

on this bill. Yet, again, this is a bill that has not made its way to the House floor.

Would the majority leader care to comment with all the time we have had on the floor this past week, why that priority of the President has not come to the floor?

Mr. ARMEY. I appreciate the gentleman's inquiry. The fact of the matter is we have attended to a great many matters, and when and if that bill is appropriate to be brought to the floor in the judgment of the majority leader, the bill will then be brought to the floor. That time has not yet come.

Ms. PELOSI. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. ROEMER. I thank the majority leader, and I thank the gentlewoman from California. I hope this bipartisan bill will get to the floor. I think it would pass with over 300 votes.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I would encourage once again the leaders of the majority to bring the Senate bill to the floor expeditiously.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, JULY 15, 2002

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will remind Members of both sides to please refrain from improper references to the Senate.

FINDING A CURE FOR ALS

(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, upon retiring from baseball due to a debilitating disease known as ALS, Lou Gehrig said, "I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the Earth . . . I might have had a tough break, but I have an awful lot to live for."

Today this attitude is personified in Matthias Radits, the corporate chef of

The Breakers resort, who was diagnosed with ALS last year. With The Breakers' kitchen serving as the classroom, Mr. Radits has established an apprenticeship for high school graduates interested in culinary arts.

ALS is a fatal, neurodegenerative disease that attacks nerve cells of the brain and spinal cord. When cells die, voluntary muscle control and movement ceases, yet a patient's mind remains intact.

The average life expectancy is 2 to 5 years. But with recent advancements, ALS patients are living longer and having more productive lives.

I urge my colleagues to work hard towards additional funding for ALS so that more aggressive and productive research can be done and we can imagine a day when this disease disappears for all of the Matthias Raditses of the world.

RESTORE INVESTOR CONFIDENCE

(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, last Saturday in Houston, Texas, my constituents, many of them laid off ex-Enron employees, joined me to announce the need for immediate action for corporate accountability. Large speeches were made this week by the administration joining in that voice, but the only action that will be respectful of the pain that so many have experienced is immediate action.

So I call upon my colleagues to immediately address an outstanding legislative initiative that deals with separating accounting functions from consulting functions offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE). I believe we can immediately begin to answer the concerns of the American people. We can address the concerns of a WorldCom stock that 3 weeks ago sold for \$64 and is now 7 cents.

So to answer the needs and the pain of my constituents, I will file today the Omnibus Corporate Reform and Restoration Act of 2002, an omnibus bill that has sweeping measures to change the face of corporate America. I hope we have heard the voices and the cries of the American people. We must do it now to restore investor confidence.

STRONG LEADERSHIP OF THE PRESIDENT

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate President Bush on the very bold speech that he made on Wall Street the other day demonstrating his outrage over the kind of business that we have seen within a number of corporations. I know many people are talking about these scandals; my colleague from Texas just mentioned it. I

think that if we look at the way President Bush has responded, there are a number of issues on which he states his very strong feelings.

There is nothing about which he feels more strongly than the fact in a capitalist system which is one of the greatest aspects of the United States of America, honesty and ethics are a priority and they are to be expected. And that is why I believe that the legislation which we have moved from this House and we hope we will be able to see legislation emerge from the Senate so that we can bring about a bipartisan compromise to deal with accounting reform that will not in any way jeopardize the free market system which is so important to us will succeed. I congratulate President Bush for the very strong leadership he has shown on this issue.

STEEL REVITALIZATION ACT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, almost every day we hear about another major U.S. corporation sell out its stockholders, lay off workers, destroy pension funds for those workers. Almost every day we see my Republican friends do the bidding of another corporate interest and fail the American public.

I call on this body to pass H.R. 808, the Steel Revitalization Act. In my district, RTI Technologies, a steel producer, has seen, its workers have seen their pension and their health benefits in jeopardy.

This body which every day acts on behalf of corporate interests on behalf of Republican leadership has failed workers in this country, has failed pensioners in this country, has failed to correct health care abuses by corporate America in this country. It is time that this body pass H.R. 808, the Steel Revitalization Act.

ACTING AGAINST CORPORATE ABUSES

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I am often admonished for urging the other body to take up action on a bill, and yet I just heard a dialogue between the minority whip and the majority leader on urging us to take up a Senate bill.

I was on the floor yesterday when that bill was under consideration. Ironically, Senator JOHN MCCAIN from Arizona had a very, very important provision in that bill that would have accounted for stock options, which is one of the biggest problems in the accounting of corporate income and expenses. He was blocked by the majority, the Democratic majority, from accepting his amendment that would have

brought to light how these stock options are treated.

Now, in fairness, we are willing to consider a bill urgently to clean up corporate abuse, accounting abuse; but they cannot have it both ways. They cannot say it is a perfect bill that has been produced by Senator SARBANES without acknowledging that they failed to address a very important option test, accounting for options, which has been the fundamental root of the problems. WorldCom, Enron, all of these options that were allowed by the corporations had faulty accounting techniques applied.

