

Without security, peace and prosperity will be difficult to find and impossible to preserve.

Without victory in the War on Terror, no fiscal, domestic, or social policy will even survive.

Those are the stakes, Mr. Speaker: the preservation of civilization and hope for peace in the world.

One man who understands those stakes is British Prime Minister Tony Blair, one of the heroes of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the War on Terror.

To show our appreciation for his courage and his friendship, we will welcome Prime Minister Blair to speak to a joint meeting of the House and Senate Thursday.

The American people are safer today because of the support he gave us—and continues to give us—in Iraq . . .

. . . just as they will be made safer by Project BioShield and other security initiatives here at home.

And President Bush and this Congress will work to ensure we stay that way.

Thanks to President Bush, vulnerabilities have been identified and addressed.

Our nation is safer, stronger, and better prepared to meet the next threat, wherever it may emerge.

Wartime leadership, Mr. Speaker, could not be better defined.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. STEVE KING

OF IOWA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2003

Mr. KING of Iowa. Mr. Speaker, on July 14, 2003, I was unavoidably detained due to a delayed flight. Unfortunately, I missed the following Rollcall votes. If I would have been present, I would have voted:

“Yea” for Rollcall 108–354, the Rehberg Amendment.

“Nay” for Rollcall 108–355, the Blumenauer Amendment.

“Nay” for Rollcall 108–356, the Hefley Amendment.

“Nay” for Rollcall 108–357, the Ackerman Amendment.

RECOGNIZING TENSAS REUNION, INCORPORATED

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2003

Mr. VITTER. Mr. speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and accomplishments achieved by Tensas Reunion, Incorporated, located in my home state of Louisiana.

Tensas Reunion, Incorporated, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to develop and implement comprehensive and sustainable programs that improve the quality of life for residents of Tensas Parish and meet the educational needs of the Parish's underserved communities. As we strive to provide our children with brighter futures, organizations like Tensas Reunion are a shining example of how we can improve our educational system through community work.

I would like to commend Tensas Reunion, Incorporated, and I am confident that they will continue their outstanding service that has helped so many children in Louisiana.

Thanks to their tireless dedication Northern Louisiana has grown and continues to grow into stronger community.

REGARDING H.R. 2673 AND THE REIMPORTATION PROVISIONS

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 14, 2003

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill, H.R. 2673:

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. Chairman, H.R. 1, the Medicare Prescription Drug bill, which I supported, contains a provision which allowed for the importation of foreign medicines. However, it also included important safeguards that are not present in the importation provision included in this legislation. These new safeguards include: (1) Limiting reimportation to drugs being reimported from Canada; (2) requiring drugs reimported under its provisions to bear a statement designed to inform the patient that the drug was reimported by someone other than the manufacturer; (3) requiring the use of packaging that is reasonably certain to be tamper-resistant and not capable of counterfeiting; (4) preventing “transshipment” through third world countries by permitting the reimportation only of drugs that have not left the possession of the first Canadian recipient after receipt from the manufacturer; and (5) allowing the Secretary to designate one port of entry in the U.S.

The provision included in the legislation before us allows reimportation from any country. Importing medicines from foreign countries weakens the U.S. pharmaceuticals distribution system by allowing the entry of pharmaceuticals from all over the world—even from countries with demonstrated counterfeiting problems. For example, this proposal would allow importation from South Africa, a country where “Up to 20% of the medicines . . . are fakes or stolen and are almost impossible to distinguish from the real thing.”

The provision included in H.R. 1 also requires imported drugs to say they are imported, the provision in this bill does not. Without proper labeling, patients won't know what drugs they are getting. Those of us who are not willing to take the risk with our health will have no way of knowing if they have purchased an imported prescription drug that is contaminated from their neighborhood pharmacy. Proper labeling gives Americans who choose not to use import prescription drugs the means to do so.

This provision would also allow the transshipment of drugs, the provision included in Medicare Prescription Drug bill would not. Transshipment of prescription drugs from country to country provides no pedigree or record of where a particular prescription has been. Without a record of shipment, there is no guarantee of safety. H.R. 1 requires documentation, such as the origin, destination, and lot number assigned to the prescription drug that provides this safety.

It also requires tamper resistant packaging, the provision in this bill does not. H.R. 1 requires prescription drugs from Canada be contained in packaging which the Secretary of Health and Human Services has “determine[d] to be reasonably certain to be tamper-resistant and not capable of counterfeiting.” Tamper-resistant packaging provides an extra layer of security to prescription drugs.

