

A hospital in Oklahoma performed 400 surgeries without an infection. A hospital in Pittsburgh reduced these infections greatly and saved millions of dollars. A hospital in St. Louis received savings of \$1.5 million.

I am pleased that the Energy and Commerce Committee will take up this issue and hold hearings on this in a couple of weeks. We need to take action and save lives. At this time when we get so concerned about so many issues in America, is it not time that Congress tackled these issues head-on and worked out such issues as pay-for-performance incentives through Medicare and Medicaid to greatly reduce infections and save thousands of lives?

To learn more on this, people can look at my Web site at murphy.house.gov.

URGING COMPREHENSIVE LOBBYING REFORM

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, while Republicans are doing their best to distance themselves from their lobbying scandal, they just cannot seem to shake off Jack Abramoff.

Jack Abramoff recently told Vanity Fair: "Any important Republican who comes out and says they didn't know me is certainly lying."

While President Bush denies knowing him, Jack Abramoff says he knew President Bush well enough to joke with him about weight lifting. Former Speaker Gingrich said he didn't know Jack Abramoff well; yet Jack Abramoff said, "I have more pictures of Newt Gingrich than I do of my wife."

Senator CONRAD Burns, Jack Abramoff says: "Every appropriation we wanted we got. Our staffs were as close as they could be. They practically used Signatures as their cafeteria."

And to add insult to injury, in January, Senator SANTORUM, the architect of the K Street Project and a Republican point person on lobbying reform, vowed to stop his weekly lobbyist meetings; yet we now find he continues to do them.

It is just business as usual here in Washington. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans may be lip-syncing reform, but clearly the "for sale" sign is still up on the West Lawn.

It is time for a change. It is time to change the culture of corruption in Washington, a culture that has real costs for the American people. We can do better. We need to do better.

MEDICARE PROGRAM NOT CONFUSING

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to discuss the Medicare part D prescription drug plan, a historic program that renews our commitment to our Nation's seniors.

This plan gives seniors choices for prescription drug coverage that will cost less while offering more benefits. It has brought Medicare, a program created 40 years ago, into the 21st century. Millions of seniors who were without access to drugs are now getting them and many are saving thousands of dollars a year.

Clearly, people have liked what they have heard about the program as sign-ups for the third week of February amounted to 546,000 and the week before numbered 543,000. All told, almost 26 million people have signed up so far.

The Democrats say that seniors are confused by this program. I am feeling a little bit confused myself, and here is why: Democrats are holding town halls for the sole purpose of criticizing this plan while at the same time telling seniors they should consider signing up. Well, I guess I can understand why they are confused.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing confusing about a program that will help Medicare beneficiaries pay for their prescription drugs while at the same time saving them money.

MISPLACED PRIORITIES AND FISCAL MISMANAGEMENT

(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. Mr. Speaker, when future generations of Americans look back at this time in our Nation's history, they will have to conclude that this Republican Congress and White House has been the most fiscally irresponsible in our Nation's history.

In 5 years we have turned a projected \$5.6 trillion surplus into a projected \$3.5 trillion of deficit, a \$9 trillion fiscal reversal. Seventy-seven percent of it is attributable to tax cuts, most of which benefit the wealthy, and to the so-called war on terrorism.

And why do I say the so-called "war on terrorism"? Because in this budget, this President's budget, he would provide tax cuts for the top 1 percent of Americans, greater than the entire amount of money he wants to spend on homeland security. And when you consider the fact that half of America's students do not even graduate from high school today, you have to ask why the amount of money he gives to the top 1 percent of Americans is almost twice as much as the entire amount of money he wants to spend on the education budget; and it is almost three times what he would spend on veterans health care.

This is misplaced priorities and fiscal mismanagement.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S CHILDREN

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, let me first thank my colleagues on the Appropriations Committee for voting overwhelmingly to put the port deal on ice. We are not anti-Arab. We want disclosure. We want certainty of transactions. We want no secrecy on these particular deals.

I also want to thank them for their courageous vote and excellent vote on H.R. 3132, the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act. Overwhelmingly passed by voice vote, that measure is on its way to the other Chamber to set up for the first time a national sex offender registry, getting background checks on foster care parents so we know if we are putting our kids with appropriate individuals, a national database requiring bracelet monitoring for sex offenders.

We track library books better than we do sexual predators. It is time we get this right. This bill does that. It puts in law guarantees that will protect our kids. It is high time we passed this measure. I thank Senator FRIST, John Walsh, among others, who have brought this to the forefront of the national conscience, and I urge we get that bill to the President's desk before we lose another child.

THE RISING COST OF HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has released a report that details what most of us already knew, that health care costs are rising and they are rising at an increasing rate.

The bureaucrats and the Members of Congress talk about SGR, they talk about pay-for-performance, and they talk about CPT codes. What is left out of the discussion is that which is most important, and that is the patient.

As a physician for over 25 years, I know that the current health care road we are on continues to move us in the wrong direction. A patient-centered system is necessary if we are to increase access to quality care.

