

# PROVIDING HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE TO SMALL BUSINESSES

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

Mrs. KELLY. Madam Speaker, I represent New York's Hudson Valley, where small businesses are absolutely critical to our local economy. Our local small business owners and self-employed workers have repeatedly confirmed to me that the recent tax cuts are working and helping our small businesses create new jobs in our communities. But they also tell me time and again that one of the toughest challenges they face is being able to have affordable health care coverage for themselves and their workers.

This is frustrating, because we have passed the Small Business Health Fairness Act in the House to address this very problem, yet the politics of obstruction in the other body have kept the bill from passing into law.

Solving the problem of America's uninsured begins with helping small businesses. The facts are clear: Six out of 10 small businesses don't offer health insurance because they can't afford the high costs on their own in the private market.

The Small Business Health Fairness Act would provide them with lower costs, giving them the same group health insurance purchasing power already utilized by unions and large corporations. It will give 8 million currently uninsured small business workers the affordable health insurance they need.

Let us work with the other body to give small businesses on Main Street the same health insurance coverage as large firms on Wall Street.

# CONGRESS MUST STEP IN TO EXTEND DEADLINE ON MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN REGISTRATION

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, if the Bush administration does not act within the next 2 months, seniors who sign up for the Medicare prescription drug plan will be severely penalized. In less than 60 days, seniors who have not yet signed up for the plan will face a Bush Medicare drug tax for the rest of their lives.

The President has shown no interest in extending this arbitrary deadline. If the President won't act, Congress must.

House Democrats did not support this debacle of a prescription drug plan, but we don't want to see seniors penalized because the Republicans voted to create a confusing plan that most seniors believe won't work. Seniors need more time to make the right decision. They are understandably confused.

If the President won't act, House Republicans must join us in extending the deadline for seniors to sign up for the new drug plan. Democrats have introduced legislation that would give seniors 6 additional months to decide on the best plan for them. What is fair is fair. We simply cannot allow the Bush Medicare drug tax to take effect.

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# A BUILDING BLOCK IN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIA

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, today we will witness another important building block in the development of the strategic partnership between the United States and India.

By introduction of bipartisan legislation to amend the Atomic Energy Act, Congress will begin the important process of authorizing peaceful nuclear cooperation between two great democracies that share similar values of goals and hopes for the future.

While the title of this agreement focuses on nuclear cooperation, the scope of this proposal reaches far beyond nuclear issues. Improved strategic relations with India will promote non-proliferation, will increase our energy independence, will provide environmental protection, strengthen our national security, and create thousands of new jobs for American workers.

As the global economy becomes increasingly competitive and the threat of terrorism endangers all free nations, America faces a historic opportunity with our friend, India. Our countries should take advantage of this unique chance to deliver tremendous mutual benefits to both Indian and American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September 11.

# THE PRESIDENT'S BUDGET AND EDUCATION CUTS

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, at the beginning of the 21st century, America stands as the greatest economic and military power in the history of the world. We have been blessed with tremendous resources, wonderful natural resources. But the most precious of all of our resources is the human potential of America's workforce.

But we have to sustain the investment in that potential. Today, half of our students will not graduate from high school. And here we have a budget proposed by the President that has some of the deepest, most dangerous cuts ever proposed, eliminating voca-

tional education, eliminating 36 other programs designed to help teachers and students, cutting billions of dollars from college student loan programs.

In fact, 3.7 million children will not even get the reading and math help they were promised under the Leave No Child Behind Act. This is not going to sustain our economic power, Madam Speaker. It undermines our economic strength, and, in fact, it is bound to shortchange our children's future.

# EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH AND THE EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, the demise of once-renowned South Korean embryonic stem cell researcher, Hwang Woo-Suk, has been well publicized. Once the darling of the research community, Dr. Hwang has since been disgraced, his research exposed as fraudulent, his methodologies shown to be unethical.

The fact that Dr. Hwang fabricated much of his research made big headlines. What was less noted, though, was that he coerced female members of his research team to donate their eggs for experimentation. This brought attention to a relatively unknown fact about embryo research.

It requires an enormous amount of human eggs, and the likelihood of women being exploited is great. This issue has brought together a coalition of pro-choice and pro-life women who are taking a stand against the exploitation of women by the biotech industry.

They point out that the egg extraction techniques required for this research can lead to infertility and even death. They are right to take such a stand against such exploitation, and we ought to stand with them.

# PRESIDENT BUSH NEEDS TO SHAKE UP THE WHITE HOUSE

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

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, how low do the President's poll numbers have to go until he finally realizes that it is time to make some changes in his administration? Either he is to blame for all of the incompetence that we have seen out of the White House over the last couple of years, or he finds it a perfectly acceptable attribute in his key advisors.

With the ever-increasing violence in Iraq, it simply defies logic why Defense Secretary Rumsfeld still has a job. How many mistakes does Rumsfeld have to make before President Bush says enough is enough?

Then there is Secretary Chertoff. The White House can blame Michael Brown all they want for a tragically slow and

inadequate response to Hurricane Katrina, but a lot of the blame should be pointed right at the man in charge, Secretary Chertoff, who as of yesterday put a lot of the evacuees out on the street. And he still remains on the job.

