up the bill at all, they should be seriously chastised for doing that since they promised it for 2 months.

But even if they do bring it up, my great disappointment and that of my Democratic colleagues is that it is a sham proposal. It is not a bill that will provide any benefit or certainly any meaningful benefit to any senior citizen. And let me just explain why and very briefly raise two, I think, very major points. One is that the Republican bill is not a Medicare proposal. We all know that for many years since the mid-60's when Medicare was first signed into law that Medicare has been a government program that has provided senior citizens, every senior, with a guaranteed benefit for their hospital care and a guaranteed benefit for their physician's care. The bottom line is it

works. It is a government program that works.

Well, the Democrats have been saying, if we have a program that works like Medicare, then just expand it to include prescription drugs. And our proposal is very much like part B right now that pays for the doctor bills. There is a defined guaranteed benefit under Medicare. Everyone gets it. There is a very small premium, \$25 a month, a low deductible of \$100 a year, and 80 percent of the cost of the prescription drugs are paid up to \$2,000 out-of-pocket, in which case 100 percent of the prescription drug bills are paid.

We have a very effective cost-control pricing mechanism that says that since there is now 30 to 40 million seniors under Medicare, that the Secretary of Health and Human Services has a mandate to negotiate lower prices on behalf of this large pool of senior citizens to bring prices down.

The Republicans have gone just the opposite. Rather than provide a Medicare benefit, rather than continuing and expanding the Medicare program to include prescription drugs, all they are proposing, if it even comes to the floor this week, is to throw some money to private insurance companies hoping that these insurance companies will offer some kind of drug policy to senior citizens. And we know that the insurance companies are saying they are not going to provide these kinds of drug policies because they have never existed before.

And even if they do, there is no guarantee seniors will be able to buy one, what the premium is going to be, whether they will get certain prescription drugs, nothing, and no mechanism in the Republican bill to deal with the issue of price and trying to reduce costs. In fact, there is actually language in the Republican bill that says that the administrator of the program cannot interfere in any way and try to reduce costs or reduce prices.

So we have here a sham proposal on the part of the Republicans. I hope they bring it up. I hope we have a debate by the end of the week on the prescription drug issue, because we have not had it for almost 2 years as this Congress draws to a close. But when they bring it up, we are going to have to show there really is no benefit at all and no proposal at all.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague from Ohio, the ranking member on the commerce Subcommittee on Health, who has been an outstanding spokesman on this issue and who has really fought very hard to make sure that we get a real Medicare prescription drug proposal.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from New Jersey, who has been, as a member of the Subcommittee on Health has helped to lead the charge on all these issues in the last couple of years as Congress, some of us, have moved towards a real Medicare benefit.