

HONORING TOM TEMIN

HON. TOM DAVIS

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Tom Temin for over 17 years of service providing the Federal technology community with unbiased, accurate, and timely information.

Through Mr. Temin's role as executive vice president and editor in chief of Government Computer News, Washington Technology, Defense Systems, Government Leader and other technology publications, he has brought valuable insight and creative journalism to the Federal IT arena.

Under Tom's guidance Government Computer News has become a premier IT magazine providing objective and comprehensive rankings of the usefulness and overall value of technology as it reaches the market. Leaders in the executive branch, both Houses of Congress and the broader technology community have come to consider the editorials he has written for Government Computer News as shrewd and perceptive analysis of the implications of IT trends.

The newspaper's fair and unyielding pursuit of issues showing the flaws and faults in the Federal technology sector has prompted numerous reforms that continue to conserve funds and improve performance for the American taxpayers.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I would like to commend and congratulate Mr. Tom Temin on all of his accomplishments. His tireless efforts have deeply impacted the public discussion of IT issues in the Federal Government, truly meriting recognition. I call upon my colleagues to join me in applauding Tom for his past accomplishments and in wishing him continued success in the years to come.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. NITA M. LOWEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mrs. LOWEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this critical legislation.

The Part D prescription drug plan has caused mass confusion and, unfortunately, provided more in profits to drug companies than savings to seniors.

Private corporations, large pharmacy chains, and individual states all use their bargaining power to secure lower drug prices for the patients they represent. It simply makes no sense that the Department of Health and Human Services is prohibited from negotiating on behalf of millions more seniors.

In fact, a recent study by Families USA found that Medicare beneficiaries pay an average of 58 percent more for the same prescription drugs sold to patients who receive their drugs from the Veterans Department, which can negotiate cheaper prices.

Using the bargaining power of 42 million Medicare enrollees to secure the best drug prices for our seniors could save billions, according to some estimates.

These savings could then be used to begin to close the infamous "doughnut hole" or gaps in coverage that millions of seniors experienced last year and are expected to experience again in 2007.

Allowing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to negotiate prices won't solve all of the problems associated with the drug benefit but it will set us on the right course toward providing our seniors with the comprehensive, affordable drug coverage they deserve.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this important bill.

A TRIBUTE TO REPRESENTATIVE EDD NYE

HON. MIKE MCINTYRE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mr. MCINTYRE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor North Carolina Representative Edd Nye and to thank him for more than 30 years of loyal public service to the people of Southeastern North Carolina. Representative Nye began his career in public service by joining the United States Air Force and launched his political career in 1966 as a Bladen County Commissioner. Mr. Nye served one term in the North Carolina State Senate before moving on to the N.C. House of Representatives, where he would go on to serve as a Representative for 30 years. As a loyal and dedicated North Carolina lawmaker, Representative Nye received "Legislator of the Year" awards from numerous advocacy groups, including the Autism Society, the Easter Seals, the Health Directors' Association, and the Mental Health Association. Such distinguished commitment and work are true signs of his dedication to his constituents. Indeed, Representative Nye is a role model for us all.

In addition to his political service, Mr. Nye is also an active member of his community in Bladen County. He has taught Sunday School and served as a deacon at the Elizabethtown Baptist Church. He is a past moderator of the Bladen Baptist Association, a former trustee of both Bladen Community College and Southeastern Mental Health, and an active member of the Bladen Masonic Lodge. Madam Speaker, I commend Edd Nye for his leadership, longevity, and love for the people of Bladen County and North Carolina. He has performed his civic duty with grace, and he has been ever mindful of the people he represents. May God's strength, joy, and peace be with him always.

COLLEGE STUDENT RELIEF ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 17, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act. The rising cost of education is a concern for students and parents across the country. Occasionally, I hold office hours at grocery stores in my district back in Chicago.

Every time people attend to share their concerns my constituents let me know that they are worried about the cost of higher education.

They worry about being able to send their children to college without taking out a new mortgage on their homes or working a second job. They worry about dipping into their retirement savings in order to pay the exorbitant cost of tuition. And they are not only worried, but they are also shocked by the tuition increases from year to year for their children who are already in college.

