

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. Speaker, the conference on our energy bill passed in this House almost 1 year ago today is beginning soon. American consumers sent Iraq and Saddam Hussein more than \$1.4 billion for oil in the first 4 months of this year. This is a corrupt regime that pays the families of homicide bombers \$25,000 for their attack on innocent victims in Israel. We are at war, and depending on Saddam Hussein for the fuel that powers our war on terrorism is untenable.

Mr. Speaker, there is a direct link between energy policy and our national security. That is why more than 80 percent of Americans want us to pass a comprehensive energy plan that protects our national security while strengthening our economy.

In 1992, we imported 32 percent of our energy. Now, nearly 60 percent of our energy is imported. We need an energy policy. The conferees on the energy bill begin meeting tomorrow. I urge them to bring us legislation to increase our energy independence, create jobs, and strengthen our economy, Mr. Speaker.

SUPPORT THE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT AND DISCOUNT ACT

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, Congress must add meaningful prescription drug coverage to Medicare. Prescription drugs can cost as much as \$500 per month; and in Rhode Island alone, 200,000 seniors lack drug coverage.

A study I commissioned last year found that the uninsured elderly in the district of Rhode Island pay an average of 78 percent more for the most commonly used prescription drugs than do seniors in foreign countries.

That is why I support the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit and Discount Act which adds a new part D in Medicare that provides voluntary prescription drug coverage for all beneficiaries. It includes a premium of just \$25 a month, which would be subsidized for low-income seniors. It has a \$2,000 out-of-pocket limit per beneficiary per year.

In contrast, the Republican plan would require high out-of-pocket costs for seniors while offering low benefits.

We must ensure that seniors do not have to choose between food or rent and getting their prescriptions filled. We must provide meaningful drug coverage.

SUPPORT FISCALLY-RESPONSIBLE REPUBLICAN PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

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

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, the Washington Democrats, once again are

misleading the American people on the debate over necessary prescription drug coverage for our seniors. To illustrate to my Democrat friends how our plan will help States, Kentucky has 615,000 Medicare beneficiaries and 50 percent of these citizens are below the 175 percent of poverty level. In Kentucky, a study estimates that State Medicare savings under the Republican-proposed prescription drug benefit would be \$549 million in the fiscal years 2005 through 2012.

In a time when seniors and State governments are experiencing financial difficulty, our plan provides seniors with an affordable prescription drug benefit to Medicare and immediate savings. States also benefit by saving millions of dollars in Medicaid beneficiary costs over the next several years.

Mr. Speaker, this plan is the only fiscally-responsible choice for both seniors and government and should be supported next week when it comes to a full vote in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Democrat plan remains an \$800 billion boondoggle; and I encourage, as we continue this debate, full support of the Republican plan.

OMNIBUS CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY AND RESTORATION ACT

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, when Enron hit, most of America thought that this was an exception, a company that had not done right, that deserved to be reprimanded, and that we would go forward. Sadly, there has been an announcement that there has been a rollover of the corporate elite violating the laws of this Nation and throwing America's investment community into a sense of doubt and shame.

It is time now to take a very forceful and firm stand against corporations that violate the law and hurt the American people, people who have lost their pensions, people who have lost everything, people who are unable to pay for their rent, their mortgages, their college tuitions of their children.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to offer the Omnibus Corporate Responsibility and Restoration Act. Once and for all, it is an omnibus bill that gets rid of insider trading, that provides us a firewall between accounting firms that consult and do accounting, that protects the pension plans of this Nation, and protects employees who can be taken advantage of by a company filing bankruptcy and then terminating thousands of employees.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to stand up against corporate criminal activity.

SUPPORT REPUBLICAN PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

(Mr. SULLIVAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Speaker, seniors in the first district of Oklahoma and across America cannot afford the rising cost of prescription drugs. In order to live within their budget, some skip a meal, some turn off their air-conditioning, and some consume half the prescriptions that they need.

Without a doubt, I believe the Republican prescription drug plan is the only plan that will give our seniors prescription drug coverage they need at a cost that the Nation's budget can afford.

The Republican prescription drug plan provides a two-tiered approach that allows seniors to start saving on their prescription drug bills immediately. By grouping seniors together, Medicare can negotiate discounts from manufacturers. This is projected to save seniors about 10 to 20 percent upon the signature of the President.

The second part of the plan will come as a comprehensive and voluntary Medicare-based prescription drug benefit. The Republican plan will significantly reduce the costs of prescriptions and save seniors approximately 70 percent of their out-of-pocket drug costs.