I ask my colleagues here in this Chamber to take a bipartisan approach to solving this issue: look at the numbers; read the reports; and, above all, listen to the American people. They are the families and the small businesses and the employers who are trying to provide health care coverage.

America has the ingenuity, but we must also have the will to make the decisions necessary to get us on the right road in health care.

WIRELESS PRIVACY AMENDMENT

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a good day for the millions of

Americans who own a cell phone. For several years, wireless phone customers have had more and more reason to question the privacy of their cell phone numbers. Right now a database of cell phone numbers is being compiled by the industry so that companies can offer wireless directory assistance in the future, but most Americans would rather not have their personal cell phone number made available to just anyone.

Yesterday after 2 years of effort on this issue, the Energy and Commerce Committee unanimously approved my amendment to put the power back into the hands of consumers. The amendment simply forbids wireless phone companies from disclosing the cell phone number of any customer without prior express authorization from the customer. Just common sense.

America is counting on us to do something about this, and we have the power to do so. Let us bring this important legislation to the floor and protect Americans' privacy rights.

AMERICA'S SECURITY

(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 we come to the floor this morning, there is a common theme. It is all about America's security, from cell phones to ports to reauthorizing the PATRIOT Act. Our goal is to keep America secure and put the focus on America's security agenda, our economic security.

And tomorrow we will have new numbers out, and we know they are going to be strong for our unemployment rates, for our productivity growth, for new jobs creation. We are looking forward to those announcements.

This body continues to focus on the moral security of this great Nation: our retirement security; our energy security; and, yes, our national security. And I congratulate the Members of this body and thank our leadership for reauthorizing the PATRIOT Act this week. Our focus: keep America secure so that future generations have the opportunity to live those big dreams that today they dream.

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POSITIVE NEWS ABOUT THE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PROGRAM

(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. Mr. Speaker, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services recently reported that 61 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries in South Carolina have prescription drug coverage, and that almost 50 percent of the beneficiaries of

the Second Congressional District where Orangeburg Prep is located have prescription drug coverage.

Since November 15, more than 25 million people have chosen to participate in this new program and are now enjoying substantial savings on the cost of their prescription drugs compared to what they used to have to pay or did not pay with no coverage. The Sun News recently reported that Mary Simms of Lexington registered for the new benefit with her plan that now just costs her \$15 a month, where she used to spend \$80 on her prior plan.

As the enrollment process continues, I encourage seniors throughout my State to join the millions of other Americans who are now benefiting from this valuable program which will enable them to live healthier, happier and longer lives.

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

TRIBUTE TO SERGEANT HENRY PRENDES

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

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, in Nevada we faced one of our worst nightmares a few weeks ago. One of our heroes, a law enforcement officer, a Metropolitan Police Department officer, Sergeant Henry Prendes, was shot down and brutally killed. He responded to a domestic violence call as a law enforcement officer, and as he appeared on the scene, a gentleman was waiting for him with an automatic weapon, and with over 50 rounds, brutally murdered Mr. Prendes.

Yesterday, in the Children's Safety and Violent Crime Reduction Act, in the act there was a provision that would memorialize Mr. Prendes for his efforts as a great American hero, a loving father and a loving husband. In the bill, it provides for a mandatory 30-year sentence for anyone that brutally murders a law enforcement or public safety officer or who conspires or attempts to kill.

This is an example of getting tough on crime. It is time to say enough is enough, and I applaud this House of Representatives for passing the act yesterday.

Also in the act was another provision that I provided, which was for additional background checks and faster and streamlined background checks for school teachers across this Nation.

RECOGNIZING JASON MCELWAIN AND THE GREECE ATHENA HIGH SCHOOL TROJANS

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

Mr. REYNOLDS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize an outstanding young man, his supportive teammates

and an inspirational performance on the basketball court.

In a matter of just 4 minutes, Jason McElwain and the Greece Athena High School Trojans showed us all the power of dedication, teamwork and perseverance. Jason also placed his heart and soul into helping the Trojans as team manager, and although never getting a chance to play, became an indispensable teammate.

Jason has also been challenged every day by autism, a disability that, while difficult, has not undercut Jason's goal or his support for the team. In turn, Jason's teammates, led by Coach Jim Johnson, have embraced him and believed in him, becoming his greatest friends and supporters.

This teamwork and mutual respect was never clearer than on the night of February 15. With only 4 minutes remaining in the final game of the regular season, Jason made his remarkable debut for the Trojans. He went on to make six 3-pointers and finished with 20 points.

A true hero and the true meaning of the word teamwork was discovered that night on the hardwood in Greece. And 2 weeks later, that teamwork propelled the Trojans to the very top as they won their sectional championship. Jason's perseverance and his teammates' support serve as a great example to us all.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of their remarkable achievement, I ask this honorable body to join me in honoring Jason McElwain and the Greece Athena High School Basketball Trojans.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2829, OFFICE OF NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL POLICY REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2005

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 713 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 713

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2829) to reauthorize the Office of National Drug Control Policy Act. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Government Reform. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. It shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill. The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. Notwithstanding clause 11 of rule XVIII, no