

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, as I listen to the national debate on Social Security reform, I am left wondering why no one is talking about America's greatest principles, and that is property rights.

I get letters, e-mails, and phone calls every day from my constituents demanding that I do not take away their guaranteed Social Security benefits. That leads me to believe that our Nation's citizens may not understand that they really have no legal right to their Social Security benefits.

The Supreme Court ruled in *Flemming v. Nestor* that there is no legal right to Social Security benefits. In the eyes of the Court, it is deemed a tax-and-spend program in which Congress can change the rules regarding eligibility at any time, and it has many times over in past years. That is how our current system works.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for reform. It is time to give American taxpayers back their personal property rights. Personal accounts would give workers true legal property rights to their contributions and their benefits. They could not be raided to pay for other programs. Personal accounts are the ultimate lockbox.

NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, as so many American families struggle with the rising costs of health care and with the unavailability of health care, I think it is important to keep in mind that roughly one-third of every health care dollar goes to wasteful administration and profit. The result is that we pay more for our health care than any other industrialized country by a wide margin.

Since American businesses are the main provider of health care in the United States, they bear the burden and it is hurting their competitiveness. How do we know? Our competition tells us so.

The CEO of the Ford Motor Company of Canada, the president and CEO of GM Canada, and the CEO of DaimlerChrysler Canada had this to say in a 2002 letter: "Publicly funded health care thus accounts for a significant portion of Canada's overall labor cost advantage in auto assembly, versus the U.S. which in turn has been a significant factor in maintaining and attracting new auto investment to Canada."

The time has come for national health insurance.

HEALTH CARE COSTS

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, America's health care system is indeed in need of fixing on so many levels. You can lose count of the number of problems that it has. One of the major issues is cost.

Recent studies show that the average American pays close to \$4,000 a year on health care. However, that figure pales in comparison to the \$11,000 that health care costs for America's seniors each.

The last time this study was conducted in 1989, the average cost was only \$2,200. Health care has become big business and big government, and patients are further removed from their doctors. Decisions that should be made between doctors and patients are now being decided many times by somebody else. Rising costs affect everyone: patients, doctors, and even small businesses that can no longer afford health insurance for their employees.

Regardless of who pays, patients should have a choice when it comes to their health care, plain and simple. H. Res. 215 would do just that. As we move forward, we must be on the patients' side; they know what is best for themselves.

PROTECT OUR NATION

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the House Republican leadership pulled the intelligence authorization bill from the floor today because the leadership here is doing the dirty work of Defense Secretary Rumsfeld.

We all know that Rumsfeld was against the intelligence reforms that the 9/11 Commission suggested, and now he is trying to prevent those reforms from moving forward. The Republican leadership is keeping the intelligence bill from coming to the floor today because Secretary Rumsfeld does not want to give up any intelligence control to new Intelligence Director Negroponte.

Let us be clear, Secretary Rumsfeld and the Republican leadership are preventing intelligence reform that could make our Nation safer than it is today.

The 9/11 commissioners warned us earlier this week that time is not on our side. It is time the House Republican leadership stops listening to Rumsfeld and starts listening to the 9/11 Commission so we can finally begin to protect our Nation.

SHELF LIFE FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, so often people come to this Chamber and say the way we deal with health care costs is to change who pays. What we need to talk about is what we are paying for.

The Department of Defense Extended Shelf Life Program evaluated over 312 drug products and found that even though they were given a date of shelf life, many of them maintain their stability, safety and potency up to as much as an additional 107 months past their expiration dates.

For the \$3.9 million the military spent on stability testing on expired drugs, it saved \$263 million. These are savings worth exploring, and I would urge my colleagues to support careful scientific review of expiration dates for prescription drugs and ask if the savings gained by the military can be applied to general health care spending.

My colleagues can learn more about these ideas for savings and health care by visiting my Web site at Murphy.house.gov and continue to change the way we look at health care to what we are paying for.

INDIANAPOLIS 500

(Ms. CARSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 89th running of the greatest spectacular in racing, the Indianapolis 500 held at Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Congratulations to the winner, Dan Wheldon of Andretti-Green Racing, whose victory was not an easy one. Wheldon's winning highlight was a dramatic pass of the sensational rookie Danica Patrick with only six laps left in the race.

Although Danica Patrick may not have won, she made history. Danica Patrick of Rahal-Letterman finished in fourth place, the best finish ever for a woman.

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She also had the highest starting position for a woman and was the first woman to lead a lap at the Indianapolis 500.

I would like to congratulate Dan Wheldon, Danica Patrick and the entire field of 33 drivers, their racing teams, the Indianapolis Racing League and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway for a spectacular race. Congratulations again.

ONE THING I KNOW FOR CERTAIN

(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, as a former small business owner, one thing that I know for certain is that there is not a nation on this earth that has ever taxed itself into prosperity. Raising taxes and increasing regulation absolutely does not create economic growth. It is a guarantee that you are going to get less of what you want. We know that by reducing regulation and reducing taxes that we see economic growth and we see jobs growth.

