

missions work over in Mexico or Alaska, he desired to be a servant for the Lord. As a member of the Harley Davidson Owners group in Gastonia, he spent that opportunity as well in service to the Lord. Baker was attending the University of Nations in Kona, Hawaii, where he was training for missions work in Africa, and in order to attend school he sold his most prized possession, which was his Harley.

Unfortunately, before he left for Africa, he was diagnosed with leukemia. Even in sickness he was a light and an inspiration to all who knew him and came around him during that time. He was always smiling and always faithful, and he was a witness of God's love even in very difficult circumstances. A very special person, we will always remember him.

#### PROTECTING AIR QUALITY

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

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to inform colleagues that North Carolina has become the first southern State to impose tough new pollution standards on aging coal-fired power plants.

This bipartisan legislation is an initiative of Governor Mike Easley, with the collaboration of industry and of environmental and public health advocates. It requires plants to reduce their sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions by 74 and 78 percent, respectively. These standards will improve the quality of life for North Carolinians, and they will save lives by reducing the incidence and severity of respiratory illness.

Ironically, as North Carolina takes steps to improve air quality, the Bush administration has proposed a major step backward, actually weakening the Clean Air Act. The EPA's proposed loosening of "new source review" regulations would allow thousands of the country's biggest polluters to avoid installing pollution-control equipment as they update and modernize their plants. So even though North Carolina will be doing its part to reduce pollution that causes ozone and acid rain, our State will continue to be stricken by pollution from other States.

North Carolina has taken a significant step, Mr. Speaker. I am hopeful that this will stiffen EPA's spine, to give all Americans the protection they need.

#### THE CALIFORNIA JUDICIARY

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

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, it is no surprise that yesterday the Ninth Circuit ruled in complete and total disregard for the wishes of the people of California. I heard earlier speakers address

the House and talk of the vacancies, and there are five on the Ninth Circuit, specifically because of the inaction of the Senate; and I would like to associate myself with those who have called for the Senate to take appropriate action.

But more importantly here today as a Californian, I want to make it very clear that when we are called the "left coast," they are only speaking about our courts; they are only speaking about the insane actions that often come from our judiciary. They are not speaking about the people of California up and down the State who embrace America's core values, including one Nation under God, indivisible.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATOURRETTE). The Chair would again remind all Members that it is not appropriate during debate to urge action by the other body.

#### OUTRAGE OVER PRESCRIPTION DRUG RULE

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we are one Nation under God, but God please help this House of Representatives. For the outrageous procedure that the Committee on Rules did this morning, we need God's blessing. For years and years seniors in our country have needed a prescription drug benefit, and yet early this morning Medicare was styled as a Soviet-style health care plan in the Committee on Rules, Medicare that was passed and had provided health care for seniors for over 35 years called Soviet care.

Well, the Soviet concern is what the procedure is today in the House of Representatives, not allowing an option except on the Republican prescription drug bill that is so filled with holes, it leaks so bad, no senior will be able to get any prescription drugs. They will not have these lifesaving pharmaceuticals. Now they are not turning on their electricity, they are taking half prescriptions, and yet the Republicans today are giving them a sieve to be able to sift through.

#### SHOCKED AND APPALLED BY NINTH CIRCUIT'S DECISION

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, like most Americans I believe in this country, I believe in God, and I believe in the power and importance of allegiance to our flag. As such, like millions of Americans, I was shocked and appalled by the Ninth Circuit's pledge decision.

Mr. Speaker, we open this House in prayer to God. The walls of this temple of democracy bear His name, but it is unconstitutional for our children to name God as they acknowledge their fealty to that very same Nation? Sadly, Mr. Speaker, this decision is part of a 35-year effort by radical secularists who would twist the freedom of religion into a freedom from religion.

We must reject this course of judiciary decisions. I pledge myself to fight every decision by the judiciary that seeks to drive expressions of faith, the Ten Commandments and voluntary prayer from schools, out of every corner of American life, so help me God.

#### MEDICARE WITHERING ON THE VINE

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the Republican candidate for President several years ago proudly voted against Medicare. The former Speaker, Mr. Gingrich, said that he hoped that Medicare would wither on the vine. Many of us wondered what he really meant.

Today, in the Committee on Rules, we found out the truth. A gentleman from Georgia on the Committee on Rules said that there are two proposals before us today, the Republican proposal and a Soviet-style program. When pressed, he said we all know Medicare is a Soviet-style program.

There is where we are. The Republican plan is a plan to privatize Medicare, first by doing the drug benefit and then extending it into the rest. It is a Trojan horse designed to get rid of Medicare, and everybody who votes for that bill today will be setting that in motion.

My mother, my colleagues' mothers, their grandfathers, their fathers, they do not want Medicare to wither on the vine; but this House is prepared to prevent us from giving even an alternative to the American people. That is what Soviets do.

#### RECOGNIZING GREATER MIAMI JEWISH FEDERATION AND MICHAEL-ANN RUSSEL JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to recognize the Greater Miami Jewish Federation and the Michael-Ann Russel Jewish Community Center to commend them for their efforts on the Interfaith Solidarity with Israel rally which recently took place in my home district of Miami.

