

It is the third hospital in the Nation to receive the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award. The Baldrige award, created in 1997 to honor the memory of the former Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige, is the Nation's highest honor for quality achievement by companies, agencies and organizations.

Every day the 2,252 employees at Baptist Hospital bring their unique skills to work with them to serve their patients. When walking into any Baptist Healthcare facility, you will be greeted with a smile and a "how may I help you?" The company should pride itself on its highly efficient and effective working environment, but, more importantly, it should take pleasure in knowing their employees have worked together to give the company a family-like atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, Baptist Hospital is a world-class hospital striving for excellence every day and achieving extraordinary results in all areas of service. On behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to congratulate Baptist Hospital on their prestigious award and exemplary service to northwest Florida communities.

□ 1916

CELEBRATING GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to celebrate Greek Independence Day with the people of Greece and Greek Americans. March 25, 2004, marked the 183rd anniversary of the beginning of the revolution that freed the Greek people from the Ottoman Empire. It is important for us to not only recognize and celebrate this day with the people of Greece but also to reaffirm the democratic heritage from which the United States and the country of Greece were born.

I am proud to represent Greek Town in the city of Chicago, and I certainly want to extend congratulations to not only my Greek constituents but the people of Greece all over the world and especially those in Greece.

MEDICARE

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening because many of my elderly constituents in Florida have been misled about the new Medicare law. They have been misinformed because of the distortions spread by some of the liberal special interest groups and, quite honestly, some bitter Democrat politicians. These insincere groups have even tried to smear the AARP, an organization

that seniors have trusted for over 45 years. They have tried to discredit AARP along with 300 other health care organizations. AARP supports the health care law that Democrats quite honestly wish that they could take credit for. Unlike what appears on TV, the biggest supporters of this bill are not the pharmaceutical companies. They are patients rights groups, senior advocacy groups, nurses and other health care professionals who have made quality health care and services their priority.

Mr. Speaker, I ask, are 300 non-partisan organizations interested only in health care all wrong, while a handful of politically motivated Democrat interest groups are right? The answer is absolutely not.

MEDICARE CREDIBILITY GAP

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I hear my friends on the other side of the aisle talk about the Medicare bill. This was a bill that the President told us cost \$400 billion. Yet people in the department who were not allowed to tell Congress had told the White House it would cost \$550 billion. That is the first part of the credibility gap.

The second part of the credibility gap is that the President said this was a bill to help America's seniors, when in fact this bill will mean \$139 billion more in drug company profits, \$46 billion in direct subsidies from taxpayers, from all of us, directly to the insurance industry.

This bill was written in the Oval Office, this Medicare law, by the drug industry and by the insurance industry while the President and the Vice President stood by and tried to pretend that it was for American seniors. That is the credibility gap this President and this Vice President have.

We should have passed a prescription drug benefit for Medicare beneficiaries, not for the drug companies, not for the insurance companies.

RECOGNIZING FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE, ON ITS SELECTION AS A PRESERVE AMERICA COMMUNITY

(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 recognize Franklin, Tennessee. Franklin and Williamson County, Tennessee, were recognized today and were given a great honor. They received the Preserve America Community distinction. This comes from the White House Advisory Council on Preservation. Franklin deserves this. We were so excited that the Preserve America distinction came to them today. They are one of only 28 towns in America to receive this award. This

has come because of a tremendous commitment from the community over the past several decades. We have had thousands of volunteers. It has been a partnership effort between volunteers and also between the local, the State and the Federal elected officials, and the hard work and the dedication to preserve the history and the heritage of Franklin and Williamson County, to educate future generations and to let them see what makes this community unique and special. That was recognized today.

Mr. Speaker, we applaud them, we say congratulations to Franklin, Tennessee. We know the best is yet to come.

QUESTIONS REGARDING 9/11

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. What does the President's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice, have to hide? It might have been that she told the 9/11 Commission that she misspoke when she said that there was no intelligence that terrorists might use airplanes as weapons and that the administration had no knowledge of that. Of course, she did all that in private. In public she is spinning a very different story. She has appeared everywhere and anywhere on the press, with the press, in public; but she will not go before the 9/11 Commission and give sworn testimony to that commission and the American public. We deserve better. We deserve the truth about 9/11, what the administration knew and when they knew it.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BURGESS). 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.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT ALCOHOL ADVERTISING DURING BROADCASTS OF COLLEGIATE SPORTING EVENTS SHOULD BE TERMINATED

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

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, not long ago the National Academy of Science released a report on preventing underage drinking. This week, the Final Four NCAA basketball playoffs will occur. I believe there is a connection. The National Academy of Science report recommended that colleges and universities ban alcohol advertising and promotion on campus. Other important research points to the problem of alcohol consumption on college campuses. For example, the proportion of

college students who say they drink to get drunk is rising. It is almost one-half. Underage drinking costs the United States \$53 billion annually. There are roughly 3 million teenage alcoholics in our country. Despite these grim statistics concerning underage drinking, alcohol advertising accounts for more than one-half of college sports advertising revenue. The 2002 NCAA basketball tournament had more alcohol ads than the Super Bowl, World Series, college bowl games, and Monday Night Football combined. The basketball tournament has more than 16 times the rate of alcohol advertising as normal programming.

A spokesperson from the NCAA recently said such advertising is "not inconsistent with our mission." I guess I would beg to differ with that statement. The NCAA statement of purpose indicates that part of its mission is to prepare student athletes for lifetime leadership. The NCAA handbook states that NCAA policies should exclude advertisements that do not seem to be in the best interests of higher education.