Mr. Speaker, America has now recovered economically from the tragedy of September 11. We have grown our economy out of recession and passed the tremendous blow on September of 2001, and we did it by reducing regulation and lowering taxes, by working to change the budget process, by reducing what the Federal Government spends, with the budget we have passed this year, by beginning to root out waste, fraud and abuse and being aggressive in that. In other words, we are working to make America competitive.

Mr. Speaker, I salute our Republican leadership for their commitment to this.

DISBAND THE CURRENT COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, in fairness to Members of this body who have been subjected to a cloud of suspicion over ethics allegations, I rise today to call for the House to disband the current Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and reconstitute it as a panel that can convene and hear the cases pending before it.

A report in the Washington Post today says the committee may be inactive for months and it may not take up politically charged accusations against a high-ranking leader until next year, which just happens to be an election year.

The Post says, "Democrats are hoping to gain political advantage from investigations into DELAY's activities and overseas travel and his ties to lobbyist Jack Abramoff."

Even the Democratic-friendly Washington Post sees the political calculations behind the minority's tactics.

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is stalled by a partisan logjam, and I see only one way to unplug it: reconstitute the panel with Members resolved to work together so that it can move forward with its work. If this good-faith effort fails again, the House needs to install a Republican majority on the committee so that the wheels of good government can turn once more.

Mr. Speaker, this body rescinded the ethics rules passed earlier this Congress to appease the minority's demands. Yet, the minority party continues to obstruct the objectives of the Ethics Committee at every turn.

I believe the Republican majority should pass whatever rules necessary so the committee can and will act fairly to hear the pending cases before it—cases that involve both Republicans and Democrats.

Members accused of violations deserve a chance to make their cases and perhaps clear their names.

WE MUST STOP THE BLOODSHED IN SUDAN

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the meeting between the Prime Minister of Britain and this administration.

If one thing has come out of that meeting beyond the need for the \$50 billion for the restoration of the continent of Africa, it is that we must act now to stop the bleeding, the bloodshed and the brutality in Darfur and Sudan.

This week is the 10th year recognition commemoration of the million that died in Rwanda, and we are reminded that they died because of our nonaction, our inertia, our refusal to accept the fact that people were being brutalized and killed. The U.S. did not act.

It is important that military assistance be sent to Sudan now and that the President of Chad be included in this process for the 300,000 refugees that are languishing in Chad without any resources from around the world.

The United States must act, the Congress must act. A declaration of genocide has already been declared. Do we want another Rwanda on our hands, more blood, more bloodshed and loss of life? We cannot afford it. The African Union must be sent. We must stop the bloodshed in Sudan and return the people to their land.

JOBs AND THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Congress on its successful, pro-growth economic agenda.

In the last month alone, the United States economy created 78,000 new jobs. Take the last 2 years into account, and our economy has created more than 3.5 million jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this growth can be partially credited to the good legislation Congress has passed, legislation that lowers taxes, lets Americans keep more of their hard-earned money, reduces unnecessary regulation, supports our small businesses, and, above all, it encourages economic growth.

Our policies are working. More Americans hold jobs today than ever before. Homeownership is at a near record level, with nearly 70 percent of American families owning their own homes. Small businesses continue to flourish, and our economy is showing steady growth.

Mr. Speaker, it is clear that our economic agenda is the right solution for American families. We will continue passing good legislation to build a stronger economy for all Americans.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HON. HENRY HYDE AND THE HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

(Mr. FLAKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, and also the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who worked with me yesterday to attach an amendment to the State Department authorization bill to allow some of the funding that we provide to the State Department to be spent on scholarships and other programs for Cubans.

For years, we have spent hundreds of millions of dollars at the State Department on public diplomacy programs that have helped individuals in countries transitioning to a democracy. Yet Cuba has been excluded from this. If there is any country that needs this help and a people that need this help, it is the country of Cuba.

So now the State Department has been directed to spend at least \$5 million in Fulbright scholarships, Ben Gilman scholarships, Truman scholarships and others to bring worthy Cubans here to the United States to study and help reverse the tide recently of less contact with the Cuban people, to actually have more contact.

This is significant. Again, I pay tribute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. Ros-LEHTINEN) for working with me on this.

AGRICULTURE APPROPRIATIONS AND COOL LEGISLATION

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the important work this body undertook last night by passing the fiscal year 2006 Agriculture Appropriations Act. This bill took an important step toward helping the farmers of America and my district in North Carolina. Farmers are the backbone of our communities, and we must provide the resources they need. My colleagues and I worked hard to exercise fiscal restraint on this bill without cutting those programs crucial to helping farmers. I feel strongly the bill we passed yesterday did just that.

I would also like to thank this body for voting to uphold a provision that delays the country-of-origin labeling process until it can be dealt with correctly, through current proposed legislation. This delay will allow my colleagues and me on the House Committee on Agriculture time to complete our work on H.R. 2068, the Meat Promotion Act of 2005 sponsored by the gentleman from Virginia (Chairman GOODLATTE).

H.R. 2068 will establish a market-driven, cost-effective, voluntary COOL program for meat such as beef, poultry and pork.