

It is amazing to me when you look at this legislation what went on. A middle-of-the-night vote, twisting arms, bribing Members of Congress, it looks like, allegations are being made at this point, and no choices at all because you are forced essentially into an HMO. And for what? A Medicare prescription drug benefit that is almost completely useless because, as we have said before, you would have to spend so much money out of pocket, probably over \$4,000 out of pocket in order to get \$5,000 worth of coverage.

We do not even know what the premium is going to be. The premium for the drug benefit could be \$85, \$100 a month for all we know. And you are going to have a \$275 deductible or perhaps a higher deductible. You are only going to get coverage up to something like \$2,000 or so and after that you are going to have to pay out of pocket even though you are continuing to pay the premiums, up to \$5,000. It does not even go into effect until 2006. No cost containment whatsoever. It is just amazing. We have got to continue to point out the bad aspects of this bill.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 11 a.m. today.

Accordingly (at 10 a.m.), the House stood in recess until 11 a.m.

□ 1100

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY) at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: In this season of expectation and winter surprises, the words of the prophet Baruch cut through the ages and blanket the earth:

"My people, take off your robe of mourning and lament; put on the splendor of glory from God forever: Wrapped in the cloak of justice from God, show forth the glory of the Lord's eternal name: For God will show all the earth your splendor."

Lord our God, be with the Congress of the United States today. May its work prove to all, You guide Your people always and are present to their deepest needs. By the lasting effects of decisions made here, Your splendor, as our judge, will be revealed.

For You, the Lord, will lead this Nation in joy and fulfillment. By the light of Your glory, You will befriend us with mercy and justice now and forever. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the

last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

Mr. CHABOT 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.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 3633

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 3633.

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

There was no objection.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, November 26, 2003.

Hon. J. DENNIS HASTERT,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on November 26, 2003 at 10:22 a.m.:

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1437.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 1813.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3287.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.R. 3348.

That the Senate passed without amendment H.J. Res. 80.

That the Senate agreed to House amendment to S. 459.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely,

JEFF TRANDAH, Clerk.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 4 of rule 1, Speaker pro tempore THORNBERRY signed the following enrolled bills and joint resolution on Monday, December 1, 2003:

H.R. 1437, to improve the United States Code;

H.R. 1813, to amend the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 to authorize appropriations to provide assistance for domestic and foreign centers and programs for the treatment of victims of torture, and for other purposes;

H.R. 2622, to amend the Fair Credit Reporting Act, to prevent identity theft, improve resolution of consumer disputes, improve the accuracy of consumer records, make improvements in the use of, and consumer access to, credit information, and for other purposes;

H.R. 3287, to award Congressional Gold Medals posthumously on behalf of Reverend Joseph A. DeLaine, Harry and Eliza Briggs, and Levi Pearson in recognition of their contributions to the Nation as pioneers in the effort to desegregate public schools that led directly to the landmark desegregation case of *Brown et al. v. The Board of Education of Topeka et al.*;

H.R. 3348, to reauthorize the ban on undetectable firearms;

H.J. Res. 80, appointing the day for the convening of the second session of the One Hundred Eighth Congress;

S. 459, to ensure that a public safety officer who suffers a fatal heart attack or stroke while on duty shall be presumed to have died in the line of duty for purposes of public safety officer survivor benefits;

and the following enrolled bill and joint resolution on Wednesday, December 3, 2003:

H.R. 2297, to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve benefits under laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes;

H.J. Res. 63, to approve the Compact of Free Association, as amended, between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Compact of Free Association, as amended, between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and to appropriate funds to carry out the amended compacts;

and the Speaker signed the following enrolled bill on Saturday, December 6, 2003:

H.R. 1, to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a voluntary program for prescription drug coverage under the Medicare program, to modernize the Medicare program, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a deduction to individuals for amounts contributed to health savings security accounts and health savings accounts, to provide for the disposition of unused health benefits in cafeteria plans and flexible spending arrangements, and for other purposes.

CONGRATULATING THE ELDER FOOTBALL TEAM

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, on the blustery evening of November 29, 2003, the Elder High School football team won their second consecutive Ohio

State championship under the guidance of Coach Doug Ramsey, becoming just the fourth school ever to win back-to-back Division I championships.

While last year's championship run was epitomized by hard-fought, closely-contested victories, this year's Panther team dominated the playoffs, except for the very close one-point win over a very tough Coleraw High School team. The dynamic leadership of quarterback Rob Florian and the sensational running of Bradley Glatthaar spearheaded the offense, while Elder's swarming defense held opposing teams to just seven points in four of the five playoff games. As always, thousands of Elder faithful traveled across the State, braving the cold, to support the Panthers throughout the playoffs.