It is our responsibility to make sure that the price of a college education does not close doors for the future leaders of America. Today we will correct a grave mistake of the past and pass the College Student Relief Act—ensuring those doors never close.

This legislation is long overdue. The last Congress neglected to deal with college affordability—allowing the cost to skyrocket and leaving millions behind in their desire for a higher education. Tuition and fees at public universities have increased by 41 percent since 2001, and interest rates on student loans have risen to record-breaking highs. The maximum Pell grant was frozen in the President's budget for a fourth year in a row. Today, the maximum Pell grant covers only 41 percent of the cost of attending college—about half of what it covered three decades ago.

In my home state of Illinois, the average graduate from a state university leaves with more than \$15,000 in debt. This massive debt limits the choices that graduates can make, and discourages many students from seeking a college education at all.

The College Student Relief Act takes the first step toward correcting this great injustice, providing real relief to students and middle class families by making a college education more affordable and accessible.

A college education should be as universal in the 21st century as a high school education was in the 20th century. This legislation is the first step towards accomplishing that goal.

Madam Speaker, I am proud that helping students with their college loans is part of the Democratic 100 hours plan. I thank the gentleman from California for his leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting for H.R. 5, the College Student Relief Act.

PEACE FOR THE MIDDLE EAST

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice recently announced that Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas would meet with her to discuss how peace can finally be brought to the Middle East. I am pleased to hear of this three-way meeting and believe a meaningful resolution is long overdue.

Since the year 2000, Israel has demonstrated a willingness to act unilaterally in the name of peace; only to have their enemies respond with more acts of violence. In 2000, Israel withdrew its forces from southern Lebanon, only to be followed by Hezbollah and its missiles. In 2005, Israel unilaterally withdrew

from Gaza, only to be replaced by the militant wing of the Hamas party. These are just two examples of the terrorism the Israeli people have experienced over time.

Madam Speaker, there will be no peace in the Middle East so long as these terrorist organizations insist on the destruction of Israel. There will be no peace, until Hamas agrees to curtail acts of violence and aggression and show that they are willing to work toward a two-state solution.

More importantly, there will be no peace in the Middle East until the world community speaks out against terrorism with one voice. And, when a world leader sways from this commitment, we take one step back.

Madam Speaker, we took one step back from reaching peace in the Middle East when former President Jimmy Carter published his book, *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*. In his book, Mr. Carter puts the onus for Middle East peace on Israel, stating that it is Israel who is keeping peace from occurring in the Middle East. I strongly disagree with this analysis.

I was recently contacted by one of my constituents in Virginia Beach about this book. Rabbi Israel Zoberman, the founding rabbi and spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim, wrote:

How disappointing that the distinguished author of *Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid*, Jimmy Carter, who served as the 38th President of the United States, has written a book that fails to promote the very goal of peace which he is no doubt committed to. In fact, the title bluntly suggests along with the very essence of the narrative that Israel's policy vis-a-vis the Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza is the core obstacle to the elusive peace. President Carter thus fails as the honest broker he proudly was when sponsoring the 1979 Israel-Egypt peace treaty.

The mere suggestion of practiced apartheid by Israel is inflammatory enough in alluding to South Africa's overthrown policy. Thus, the book's title with the word "apartheid" in it and the cover's photo of the controversial security barrier, which are surely designed for sales' purposes, are irresponsible . . . To speak of Hezbollah and Hamas as if they were representing freedom fighters only seeking to remove Israel from the occupied territories is unfortunately not so. The means employed by the terrorists disregard civilian lives by using their own women and children as human shields.

Madam Speaker, in August 2005, I had the privilege of visiting Israel. It was truly a life-changing experience which helped put into perspective the crisis facing this generation of Israelis. Every generation is confronted with a moment of truth. We are at that moment now. Our duty as responsible statesmen and world leaders is to promote dialogue and action so that all families, whether they are Israeli or Palestinian can live without fear.

TRIBUTE TO AUDREY C. RUST,
PRESIDENT OF THE PENINSULA
OPEN SPACE TRUST

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, January 18, 2007

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Audrey C. Rust, who is celebrating her 20th anniversary of leadership at the Peninsula Open Space Trust, POST.