The House Republican prescription drug plan will work for seniors today, tomorrow, and for the rest of their lives. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4598, HOMELAND SECURITY INFORMATION SHARING ACT

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 458 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 458

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4598) to provide for the sharing of homeland security information by Federal intelligence and law enforcement agencies with State and local entities. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour, with 40 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and 20 minutes equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. Each section of the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. During consideration of the bill for amendment, the Chairman of the Committee of the Whole may accord priority in recognition on the basis of whether

the Member offering an amendment has caused it to be printed in the portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII. Amendments so printed shall be considered as read. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommend with or without instructions.

□ 1030

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin). The gentleman from Florida (Mr. Goss) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, for purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia, or from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS), my colleague and friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time is for purposes of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, the legislation before us is an open rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 4598, the Homeland Security Information Sharing Act. This is a fair rule that will allow thoughtful discussion on a topic that has become crucial to our national security.

I do not think there is anything controversial in any way about any of the elements of the rule, which were so well read by the Clerk, and I do not think there is any point in repeating all of that.

Mr. Speaker, this is a good open rule on an important subject. Dealing with information sharing is critical to our ability to prevent bad things from happening in homeland America. That is the challenge that is before us today.

I have to congratulate the chairman and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security of my Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), for their work on this timely piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this bill starts us down a road that we must travel to make sure all our forces are cooperatively engaged for national security. H.R. 4598 would promote the sharing of critical homeland security threat information between Federal law enforcement and intelligence agencies with State and local officials in place to protect and defend the American public.

Can Members imagine how much safer our country can be if local first responders like police officers and sheriffs have Federal information at their fingertips that enables them to pinpoint and thwart evildoers before tragedies occur?

Mr. Speaker, this bill may not provide a crystal ball that forewarns us of

every and all bad things looming in the future, but it gives us a tool for transmitting known facts and information about terrorist activity to capable, authorized people who are in position to act on the front lines across America.

The tragic events of September 11 have caused us to reevaluate how we go about protecting our Nation and our people. We are dealing with a visionary new homeland security structure, we are dealing with necessary reform at the FBI, we are dealing with 9-11 reviews, we are dealing with reform of the intelligence community, and some inevitable changes in our intelligence community capabilities and management.

So we have a great many things on our plate. But, in the meantime, there is no reason why we should not, and every reason why we should, support a good rule and a good piece of legislation that will help us get some interim activity that will heighten safety for every man, woman, and child in the country. That is something that we all want.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from the east coast, I mean west coast, of Florida, the distinguished chairman of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, for yielding time to me. Since he almost put me in Georgia, I decided to put him on the east coast of Florida.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this rule and in support of the underlying bill, the Homeland Security Information Sharing Act. I am proud to have worked with the Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security chairpersons, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS) and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. HARMAN), on this bill; and I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4598 requires Federal intelligence agencies to share relevant homeland security information with designated local police and emergency first response personnel. Furthermore, this bill instructs the Director of Central Intelligence and the Attorney General to draft guidelines for the dissemination of this information.

All such information and the systems used to disseminate it are to be open to Federal intelligence, Federal law enforcement, and congressional review.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is timely indeed. At a moment when State and local law enforcement and emergency response personnel are being forced to prepare for unprecedented threats to the safety and security of their communities, they cannot be left in the dark. Local first responders must have access to timely and detailed information about any terrorist threats in order to adequately serve their communities.

A footnote right here, and a compliment to the distinguished chairperson of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence and, in the other body, the Senator from Florida who chairs the concomitant committee in the Senate, for having sponsored a program in Orlando that I was fortunate enough to attend with both of them that deals specifically in part, or dealt with, in part, the facts having to do with first responders and local communities.

I think to the extent that Florida will become a bellwether State, the beacon light was shed by the information that was provided at that conference due to the two chairs of the intelligence community. I, for one, as a Floridian and as a Member of this body, am grateful and indebted to them.

Mr. Speaker, while some may be concerned that this legislation greatly widens the pool of people with access to intelligence information, let me note that this bill provides very adequate safeguards to protect the rights of individuals and groups.

For example, the bill protects the constitutional and statutory rights of individuals by requiring that any information that is shared must not be used for any unauthorized purpose. Similarly, the information sharing procedures mandated by the bill must ensure the security and confidentiality of information as well as redact or delete obsolete or erroneous information.

