

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DEFAZIO led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monohan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed without amendment a concurrent resolution of the House of the following title:

H. Con. Res. 313. Concurrent resolution to urge the President, on behalf of the United States, to present the Presidential Medal of Freedom to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, in recognition of his significant, enduring, and historic contributions to the causes of freedom, human dignity, and peace and to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of His Holiness' inauguration of his ministry as Bishop of Rome and Supreme Pastor of the Catholic Church.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1895. An act to temporarily extend the programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through March 15, 2004, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 10 one-minutes from each side.

IN SUPPORT OF MEDICARE REFORM BILL

(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 learned in the real estate business, you never leave the negotiations for fear they may fail and you do not get your commission. Today, I understand the Democrats are planning a walkout from this floor to protest Medicare legislation. Yesterday, uniquely, the Democrats were burning their AARP cards down the street. The only thing missing from that scene was Jane Fonda.

Mr. Speaker, the seniors of our country deserve a Medicare program that is updated for the 21st century, including prescription drugs. It is an opportunity to help our seniors with new technology, diagnostic tests for osteoporosis, cardiovascular disease, diabetes. But no. If the Democrats do not get their way, they take the highway. That is discouraging for American seniors. And for them to ridicule and criticize AARP that just last week was

the gold standard for senior lobbying organizations is somewhat a tremendous stain on the Democratic Party. Where are the leaders like Claude Pepper and Franklin Roosevelt?

I urge them to come to the floor today and work on Medicare legislation. Let us pass a bill for all seniors.

A RUBE GOLDBERG MEDICARE REFORM BILL

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman before me waxed eloquent about a \$400 billion Rube Goldberg complete with subsidies for the pharmaceutical industry, the insurance industry and price fixing. It is going to guarantee that there will be no reduction in the extortionate price of prescription drugs. Americans will still continue to pay the highest prices in the developed world despite the fact that the drugs are manufactured here by American companies who often receive the benefit of taxpayer-funded research.

We could provide a much more meaningful benefit for substantially less and that would be if we did two simple things: Negotiate lower prices like every other nation in the world has done, but this bill prohibits the government from negotiating lower prices on behalf of Americans or Medicare beneficiaries. And, secondly, we could just engage in free trade, allow the reimportation of U.S.-manufactured, FDA-approved drugs. That would substantially lower the price. Many American seniors have already resorted to that, but this bill will prohibit the reimportation of drugs but instead it will engage in subsidizing private insurance, subsidizing the pharmaceutical industry, price fixing and protectionism. They are violating every principle they say they believe in.

IN SUPPORT OF MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL

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

Ms. DUNN. Mr. Speaker, later this week we will have an opportunity to keep our promises to seniors. For too long our parents and our grandparents have been paying too much for prescription drugs. This problem is much more acute for low-income seniors, especially women. Women represent more than half the seniors with incomes that are less than 135 percent of the poverty level. They live longer than men, they spend more on health care, and they are more likely to suffer from chronic medical conditions. In essence, women need more drugs for a longer period of time but are least likely to be able to afford them.

This prescription drug bill will help those on fixed incomes. A woman with

an income of less than \$13,000 today will receive full assistance. No premiums, no deductibles, no gap in coverage. Furthermore, disease management programs will help women who are suffering from multiple chronic diseases. It will help them receive better care from health professionals who can coordinate their medical needs.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to end the rhetoric and deliver on a promise.

CONGRESS PUNTS ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, as we address the issue of prescription drugs and as speaker after speaker is speaking about prescription drugs, there are three attempts to deal with out-of-control prices of prescription drugs that are going up on average 20 percent a year:

One is through the free market principle of reimportation, allowing Americans to buy drugs in either Europe or Canada. Second, bulk negotiation, creating a Sam's Club using the power of 40 million seniors to purchase drugs at reduced prices like they do in Europe and in Canada. And, third, through speedy introduction of generic medications to market to bring competition to price.

In all three areas, the pharmaceutical industry got what they want, and this Congress punted on getting the price reduction as it relates to pharmaceutical prices. We need to offer the taxpayers who are about to be asked to spend \$400 billion of their money, \$400 billion of taxpayer money, we owe them the common decency and courtesy to get them the best price, either through the free market principle, through creating negotiation bulk prices to get prices reduced, or generics. In each area, this Congress punted on behalf of the pharmaceutical industry.

PEER-TO-PEER SOFTWARE IS A REAL DANGER TO OUR KIDS

(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, the British newspaper The Guardian has found that demand for child pornography through the use of file-sharing programs, like Kazaa, is leading to more abuse of children. The sale of peer-to-peer traffic in illegal images of children now dwarfs any other pedophile network they have found.

David Wilson, professor of criminology at Central England, said, "Peer-to-peer facilitates the most extreme, aggressive and reprehensible types of behavior that the Internet will allow." Programs that are used by kids to find songs or pictures of cartoons are delivering our children right into the clutches of these predators.

And what are we doing about it? Nothing. Every day innocent kids are victimized on peer-to-peer file-trading software and our inaction allows them to walk right into the trap set by sexual predators. The time to act has come.

