

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman from California. Education, guidance and opportunity are key ingredients to success, and I commend the gentlewoman for her initiative on this motion. I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. OBERSTAR. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I would simply note that the air patrol in Minnesota has a similar program, we call it the Young Eagles, to bring young people into participation in aviation at an early age. It is beneficial to all of aviation.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the concurrent resolution, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 532

Whereas youth participants perform community service in exchange for flight lessons and instruction courses offered through the Aero Squad After School Program at Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum in Compton, California;

Whereas the Aero Squad After School Program, founded by Robin Petgrave, provides a haven for young people to work and develop workplace ethics while taking seminars that focus on mathematics, airplane maintenance, and motor maintenance: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the Aero Squad After School Program at Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum in Compton, California, as well as other youth aviation programs that expose young minorities to the field of civil aviation through engineering, science, and mathematics enrichment courses;

(2) commends civil aviation enrichment programs that encourage minorities and underrepresented groups to enter the field of civil aviation; and

(3) congratulates the graduates of the Aero Squad After School Program at Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum in Compton, California, who have obtained pilot licenses, including Kenny Roy, who obtained his student pilot license in Canada.

The concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H.R. 5426 and H. Con. Res. 532.

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

There was no objection.

REPORT OF COMMITTEE TO NOTIFY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, your committee appointed to join a committee of the Senate to inform the President that the Congress is ready to adjourn

and to ask him if he has any further communications to make to the Congress has performed that duty. The President has directed us to say that he has no further communications to make to the Congress.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, 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 (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXPRESSING FRUSTRATION REGARDING APPROPRIATIONS PROCESS

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

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, as we conclude the 108th Congress, I think all of us who served in this body feel a great sense of pride and accomplishment for the legislation that we passed that will have a positive impact on our Nation. I think also many of us have a great deal of regret over legislation that did not pass that we needed to pass to address serious issues facing our great Nation.

I am really reluctant at this time to talk about matters that I find frustrating for me personally, but I am not going to be critical of any Member, of course. But one of the processes that seems to be taking place certainly in the House of Representatives is that each year we take up more and more of the legislative calendar to pass appropriation bills. It seems that each year we do not pass all of the appropriation bills. Then what happens is at the end of the year we come forth with a gigantic omnibus bill. This year was no exception. That is one of the reasons that a few years ago on this floor, we had a vote to go to a 2-year appropriation cycle so that one year we could appropriate money for the government, and the next year we could debate substantive issues.

But as I stated earlier, we find ourselves this year with a gigantic omnibus bill once again. The sad thing about it is that when that bill went over to the Senate, many provisions were placed into that bill, and the Members of the House of Representatives never had an opportunity to vote on the bill. I just want to give one example of a substantive policy that was made because of legislation adopted on the Senate side that was never, we never had an opportunity to vote for on this side.

The Bureau of Land Management oversees approximately 261 million acres of public lands, and more than 29 million acres of that land is used for wild horses and burro grazing. Now, because of section 142 being inserted into the omnibus bill on which there was no disclosure, no one knew about it; as I said earlier, we never had an opportunity to vote on it on the House side, 31 years of policy relating to public lands and wild burros and wild horses grazing on those lands were changed. As a matter of fact, the change will no longer protect those wild horses and burros on the public lands. Someone, and it is unclear who, will decide that there may be an excessive number of these animals out there, and those animals will be disposed of.

Now, prior to this year's omnibus bill, in every appropriation bill relating to BLM lands, it said, "Appropriations herein made shall not be available for the destruction of healthy, unadopted wild horses and burros in the care of the Bureau or its contractor." Of course, the omnibus bill eliminated that language as well.

So we leave here at the end of this 108th Congress by action taken in the dark of night, without the knowledge of anyone, that changes 31 years of policy relating to the way we manage Bureau of Land Management and the animals, the wild horses and burros on those properties.

I, for one, am quite frustrated by this process. It seems that each year we come with gigantic omnibus bills. This one exceeded I have been told over 3,000 pages. Most Members, of course, do not know what was in it. But the really disappointing thing to me, and I stress that, was the fact that on the House side, we never had an opportunity to vote on those changes made by the Senate.

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

(Ms. LEE addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to proceed out of order.

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

There was no objection.

CALLING FOR RESTRICTIONS ON ACNE DRUG ACCUTANE

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, I come here tonight concerned about drug safety and to speak out to protect our

children from the acne drug Accutane. As a legislator, I have called for more restrictions on the distribution of this drug, which is known to cause severe birth defects and a form of impulsive behavior and depression in people taking this drug.

This drug has devastated my family with the loss of our son BJ and more than 250 other families who have lost their young son or daughter while he or she was taking the drug Accutane.

Recent news stories concerning the safety of prescription drugs have quoted an FDA safety reviewer, Dr. David Graham, when he spoke to the Senate Finance Committee. Dr. Graham said, "I would argue that the FDA as currently configured is incapable of protecting America against another Vioxx." He told the Senate Finance Committee that "there are at least 5 other drugs on the market today that should be looked at seriously to see whether they should remain on the market." He cited the acne drug Accutane.