Most importantly, the importation provision included in the Medicare Prescription Drug legislation contains language that allows the Health and Human Services Secretary to ensure the safety of the American drug supply and those drugs being imported, the provision included in the Agriculture Appropriations bill does not. The Medicare bill contains language that requires the Secretary of HHS to certify to the Congress that the new imports will (1) pose no additional health and safety risks, and (2) result in significant savings to consumers. This is important, since the safety and cost-savings provision was signed into law by Congress and President Clinton, as part of the “Medicine Equity and Drug Safety Act of 2000,” to ensure consumers are protected and that they save money. Since that time, two HHS Secretaries, one Democrat and one Republican, could not demonstrate cost-savings or safety from importation.

The importation provision in the bill before us does not include any safeguards to ensure that the medicines patients receive are safe. I do not support taking this type of risk with the health of patients in my district. While I am voting in favor of H.R. 2673 because of numerous other provisions in the bill, I believe reimportation is poor policy and a serious safety concern to Americans.

REMARKS IN HONOR OF TECKLA HALL

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2003

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great shock and even deeper sadness that I come before the United States House of Representatives to announce and mourn the untimely passing of my friend Teckla Hall, of Co-Op City, the Bronx, New York.

Teckla Hall was a driven, passionate advocate for the causes she felt were important—her community, her family, her ancestral roots.

She worked tirelessly on every project she undertook, whether serving on the board of the Riverbay Corporation, where she continually strived to improve the quality of life for all residents; to her service as President of the Eleanor Roosevelt Democratic Club working to advance her political beliefs; to her leadership in the National Council of Negro Women. Teckla had a quiet yet powerful voice. She was heard. She was listened to. She was respected and admired.

While I only knew Teckla a short time, the brief 6 months she worked as my Office Director in Co-Op City, I admired and respected her.

When visiting Co-Op City looking for a community representative for my Co-Op City office, I continually heard one name—Teckla Hall.

But she was more than a résumé—more than a community leader. She was a beloved

daughter, caring for her mother at her home in Co-Op City; a cherished sister, an adored aunt and a good and faithful friend.

Just recently I was on the House floor discussing her niece and her stunning accomplishments. I never thought I would be here again, so soon, discussing something so sad.

When I heard of her death on July 4, I was shocked. She was only 44, in the prime of her life and more accomplished than her years.

All who knew her will feel her loss. She touched many lives—her family's, my staff's, constituents' and people throughout New York's Seventh District.

I will do all that can be done to help ease the pain of Teckla's family during this tragic time. My thoughts and prayers are with them.

Today, she was laid to rest but she will always be a part of the fabric of Co-Op City.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS ARE
"OUT OF BOUNDS" FOR SENIORS

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 15, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, on June 27, 2003, this House of Representatives passed a poor excuse for a solution to the Medicare prescription drug crisis. The Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003 provides minimal benefits to our Nation's disabled and senior citizens and fails to address the underlying problem of skyrocketing prescription drug costs.

On July 9, Families USA released a report appropriately called "Out of Bounds: Rising Prescription Drug Prices for Seniors." Between January 2002 and January 2003, the price of the 50 drugs most commonly used by seniors rose at three-and-a-half times the rate of inflation. With the Republican prescription drug plan, these rising prescription drug costs will continue to restrict patient access to much needed medications.

What is the solution to these skyrocketing drug prices? We must hold the pharmaceutical

companies accountable! The cost disparity between identical prescription drugs sold in the United States, Canada, and Mexico must be eliminated. Generic drugs, whose prices grow far more slowly than brand name drugs, must be allowed to quickly enter the market. Drug companies must begin to hold the welfare of patients above the richness of their own pocketbooks.

Until we convince pharmaceutical companies to treat our senior citizens justly, Congress must take action. A fall-back prescription drug benefit must be offered through Medicare, which would have the power to negotiate drug prices. We must allow drugs to be re-imported from Canada. Members of Congress must be held accountable for the prescription drug benefits we give to seniors. We must urge the conferees to maintain in the final bill Senator MARK DAYTON's amendment which calls for Members of Congress to receive comparable prescription drug benefits to those of Medicare beneficiaries.

Members of Congress, I urge you, do not allow the well-being of our Nation's seniors to be controlled by the greedy hands of the pharmaceutical industry. Take a stand and fight for our Nation's disabled and seniors.