In view of the fact that nearly one-half of college students are binge drinkers; 1,400 college students die annually from alcohol-related incidents, which is the leading cause of death on the college campus; more than 70,000 students are victims of alcohol-related sexual assaults; 500,000 students are injured each year while drunk; recent recruiting scandals at NCAA schools were often alcohol-related, I would have to say that there is great inconsistency in linking college athletics with the alcohol industry. The 12-, 13-, 14- and 15-year-olds watching the tournament this weekend will witness great athletes display their skills. These young people will identify with those athletes, and they want to be like them. Sandwiched into the telecasts will be many ads promoting alcohol; and most of the ads will contain attractive young people, celebrations and sometimes adolescent humor. The connection between players on the court and the alcohol advertising will be subtle, but it will be very real.

Dean Smith, my friend, the former North Carolina basketball coach, said this: "If aspirin were the leading cause of death on college campuses, do you think chancellors, presidents and trustees would allow aspirin commercials on basketball and football telecasts? They wouldn't, not for a minute."

I spoke today with John Wooden, in my time maybe the greatest coach of all time. He won 10 NCAA basketball championships in 12 years. John said that he wholeheartedly endorses taking alcohol advertising out of college sports. Andy Geiger, the Ohio State athletic director, opposes alcohol advertising. Eighty-four percent of Americans think advertising beer on college games is not in the best interest of higher education. Seventy-one percent of Americans support a total ban of alcohol ads on college games. Seventy-

seven percent of parents say it is wrong for colleges to profit from alcohol advertising while trying to combat alcohol abuse on their campuses.

The alcohol industry will counter by indicating how much money they spend to curb underage drinking. However, in 2001 the alcohol industry spent a total of \$811 million on product promotion and only 1 percent of the ads promoted responsibility. The placement of their ads and the content of their ads cater to a youthful market. Young people always represent future customers.

I do not advocate Congress legislating NCAA matters. The NCAA is a voluntary organization and such legislation should be left to the schools. And I do not believe that eliminating alcohol ads on college sports will end underage drinking. However, I do urge my colleagues to support House Resolution 575, expressing the sense of the House that the NCAA should affirm its commitment to a policy of discouraging alcohol use among underage students by ending all alcohol advertising during radio and television broadcasts of collegiate sporting events.

Hopefully, this resolution will help college administrators see the untenable position they now occupy and move to end current alcohol advertising.

ASSAULT WEAPONS BAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, next week the House goes into recess. Yet the House has failed to address the expiration of the assault weapons ban. We in Congress should be looking at this again. September 13 is when it expires. We have 168 days to take care of this. The good news for terrorists, cop killers, and drug dealers is that they will be back on the streets with the assault weapons of their choice.

□ 1930

Since I took the floor last week, over 400 Americans have died from gun violence in this country. By the time the House comes back, we will have lost another 800 Americans in this country. But instead of doing the commonsense thing, instead of having a sense of urgency, the House has stood idly by.

Some seem content to let the assault weapons ban expire on September 13. I am not. The ban has kept us safer for the past 10 years. There is no reason why we should let assault weapons back on the streets. It has also respected the rights of gun owners, protecting the hunters, law-abiding citizens buying the guns that they want. But again do we need assault weapons back on the streets? Only criminals have been kept from their gun of choice. This explains why 66 percent of American gun owners support renewing the ban. The American people support it by even more overwhelming margins.

Once again, our Nation's law enforcement officers are leading the fight to keep the ban in place. The gun industry continues to evade the ban with copycat weapons like these. These are the ones that were banned. These are the ones that are out there on the streets now. They still do the same deadly thing. They take down as many people as possible in the shortest amount of time. This also has to stop.

I came to Congress to reduce gun violence in this country. I fought for commonsense, effective gun measures. That is why I have introduced H.R. 2038, which would renew the ban but also close the loopholes so that these guns cannot be back out on the streets either. We cannot let special interests control this Congress. We have 168 days left to renew it.

Let me say one other thing. Gun violence in this country costs the health care system over \$1 billion a year, \$1 billion. That is not counting the pain and the suffering that goes to the communities and to the families, those that might never walk again, those that end up never being able to go back to work. And, by the way, the American people pay half of those costs because insurance runs out for those that did have insurance, but, because rehab is so long, they run out of insurance.

Why do we tolerate this? Why are the American people not fighting? Here in Congress many a vote or many a rule, many a measure is won or lost by one vote. The American people have to understand they have a voice in this House. This is the people's House.

I am asking the American people to get involved in this issue. Do they actually want assault weapons back on the street? I think there is enough fear in this country now with the war on terrorism. Do they honestly want possibly the terrorists that are in this country in cells to be able to go to a gun show and pick up an assault weapon? Remember, in D.C., we had two people with a Bushmaster that paralyzed this whole area, cost millions of dollars. By the way, the Bushmaster was supposed to be a banned gun. The deaths that came from that incident can be multiplied throughout our cities and throughout our country. Is that what the American people want?

Common sense. Assault weapons, we see them on TV every single night in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, Israel. Is that what we want in this country? Open warfare between our police officers, drug dealers, gangs? Wake up, America. We need America's help in the House. They have the right to call their Senators and their congressmen. We can do this, but we only have 168 days left. Please get involved.

VACCINATIONS CONTAINING MERCURY

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