

technological advancements in health care organizations.

The United States spends over \$1.2 trillion a year on health care. We could have a dramatic impact on reducing the amount of paperwork on the administrative side by using bar code technology that automatically captures patient data and eliminates some of the costly administrative burdens that take hospital staff away from patient care.

Moreover, the quality of life in rural America depends on having access to quality, affordable health care.

Mr. CHAIRMAN, will you agree to work with me to improve the quality of health care in small and rural hospitals as this bill moves forward in the legislative process?

□ 1730

Mr. REGULA. Yes. I thank the gentleman for bringing this important issue to my attention and to the attention of the House of Representatives.

I agree that the quality of health care in rural America is an important issue. And regrettably in a tight fiscal environment, some reductions have been made to rural health care programs. I look forward to working with the gentleman to help find funding streams from which to draw from to help improve the technology available to patients of health care providers in rural America.

Mr. JINDAL. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose, and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT) having assumed the chair, Mr. TERRY, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3010) making appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes, had come to no resolution thereon.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained yesterday on official business.

Had I been here, I would have cast the following votes: Roll Call 297, no. Roll Call 298, no. Roll Call 299, aye. Roll Call 300, no. Roll Call 301, no. Roll Call 302, aye. Roll Call 303, no. Roll Call 304, no.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE TO HAVE UNTIL MIDNIGHT, FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2005, TO FILE A REPORT ON H.R. 2864, WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ACT OF 2005

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Transportation and Infrastructure have until midnight, Friday, June 24, 2005, to file a report to accompany the bill H.R. 2864, to provide for the conservation and development of water and related resources, to authorize the Secretary of the Army to construct various projects for improvements to rivers and harbors of the United States, and for other purposes.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 2567

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 2567.

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

There was no objection.

REMOVAL OF NAME OF MEMBER AS COSPONSOR OF H.R. 415

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to have my name removed as a cosponsor of H.R. 415.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and I missed Roll Call vote 259. Had I been present I would have voted nay.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained and I missed several votes. Had I been present I would have voted the following: Roll Call vote 293, aye. Roll Call vote 294, no. Roll Call vote 295, no. Roll Call vote 296, nay. Roll Call vote 297, no. Roll Call vote 298, no. Roll Call vote 299, aye. Roll Call vote 300, no. Roll Call vote 301, no. Roll Call vote 302, aye. Roll Call vote 303, aye.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. 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.

SAVE PUBLIC BROADCASTING

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

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, it was with alarm and a great sense of shock that I learned of the proposal to cut public broadcasting. Public broadcasting provides unbiased, in-depth

coverage of public policy issues, exposure to the arts and culture, and quality family-friendly educational program.

Cutting funding for public broadcasting would damage the fabric of public discourse and citizen oversight, the very basis of representative government. By encouraging and informing public debate, public broadcasting makes a lasting contribution to community across the country and has historically enjoyed broad bipartisan support.

In Kentucky, Governors from both parties have worked with Kentucky Educational Television to create the largest PBS member network in America, serving 640,000 Kentuckians each week. The proposed cut that we debated today would have had a crippling impact on the ability of KET and other public broadcasters to inform the public and enrich the curriculum taught to school children in the district of every single Member of this body.

The question on everyone's minds was why?

As educators and parents across our Nation contend with inadequate resources for public schools, why drastically scale back support for programming that enhances basic education and provides many students, especially those in rural schools, with their only exposure to the arts, music and the humanities? As policymakers work to improve early childhood education, why eliminate support for good programs like Sesame Street and Clifford the Big Red Dog which improve reading and literacy skills for millions of children?

As parents express concern about indecent content in the shows that their children watch, why turn our back on the only station I can allow my three children, Lucie, Albert and Branham, to watch without supervision?

And as the public seeks refuge from an increasingly disappointing, and, in some cases, outright partisan media, why rescind support for highly respected objective news programs like the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer and Frontline?

Why cripple excellent radio stations like WUKY and WEKU in my district, jeopardizing shows like Morning Edition and All Things Considered?

Why indeed? I cannot answer such questions. The very notion of turning away from the future of public broadcasting is preposterous. I am fearful this is an administration effort to either censor public broadcasters or intimidate them into favorably reporting on the current administration. I sincerely hope not. Objectivity and facts know nothing of partisan politics.

The opponents of public broadcasting should take note, we will never stop fighting to preserve public broadcasting's independence. Public broadcasting is a true civic treasury, a shining example of what good government policy can do to improve our quality of life and strengthen the American Republic by engaging citizens in public affairs.

As Thomas Jefferson once said, Whenever people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government.

Maintaining our commitment to public broadcasting will help keep the very people who elect us well informed, and in doing so, help to promote the integrity and proper functioning of this very body itself.

I applaud the Members of this body who rose to the defense of public broadcasting earlier today by voting to restore funding to a cherished American institution.

HONORING ARMY SPECIALIST STANLEY "STOSH" LAPINSKI

(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, it is with a heavy heart that I rise today to express condolences of a grateful Nation.