I urge my colleagues to cosponsor my bill, H.R. 2885, so that we can move forward in protecting our kids online.

AWARDING CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO PRESIDENT JOSE MARIA AZNAR

(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, I rise today to again encourage my colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 2131, a resolution that will bestow President of the Government of Spain, Jose Maria Aznar, with the Congressional Gold Medal.

Shortly after the September 11 attacks on the United States, President Aznar made the following comment: "Our battle is a battle for the same ideas, for the same freedoms, for the same society and civilizations, and we will share all those efforts as long as it is necessary."

President Aznar of Spain has stood by the United States and, despite heavy political pressure, has never wavered from his staunch commitment to the ideals of freedom, liberty and democracy.

I urge my fellow Members to join me and over 100 cosponsors of H.R. 2131, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to President Aznar. Join us in honoring a man who is a great leader in global democracy, a great leader in the war on terrorism, a notable ally of the United States, and a champion of freedom.

IN OPPOSITION TO LATEST NEW GOVERNMENT ENTITLEMENT

(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, earlier this week I came to the House floor to announce my opposition to the largest new entitlement since 1965, the Medicare prescription drug bill that we will consider this week. As my voice has weakened, strong voices in opposition have emerged, including the venerable Heritage Foundation which has been a beacon of limited government for over three decades. And today, the editorial page of the Wall Street Journal in a piece entitled "Entitlements Are Forever" makes a powerful case that Congress should reconsider before we create this massive new government entitlement. The Wall Street Journal says the GOP's Medicare bill trades certain spending for speculative reform. The bottom line is that the bill would add a universal drug entitlement to a

largely unreformed Medicare program and warns of fiscal disaster. They conclude that Republicans are offering the certainty of trillions in new entitlements in return for a mere promise of future reform and that is too expensive a gamble for principled conservatives to support.

With my very last breath, I would say, "I agree." Oppose the Medicare prescription drug entitlement.

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report for H.R. 1, an historic bill that will include the creation of health savings accounts, a breakthrough program that gives control back to patients. The voluntary health savings accounts provide care that is affordable, flexible and portable. They restore the doctor-patient relationship, allowing Americans the freedom to choose their own doctor and their own care. Also, contributions, earnings and medical payments from these accounts are all tax-free.

Health savings accounts will lower health insurance costs for millions of Americans and allow for price competition of doctor and hospital services. Moreover, these accounts stay with a person throughout their lives as they are portable from one job to the other. They also can be used during retirement to pay for retiree health care, Medicare expenses and prescription drugs.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support health savings accounts by voting in favor of H.R. 1 and give health care freedom to millions of Americans.

In conclusion, God bless our troops. We will not forget September 11.

IN HONOR OF RECENT BRONZE STAR RECIPIENTS

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the honor of handing out Bronze Star Medals to 58 World War II veterans from the Third District of Arkansas. These veterans did not previously receive their medals because of an oversight when they returned home after the war.

The Bronze Star is awarded to World War II veterans who earned the Combat Infantry Badge or the Combat Medical Badge. The award of these badges is considered as a citation in orders of exemplary conduct in ground combat against an armed enemy.

The hard work of the Northwest Arkansas Veterans Task Force who brought this oversight to my attention made this ceremony a reality. They are

constantly looking out for veterans in our community, and their commitment to our veterans ought to be commended.

Mr. Speaker, each one of these veterans has a story to tell. Theirs is a special generation, the greatest generation, and we all owe them a debt of gratitude.

IN SUPPORT OF CONFERENCE REPORT ON MEDICARE MODERNIZATION BILL

(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, I rise today in support of the conference committee report on the Medicare prescription drug coverage bill. This long-awaited legislation will provide a tangible, real and meaningful benefit to American seniors.

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Senior Americans are tired of the talk. It is time for action. This bill will put a drug discount card in their hands in May, 2004; and it will help them save between 15 and 25 percent right off the bat. It also provides structure for Medicare. It includes an affordable deductible and catastrophic coverage, in responsible manner, to help the neediest seniors. Those who currently have prescription drug coverage can keep their coverage because this plan is voluntary. This is reasonable legislation that will not only improve and prolong lives of our seniors but will do the same for the Medicare program.

Provisions for reimportation are in this legislation, ensuring safety and accountability. And it also includes an update for oncology drugs that is critical to cancer patients nationwide.

In conclusion, I would remind my colleagues that this bill provides structure; helps seniors get the prescription drugs they need when they need them by putting a discount card in their hands; is voluntary; and is tangible. It ensures accountability for reimportation and, more importantly, makes Members accountable to their constituents. I urge my colleagues to vote for H.R. 1.

PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, the President gave an amazing speech yesterday in England, and everyone should read it. Consistent with that speech, I would now ask the administration to appoint a special envoy to the Middle East to focus like a laser beam on bringing peace to the Middle East.

Envoys for peace have succeeded in the past. Senator Mitchell succeeded in Ireland. Senator Danforth has helped push the peace in Sudan. Three people