Then there are the Under Secretaries who signed off on a deal that handed over operations of six U.S. ports to a foreign nation. Imagine that, outsourcing our homeland security to another nation. It is time for changes, Madam Speaker.

#### TRUST THE SENIORS ON MEDICARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, today we are just 60 days away from the deadline for seniors to sign up for the new Medicare part D prescription drug plan. This plan is giving seniors choices for prescription drug coverage that will cost less while offering more benefits.

Millions of seniors who were without access to drugs are now getting them, and many are saving thousands of dollars a year. In fact, the typical senior could see his or her total drug expenses drop by nearly 50 percent.

Those with limited income and resources could have nearly no expenses at all. It is a real shame that Democrats are trying to scare seniors away from enrolling in this program by saying it is complicated and confusing.

Fortunately, their attempts to sabotage the program are failing. According to a recent article in *The Washington Post*, 80 percent of senior citizens polled say they had no trouble signing up for or using the Medicare prescription drug plan.

Another poll conducted last week by Ayres, McHenry & Associates shows that 60 percent of seniors said that they were saving money by using the program. Madam Speaker, I trust the positive feedback from the actual folks using the program much more than the negative rhetoric of Democrats trying to turn this into a political issue.

#### A NATION PERMANENTLY AT WAR

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, 3 years ago the Bush administration spoke to a doctrine of preemption that formed the basis for the United States' attack on Iraq. Three years later, Americans finally know there were no weapons of mass destruction, Iraq did not have the intention or the capability of attacking the United States; that Iraq, in effect, was not in a position to attack us.

Now the American people know what a shambles the Bush administration's policy was in Iraq. Yesterday, the administration now identifies Iran as the

top threat, and states again that we have the right to preemptively attack any country. Are we here on the threshold of permanent warfare, where the administration can keep naming enemies, and the American taxpayers with their sons' and daughters' blood have to keep paying for wars that we should not get into?

We should not only vote against this supplemental appropriation, we should start to call into question the administration's entire international policy. They are setting America against the world, and we are paying for it every day.

#### THE LACK OF A DEMOCRATIC PLAN

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, a once great party left with nothing, nothing but a nifty little slogan, and that slogan is, "We can do better." Madam Speaker, that is the Democrat Party here in Washington, DC.

It was announced in the press in October that they were going to come out with their great agenda in November. November came and went, they had nothing.

In January they said, that is going to be the time we are going to lay out our agenda, our positive agenda for America. January came and went.

Twice more they set dates to roll out their agenda, but nothing. They got nothing except this nifty little phrase, "We can do better." It is a sad state of affairs when they have no agenda, no ideas. All they have is negative attacks, partisan attacks here in Washington. We need more, and we, the Republicans, can do better.

#### SUPPORT THE FUNDING FOR FIXING TEXAS LEVEES

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Madam Speaker, the lives and livelihood of tens of thousands of Texans in a major hurricane zone are at risk because of defective federal levees that only the federal government can repair.

I am here to ask that on the third vote this morning, our colleagues support an amendment offered on behalf of myself, Congressman ORTIZ, and Congress REYES to prevent another Hurricane Katrina-like disaster. This map shows the area of McAllen, Mission, Hidalgo, and Pharr, Texas—a booming community of hardworking Americans, small businesses, schools, hospitals, and nursing homes.

That is how it looks today. This is how it will look if those federal levees fail, covered not in blue plastic, but in water. Because the federal levees are up to 9 feet deficient in height according to a report of the U.S. State Department.

In order to prevent the destruction of the lives and livelihood of those hardworking Americans, we need the \$7.8 million modest appropriation proposed in our amendment. Save lives and prevent a tragedy from occurring by approving emergency appropriations to assist the repair of these important federal levees.

#### ROME AREA HISTORY MUSEUM

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

Mr. GINGREY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Rome Area History Museum on their 10th anniversary of collecting, preserving, and presenting the history of northwest Georgia. In 1995, five men, C.J. Wyatt, Bobby McElwee, John Carruth, David Oswalt, and Ed Byars, recognized the need to create an institution dedicated to the history of Rome and the surrounding communities.

These founders gathered a group of dedicated volunteers and opened what has become one of the finest museums in the State of Georgia. The founders renovated a building on historic Broad Street to serve as their headquarters.

And after much labor, the Rome Area History Museum officially opened its doors on March 30, 1996. For the past 9 years, Bernard Neal has done a wonderful job as the museum's president.

Madam Speaker, as the museum celebrates a decade of educating teachers, researchers and visitors, I want to thank the volunteers and supporters for making the Rome Area History Museum all that it is today.

Museums like this add richness to our communities and preserve our Nation's history.

#### LIVING IN A FISCAL FANTASYLAND

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

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, today the Senate will vote on the \$781 billion increase in the national debt, the fourth debt limit increase in 5 years.

And the Republican Party continues to push tax policies that will drive us even deeper into debt. In 5 years, the Washington Republicans have racked up more new debt, more than \$3 trillion, than the entire debt amassed from 1789 to 1988. We are now borrowing more than \$600,000 per minute, \$218 billion this year alone.

In March 2001, President Bush promised, "We will pay off \$2 trillion of debt over the next decade. Future generations should not be forced pay back money that we have borrowed. We owe this kind of responsibility to our children and grandchildren."

Promises made, promises broken, a \$5 trillion mistake the President made.