I rise to honor the life of Army Specialist Stanley, also known as Stosh, Lapinski. Specialist Lapinski was a recent victim of a terrorist roadside bomb.

During his last conversation before he was killed, Sergeant Lapinski told his parents not to worry about him and he would be fine.

While Stosh did not make it home from Iraq, I am honored to join the Lapinski family for his burial at Arlington National Cemetery next week.

A grateful Nation has brought him home to the honors and accolades he well deserves.

Nothing I could say today would heal the wounds of the Lapinski family. After speaking to them, however, I can tell you that they want their son's sacrifice to be remembered for the good and honorable actions he was doing in Iraq.

His service showed the true American spirit. While the Lapinskis lost their son, they know that he died preserving and fighting for democracy.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all Americans to join me in honoring a true American hero.

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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. GUTKNECHT).

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. McCaul of Texas). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

MERCURY AND AUTISM

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I have been down here a lot talking about autism over the years and my committee had many hearings on the issue of autism. My grandson became autistic after receiving 9 shots in one day, 7 of which contained mercury, in a product called thimerosal. And he is doing better but it has been a very difficult time for me and my family.

I strongly believe that there is a link between the mercury that is in the thimerosal in the vaccines and children developing neurological disorders such as autism. In fact, according to a recent study released by collaboration of U.S. medical researchers from Johns Hopkins University, Northeastern University in Boston, and the University of Nebraska and Tufts University that was published in the Vancouver Sun in February of last year and was officially released in the April 2004 edition of the scientific journal Molecular Psychiatry, "A recent review of vaccine-related adverse events in the U.S. found a significant correlation between shots containing thimerosal," i.e. mercury "and autism."

The study further concluded that the use of thimerosal-containing shots could account for the rising rates of autism since the early 1980s when more thimerosal-containing vaccinations were added to the government-managed childhood vaccination schedule.

Scientific evidence aside, we have seen an increase from 1 in 10,000 children who are autistic to 1 in 166 since they started using thimerosal in many, many vaccines in the early eighties and children started getting more of these shots.

I am not against vaccinations but I do believe, as many of my colleagues, including the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WELDON) believe, that mercury should be taken out of all childhood vaccines and in fact all vaccines.

We need to ask ourselves one simple question: What is right? The answer I think is very clear. Get mercury out of all vaccinations.

In reality the answer that is given by far too many officials in our government, health agencies and some Members of Congress, sorry, we cannot help you, and the need to protect the pharmaceutical industry is so great, we cannot do much about it.

□ 1745

Some in my party keep talking about changing the law to protect the drug companies against so-called frivolous lawsuits, and we have to do something to help these families who had their children damaged by the mercury vaccines. I am against class action lawsuits in general. I am for tort reform, but we have got to do something to help these families.

We have tried to talk to the pharmaceutical industry about protecting

them while at the same time changing the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund in a way that will protect these families and help those who have been damaged, but so far we have gotten absolutely nowhere with them; and it is something I think we need to continue to work on.

Just recently, there was an article that was published in a magazine I normally do not read. It is called Rolling Stone, but this article was brought to my attention, and I think everybody in this body ought to read that article. It was written by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., somebody who I normally do not read, but I have to tell my colleagues it is a very well-written article. It goes into great detail and scientific research studies on mercury-connected mental disorders caused by the thimerosal in the mercury in these vaccinations.

I would submit to all my colleagues they really need to read this article. I am going to send a Dear Colleague out to all of my colleagues in the House and the Senate over the next couple of days. It is a fairly lengthy article, but it goes into how government officials met with pharmaceutical company officials and deliberately covered up the connection, deliberately covered up the connection between the thimerosal in vaccines and the problems that are being created, neurological problems that have been created in these children, including autism.

All of my colleagues ought to read this and realize that we have had a collaboration between health officials in our government and the pharmaceutical industry to protect themselves from class action lawsuits at the expense of these young kids and families who have been damaged by neurological disorders, including autism.

So I submit to my colleagues who may be in their offices or here tonight, please read this article. It is extremely important. I do not want to hurt the pharmaceutical industry. I would like to protect them from class action lawsuits; but at the same time, we need to change that Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund to take care of these kids that have been damaged and help their families.

DEADLY IMMUNITY

(By Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.)

JUNE 16, 2005.—In June 2000, a group of top government scientists and health officials gathered for a meeting at the isolated Simpsonwood conference center in Norcross, Ga. Convened by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the meeting was held at this Methodist retreat center, nestled in wooded farmland next to the Chattahoochee River, to ensure complete secrecy. The agency had issued no public announcement of the session—only private invitations to 52 attendees. There were high-level officials from the CDC and the Food and Drug Administration, the top vaccine specialist from the World Health Organization in Geneva, and representatives of every major vaccine manufacturer, including GlaxoSmithKline, Merck, Wyeth and Aventis Pasteur. All of the scientific data under discussion, CDC officials repeatedly reminded the participants, was strictly "embargoed." There would be no