I want to especially thank Rachel Sapoznik, international division chairwoman from the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, Fanny Hanono and Avy

Weberman from the Michael-Ann Russell Jewish Community Center for their tireless efforts in making this rally a giant success. The event included a variety of speakers from different religious denominations, parochial schools, youth groups and community organizations.

The rally provided an opportunity for folks to voice their support for the State of Israel and gave them specific information on the different ways that they can help both of our countries fight the international war on terrorism.

I want to especially thank those organizers of the Interfaith Solidarity with Israel rally for uniting our community in its support for this embattled country.

#### AMERICA'S SENIORS WANT GUARANTEED ACCESS TO MEDICINES

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, left to the Republican sham prescription drug bill, our parents, including individuals with disabilities, will find themselves at the mercy of private HMOs having to search for a plan. America's seniors want guaranteed access to the medicines their doctors prescribe at prices they can afford, and they depend on that guarantee for help and for life.

The only bill on the floor today guarantees no prescription drug benefit. The plan the Republicans are trying to force on this country does nothing to curb soaring drug prices, not enough to restore provider payments and does everything to benefit private insurance companies.

Our plan, the Dingell bill, honors our responsibilities to this Nation's seniors, gives them coverage for any drug their doctor prescribes, and guarantees that beneficiaries always have coverage, with lower monthly premiums and a lower out-of-pocket maximum. Our plan beats theirs any day and in any way. That is why we are being denied a chance to offer it.

That is not fair to us, their colleagues, and it disrespects those who sent us here; but it is most unfair to the seniors and their families who need real help with medication now.

#### ENERGY INDEPENDENCE THROUGH FUEL CELLS

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

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to highlight the promise and the potential of fuel cells in hydrogen to help us gain greater energy independence in a way that is safe, clean and renewable.

Often called minipower plants, fuel cells could hold the key to energy independence for America. In an article en-

titled "Squeaky Clean," the magazine The Economist referred to fuel cells as the next big thing, and the most promising fuel cells operate on hydrogen, which the magazine Physics Today referred to as the fuel of the future.

We know their potential. Zero emissions. Water and heat are the only by-products, and when both heat and electricity are used, fuel cells can obtain more than 80 percent efficiency.

Researchers at our national science labs, corporations, universities and small businesses are working hard to help us realize the potential of fuel cells.

America has the ingenuity and the expertise to meet our future energy demands, and fuel cells can help us to do so in an environmentally responsible way that sets a standard for the world.

#### WOMEN AND PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, women in this country need a Medicare drug benefit now. In the State of California, 56 percent of Medicare recipients are women. These elderly women have on the average spent about 10 percent of the cost for prescription drugs there, but this year alone their costs went up about 20 percent; and for people from my district particularly, this is a very, very extreme hardship.

Most are on fixed incomes and cannot afford those costs, and they believe the plan that is being proposed by the Republicans today will actually make their lives worse. I know that because their plan will help to benefit HMOs and insurance companies and it is a farce. They are saying that our current drug benefit program is a Soviet-style form of government. That cannot be farther from the truth.

When I go into my senior citizen centers, the first thing people ask me is, HILDA SOLIS, you are my representative, why is there not a better benefit program so I can pay for my treatment that I need to control my diabetes, to get my insulin, to pay for the things that I need to survive?

Let us do the right thing today. Let us vote for a Democratic substitute that is fair for all people.

#### ASTONISHMENT AND OUTRAGE AT RULING OF NINTH CIRCUIT COURT OF APPEALS

(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 astonishment and outrage at the ruling of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which declared the Pledge of Allegiance to be unconstitutional. Mr. Speaker, what could this court be thinking? Under their reasoning, our money would be uncon-

stitutional, the Presidential oath would be unconstitutional, and yes, this very Chamber, the House of Representatives, would be unconstitutional.

To call the Pledge of Allegiance unconstitutional is the highest embarrassment for our judicial system, and this ruling undermines everything our Nation stands for, principles set back in 1776, as well as the Declaration of Independence, which by the way includes the word God as well.

Mr. Speaker, is the very document that announced our Nation's independence also unconstitutional? Next week we will be celebrating our Nation's independence, and I hope every American will remember and celebrate our Nation's traditions, including expressing our unity as one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all, and may God bless America.

#### REPUBLICANS DENYING OUR SENIORS RELIEF THEY NEED

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, today Republicans refuse to permit consideration of a prescription drug plan for our seniors on the very same day that one of their leaders condemns the basic Medicare program as a Soviet-style program. The Republicans have no prescription drug plan, only a scheme to privatize Medicare and to protect prescription drug manufacturers. They want to turn seniors over to HMOs with no guaranteed deductible, no guaranteed premium, and no guaranteed benefit. Some plan.

The House Republican leadership has once again pledged its allegiance to the pharmaceutical manufacturers who are the price gougers that forcing our seniors to pay the highest prices of any people in the entire world. Little wonder that these same manufacturers are already on the airwaves across America paying millions for ads to defend their Republican House partners who are trying today to deny our seniors the relief they so very desperately need.

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#### LIBERAL COURTS ERR AGAIN

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, our liberal friends in the Federal courts have erred again. The 14th amendment says that no State, and I quote, "shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property without due process of law." Yet late last year the Supreme Court ruled that this guaranteed doctors the right to impale partially-born babies in the skull with scissors and extract them dead from their mother's birth canals.

The first amendment says America cannot have an official State church,