Why Accutane? Accutane is the poster child for why we need an independent body to approve and review drug safety. Accutane causes horrendous birth defects and may cause psychiatric disorders such as depression and suicide. It is linked to over 250 suicides, according to the FDA.

A recent study by Dr. J. Douglas Bremner demonstrates how Accutane affects the brain, possibly causing impulsive behavior due to changes in the orbitofrontal cortex. This is the front part of the brain. This is an area known to mediate depression.

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Our investigation, that of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, found that the dosage for Accutane may be way too high.

Too much Accutane, a synthetic vitamin A, causes cerebri tumor or a pseudo tumor in some patients. Some pseudo tumor is a warning that is found on Accutane packaging, but what does it really mean?

What it really means is it causes severe headaches. And while it acts like a tumor in the brain, it cannot be discovered. CAT scans will not show it. There is no evidence of a tumor. So what happens?

As Dr. Bremner showed us here in this study of the orbitofrontal cortex, there is a decrease in the metabolism of the brain. This PET scan right here establishes a baseline of a person before they started Accutane, here on my far right-hand side. This PET scan of the same person 4 months later, while on Accutane, in the first PET scan, the color red representing brain activity in the front part of the brain. Now in the second PET scan after 4 months, notice very little red, representing decreased brain activity in the same person after 4 months of treatment on Accutane. Accutane decreases the metabolism in the front part of the brain.

This is one slide that Dr. Bremner has shared with us. There is a 21 per-

cent decrease in brain metabolism in this patient. This only occurred in some of the Accutane patients. Dr. Bremner also did PET scans with other patients taking oral antibiotics for acne, and none showed brain changes. It is not all Accutane patients who demonstrated a brain change, just those of who complained of headaches. Is the excessive dosage found in the current formula of Accutane that is prescribed to young people, is this the cause of the change of young people that we see?

Medical evidence is clear that Accutane causes medical changes in the brain, and this may be what leads some people to take their own life through impulsive behavior.

Even today, USA Today, dated 12/7/2004, "Drug Maker Rebuffed Call To Monitor Users," a special report in USA Today. What did it say? That the manufacturer, Hoffman-LaRoche, knew that this drug causes depression and impulsive behavior, but it did not want to warn anyone for fear of loss of sales in the U.S. market.

The medical evidence is clear. Accutane causes changes in the brain, and this may be what leads some young people to take their own life. Let us join with Dr. Graham, the Centers for Disease Control, and other health care groups that have expressed strong concerns about the safety of this drug and who have called for Accutane to be withdrawn from the market as far back as 1990. For 14 years these groups have been saying because of the birth defects and psychiatric impact of this drug, we should withdraw it from the market until we have some answers.

Let us pull this drug from the market until we have all the answers surrounding this powerful, dangerous drug called Accutane. Is this decreased metabolism that we see here in the PET scan reversible? Will the brain repair itself? What amount or dose of Accutane is safe? What amount of Accutane can be safely taken by young people so the brain is not affected? These are questions that must be answered to protect our young people.

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

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

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

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

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I wish all of my colleagues a safe and prosperous holiday season; a time to fellowship with our family members and friends; time for our spiritual reflection of our respective faiths; a time to wish for a better life for all of us.

We finally finished, Mr. Speaker, a very long journey; and that journey started on that fateful day of 9/11. So many of us can remember.

My recollection serves me well. It was a Tuesday morning. Some of us had already come to this Capitol, engaged in meetings, prepared to do the normal business of the House. Within a flicker of an eye, the buildings in New York were struck; the Pentagon had gone up, a portion of it in smoke; and in a field in Pennsylvania, a plane had nose dived, killing all.

I repeat this because for some reason this intelligence debate took on a life of its own, maybe even caused confusion among the American public. But it did not cause confusion among those family members who had lost loved ones and those who lost their lives who are not here now to tell us their story.

The real crux of the debacle and the tragedy of 9/11 was a failure on the part of this government. We failed in understanding the necessity of human intelligence. We failed in understanding the surge of terrorist acts around the world. It was not a Republican failure or a Democratic failure. It was a failure of government, and we failed the American people and those who lost their lives. That is why I was so baffled by the long, extended time it took for this body to pass the 9/11 Commission report. Gratefully, after a long debate, we had a 9/11 Commission, and even that was opposed.

Democrats strongly supported this Commission, but after the report went through and the balance of the representation of the Commission, Democrats and Republicans, who meticulously listened to testimony after testimony, reviewed documents after documents, and came up with what I think was a fair response to the tragedy of 9/11, they gave us a road map upon which we could base our lack of understanding to make it better for the future.

We are very fortunate, and I would not give this credit to any one party. We came together. We forged a Homeland Security Department. I have the honor of serving on the Select Committee on Homeland Security. We had hearing after hearing trying to explore where there were loopholes in the system so we could ensure safety for the American people. Lo and behold, a report came out, the eloquent statements, tear-jerking statements of family members who tore at our heartstrings about what they went through, the gap of time, the lack of information, the lack of coordination. It was glaring. We had failed.