So I commend Senator MCCAIN for introducing that, and I urge those on the other side to consider it as well.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind the Member to refrain from improper references to the Senate.

UNNECESSARY DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I realize that almost everyone in the Congress is going to vote to create the new Department of Homeland Security, but I am afraid all this new Department is going to do is make the government bigger, more bureaucratic and more expensive and the country will not be any safer.

In yesterday's "Congress Daily," we read that the Congressional Budget Office has estimated it will cost \$43 billion just to implement the new Department.

The New York Times on June 23 had a column which said the proposed Department contains "elements so big that even a fee-hungry Wall Street investment banker might have hesitated to propose it."

William Schneider, in the "National Journal," said it will "simply add another layer of bureaucracy. Will adding another layer of government at the top make a great deal of difference? Not if the problem is at the bottom."

Tony Blankley, in Wednesday's Washington Times said, "Congress should slow down, be more deliberative . . . Perhaps some bill can be cobbled together at such breakneck speed, but not the bill that this country needs."

Mr. Speaker, we should not have to create a new cabinet-level Department just to get Federal agencies to cooperate with each other.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIRK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a

previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, we spend a lot of time in Congress talking about health care, and reasonably so, we should. Health care is probably the one thing none of us as citizens can totally control on our own. We can exercise, diet. We can work out. We can do all the right things, but we may be stricken at sometime in our life with Lupus, leukemia, Alzheimer's, AIDS, cancer, any number of maladies that face us. It is important to talk about these subjects because it is important for Congress to grapple with these issues.

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There is also a looming issue that needs to be discussed, vetted and a solution found for, and that is medical malpractice insurance rates. Florida particularly has been inundated with liability crises and looming coverage where we may see our physicians unable to afford any coverage at all, and if they can find it, the cost prohibitive for them to continue to practice their vital roles that they play in society.

Malpractice rates have been rising 20 to 40 percent per year, 20 to 40 percent per year, while inflation has remained virtually stagnant. The hardest-hit doctors in Florida are over 50,000 obstetricians, radiologists, orthopedic surgeons, lung specialists, oncologists, among the list of people.

Average damage awards, which is part of the root problem, ordered by courts have doubled over the past 3 years, meaning jury awards for courts have increased damage awards substantially and significantly. Hospitals, one insurer increased a local hospital rate to \$1.5 million this year from \$500,000 a year ago. That is a tripling of premium, which any person can routinely understand that if we add an expense like that to a category, it has to come out of somewhere; and ultimately we pay more for health care, pay more for all the services provided for indigents and others in our community.

Some doctors are paying up to 80 percent of their annual income in premiums. Many people snicker and say physicians make a lot of money. I beg to differ. Some do, but most have been working tirelessly to provide the important roles they do for society and

are often compromised because they are not only having to pay extraordinary liability insurance, but with all the regulations and all the attendant things that they are expected to do, including continuing medical education and the like, they are consequently under the great glare of looming bankruptcy or finding themselves wanting to leave the practice of medicine that they have loved doing for all their life.

We need to do something about this issue. It needs to revolve around getting the parties together, and this is not a shot at the trial lawyers, but they have to be intimately involved in some of these discussions where there would be another system like a loser pay something where at least the onus is on those bringing charges, to be certain they have valuable and vital suits to bring to the courts. Oftentimes litigation ends with a letter to the plaintiff defendant, ultimately trying to shake down a few dollars, and hopefully the insurance company will settle because they will tell us it is more expensive to go to court than to settle out of court; and consequently, doctors are hemorrhaging incomes because of these consequences.

I do not stand aside or take any notion that we should excuse wrongful and wilful malpractice. Somebody cuts off the wrong limb, absolutely the person who has been aggrieved demands full compensation for damages rendered. That is not what we are talking about. We are talking about a system that has run amuck; that does not recognize dangerous procedures that were done to people, devastating their lives and frivolous lawsuits.

This Congress nationally, as well as legislators in 50 States, needs to grapple with this issue because I can tell my colleagues today that if this does not get resolved soon, we will have a mass exodus of professionals leaving health care, a mass exodus because they can simply no longer afford the premiums that this malpractice insurance costs. It is affecting hospitals. It is affecting nursing homes. It is affecting practitioners. It is affecting every American, because as these rates rise, they must be passed on to others, and that is the patient. The patient pays more; health insurance becomes less available. Cost of treatment and facilities increases; cost of health care premiums skyrocket. Costs to the consumers in every product, good or service produced, sold or distributed in this country is exponentially increased because of the underlying costs of these looming crises.

So we can stand here and do nothing, afraid to tackle a tough issue; or we should include it in at least the act of debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIRK). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFAZIO addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)