Mr. Speaker, the hard work and sacrifice of the young men at Elder have brought pride and honor to Price Hill and to our entire community. Football fans throughout the Cincinnati area congratulate the Panthers and share in their celebration. Way to go, Elder Panthers. And from a LaSalle Lancer, it might be a tough thing to do, but we are real proud of you, Elder. God bless you.

CALLING UPON RETAILERS TO REMOVE VIOLENT AND DEGRADING VIDEO GAMES FROM STORE SHELVES

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

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring to this Chamber's attention a disturbing trend in video game entertainment: Grand Theft Auto: Vice City, a video game made by Rockstar Games, Inc., contains violent and discriminatory messages, urging the player to "kill the Haitians" and "kill the Cubans."

As an elected official who represents an ever-expanding population of Haitian Americans and Cuban Americans, I am deeply disturbed by the inflammatory and anti-immigration message contained in this video game. These messages run counter to the very principles on which this Nation was founded: as a haven for all of those who seek freedom and equality.

I stand before the House today calling on my colleagues to join me, along with many elected officials, to urge retailers to remove this divisive product from their shelves and Internet Web sites immediately.

The Haitian and Cuban communities in America represent a core of law-abiding, hard-working model citizenry that embrace family and community. They are valuable segments of our society who, as others before them, seek to live the American dream.

It is shocking and disheartening to know that games with such dehumanizing messages against these groups are routinely sold to children across the Nation. This sort of insensitivity and degradation cannot be tolerated.

I urge my colleagues to join me in calling upon retailers to remove this game.

ACKNOWLEDGING ADMIRABLE CALIFORNIANS

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate Governor Schwarzenegger on his efforts to "clean house" in California. Since he took office last month, he has been implementing many reforms to California's economic and security problems. He has rescinded a \$4 billion car tax, called for a constitutional amendment to limit State spending, and worked with the legislature to repeal the law that allows illegal aliens to obtain driver's license. Instead of hiding his head in the sand as his predecessor did, he has shown the courage to balance the State's budget without raising taxes and to protect the security of the State.

I would also like to speak on another admirable Californian, Judge Janice Brown. Judge Brown is the daughter of a sharecropper who has beat the odds to become one of the finest judges in America. Critics claim she is an extreme conservative who is outside of America's mainstream, but they are the ones who are outside the mainstream. These critics have intentionally disregarded her judicial opinions that have upheld due process rights for criminal defendants and consumer protection for Californians. This body must stand with Californians, like Governor Schwarzenegger and Judge Brown, who are working to make a difference.

MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, today, as the President signs the Medicare Reform Act dealing with prescription drugs, although this is going to be hailed around in Washington as a great day, we missed an opportunity to save our seniors dramatically on the cost of prescription drugs.

We could have included a provision that allowed prescription drugs to be purchased in Canada or Europe where prices are 40 to 50 percent cheaper, saving for seniors, on average, a good deal of money, as well as taxpayers a good deal of money. We could have included a provision to allow a Sam's Club-like bulk negotiating which the Veterans' Administration does for veterans, and we could have done that for Medicare, for 41 million Americans, to reduce prices. Either way, either of these issues, either through open markets and market access, allowing competition to bring prices down and give con-

sumers choice, or allowing bulk price negotiations, which is what happens if you have a Sam's Club. In either manner, we in the government prevented that from happening and are forcing our seniors into higher prices and forcing our taxpayers to pay inflated prices.

We have an obligation to the taxpayers to give them the best and most affordable prices for their taxpayer money, and we took a pass today on that legislation.

INFAMOUS DAYS IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY

(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, yesterday was the anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. That day, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt said, was "a day that will live in infamy." More than 2,400 Americans died that day, 1,100 were wounded, and that day changed America forever.

But despite being attacked on our own soil, the American people responded with courage and resolution.

This same courage showed its face on September 11, 2001. That same resolution continues to drive us in the war on global terrorism today.

As President Bush said this weekend honoring Pearl Harbor, "America's liberty is sustained by the courage of the American people. Every generation of Americans has answered the call to protect the blessings of freedom and democracy. With the help of our friends and allies, the brave men and women of our Armed Forces are now engaged in a global war on terrorism. And as in the aftermath of the terrible attack on Pearl Harbor, our Nation will stay the course, and we will prevail."

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

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

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Last year, President Bush and the Republican Congress refused to extend unemployment insurance before it expired, leaving millions out in the cold. This year, they are, again, showing little interest in providing relief to those searching for jobs. To me, that is wrong.

Despite modest gains in the economy, the job market remains abysmal. Over 1.1 million Californians remain out of work, looking for jobs. Long-term unemployment last month was the highest in 20 years, with over 20 percent of those without jobs looking for work for more than 6 months.

This is especially true in my district where unemployment rates remain very high. In East Los Angeles, the area that I represent, the unemployment rate is well over 10.7 percent, and