Last, this legislation, like the PATRIOT Act before it, brings with it new modes of intelligence sharing and new congressional oversight responsibilities. Just as we are compelled to increase our intelligence-sharing capacity in the wake of the tragedy of September 11, so, too, are we compelled to ensure that these new government powers do not erode our precious civil rights and civil liberties.

Again, for all of the reasons I have just outlined, I support this bill and I support this fair, open rule which allows its consideration today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am from the west coast of Florida. We will get this right. Florida is south of Georgia. The gentleman from the east coast of Florida just made an eloquent speech for which I am most grateful, and I appreciate the kind remarks. I will return them from the west coast of Florida to the east coast of Florida.

It was always a privilege to have the gentleman on our Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. We look forward to his return. We enjoy working with him on the Committee on Rules, in the meantime. It is a different kind of work than the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE).

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the distinguished gentleman from Florida and the distinguished gentleman from Georgia. I want to thank them. I will soon be reprimanded on the floor. I am using my time. Let me thank the two distinguished gentlemen from Florida for their leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, let me applaud the proponents of this legislation, particularly in the testimony they gave before the Committee on the Judiciary, of which I am a member. I want to add my support to the rule and am gratified that it is an open rule.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues that I think one of the more important points that we can make as we move toward making this country a safer place to live, and recognizing that we have turned the page of history on September 11, is the ability to share viable and important information with our local responders, if you will, or the local leaders that will provide the home-based security.

With that in mind, I intend to offer an amendment, a friendly amendment, that I hope my colleagues will consider favorably, and that is to ensure procedures that will allow the information from government whistle-blowers to be able to be shared within the confines of the regulations that may be designed by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I hope in this context we will recognize that information may come from a variety of sources, and we would hope the President would then design for us the best way that that information should be shared. The idea is to make sure that our Nation is safe, to do it with cooperative and collaborative efforts, but also to protect the integrity of the information we need to secure those in the homeland.

This amendment, as I said, is offered in a friendly context to recognize the importance of information that comes from those who would be willing to provide us the truth. I think as we move forward we have all determined that the key element for safety involves finding out the facts and the truth.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the remarks of my colleague, the gentleman from the east coast of Florida (Mr. HASTINGS). Actually, we do note there is an east and west, we are one State together, and proud to know each other.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Texas). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 42 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess for approximately 10 minutes.

□ 1056

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Texas) at 10 o'clock and 56 minutes a.m.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 458, the legislation just passed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

HOMELAND SECURITY INFORMATION SHARING ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 458 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 4598.

□ 1057

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 4598) to provide for the sharing of homeland security information by Federal intelligence and law enforcement agencies with State and local entities, with Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered as having been read the first time.

Under the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROEMER) each will control 20 minutes. The gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) each will control 10 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS).

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Chairman, I yield the balance of my time to the distinguished gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CHAMBLISS), and I ask unanimous consent that he be allowed to control the time that is allowed to us on behalf of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, I would like to thank the distinguished chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence for the great work that he and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), have done in leading our Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, not just post-September 11, but even before that.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) has been a very level-headed individual, who has carried us forward in some difficult times with respect to dealing with our intelligence community; and since September 11 he has particularly provided the strong leadership that this Congress needed and that this Nation has needed in order to be able to ensure the American people that Congress and our intelligence community is doing everything we possibly can to ensure that another act like September 11 never occurs again.

□ 1100

Since September 11 of last year, Congress has enhanced the capabilities of the Federal, State and local officials to prepare and respond to acts of terrorism. Information sharing is the key to cooperation and coordination in homeland security, and it has become abundantly more clear that better information sharing among government agencies and with State and local officials needs to be a higher priority.

The intelligence community of the Federal Government does a great job of gathering information on terrorist activity, but we do a very poor job of sharing that information both horizontally and vertically within our agencies and with State and local officials.

In the public hearings which our Subcommittee on Terrorism and Homeland Security held last September and October, we heard a recurring theme from witnesses ranging from New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani to Oklahoma Governor Frank Keating. They stressed the importance of an increased level of information sharing between Federal intelligence and law enforcement agencies and local and State law enforcement agencies.

Governor Keating even told us a story about his State Adjutant General, a gentleman that he appointed, who informed the governor he could not share some information with him because, as governor, he did not have the right security clearance.

The case in Oklahoma is no exception. These same types of communication gaps exist in every State, including my home State of Georgia. The result is that sheriffs and local officials do not have the same information as the governor, who does not have the same information as the FBI, who does not have the same information as other local officials.

As we fight this war on terrorism, we must make certain that relevant intelligence and sensitive information relating to our national security be in