Ms. Rust is a graduate of the University of Connecticut, and prior to joining the Peninsula Open Space Trust as its executive director in 1987, served as the director of development and membership for the Sierra Club. She also directed West Coast capital giving programs for Yale University and served in a variety of development capacities for Stanford University. She has also served as a member of the board of directors of the Land Trust Alliance and the League of Conservation Voters in Washington, DC.

Under her leadership, POST has worked effectively through public-private partnerships to acquire and protect over 50,000 acres of land on the San Francisco peninsula. These lands have become parts of the National Park System, the National Wildlife Refuge System, California State Parks, county and city parks, regional open space preserves and private farmland. Ms. Rust's vision helped bring POST to the national stage and on multiple occasions Congress has voted to support her efforts by providing funds for public land purchases and the adoption of POST lands into national areas of conservation. I am particularly proud of our work together on the acquisition of the Phleger estate, now part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, and Bair Island, now part of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Ms. Rust's work on land conservation is nationally recognized. She has received the League of California Voters Environmental Leadership Award, the Times Mirror-Chevron National Conservationist of the Year Award; the Cynthia Pratt Laughlin Medal, the Garden Club of America's top environmental honor, and the Jacqueline Kennedy Award from John F. Kennedy University.

There are few who embody the commitment to conservation and our collective future as Ms. Rust does. In POST's most recent Annual Report, Ms. Rust wrote:

Open space defines our sense of place on the Peninsula, and it is worth saving, because it is where we as humans touch mysteries that last long after we are gone. It is the best gift we can pass down to those who follow us, because it connects us to our past and our future, allowing us to share a communal memory of what it's like to live in this extraordinary place. By setting aside land for permanent protection, we declare to the future, "This is what we value; this is what we deem precious."

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying tribute to Audrey Rust whose 20 years at POST have benefitted millions of Americans and millions more to come. She is an exceptional leader, a powerful voice for conservation, and a great American.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG NEGOTIATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 12, 2007

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this bipartisan bill, H.R. 4, the Medicare Prescription Drug Negotiation Act of 2007. This quality, sound bill enjoys support not only from Members from both side of the aisle, but also from the

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, the Consumer's Union, the AFL-CIO and Families USA. Most important, the majority of Americans are in favor of the principles set forth in this bill.

For generations, among Democrats' top priorities has been to make healthcare more affordable for all Americans. I stand here today, as an exceedingly proud cosponsor of this bill that will take steps toward accomplishing just this. H.R. 4 fights for what is fair and right for our Nation's seniors, and fixes the Medicare prescription drug program as we know it today.

The current prescription drug plan has kept costs high and created needless confusion for the 22.5 million seniors who chose to enroll in Medicare Part D. This number doesn't even begin to contemplate the millions who did not enroll, perhaps because of the complexity of the benefit.

The present Medicare Part D forbids the government from negotiating affordable drug prices at the expense and well being of our seniors. So, while big companies like WalMart receive deals on prescription drugs, the American people can not. According to findings from Families USA, the law's current ban on bargaining for lower drug prices had caused seniors on Medicare to pay significantly more for their drugs.

The history behind the current defective drug plan, introduced by Republicans in 2003, was one of the most corruptive abuses of the legislative process in all of our lifetimes. In the middle of the night, while most Americans were sleeping, Republicans snuck this bill in, loaded with giveaways for the drug and insurance companies. And using their signature scare tactics, the Republican leadership bullied the rest of their party to pass this bill after holding a 15 minute vote open for 3 hours!

Mr. Speaker, such an abuse of legislative power is immoral and wrong. I am pleased to say that such abuse ended when Democrats took up the gavel.

With Democrats in the driver's seat, seniors across America will be a part of new drug plan. A drug plan that will be tailored to America's seniors—and not the big drug companies who are now reporting record profits.

The current Medicare Prescription drug program is not the best we can do for our seniors. Improvement clearly needed to be made to Medicare Part D, to make it more affordable and fair for its beneficiaries.

The comprehensive and affordable plan being passed today is an important step forward toward alleviating seniors' prescription drug price concerns. The bill repeals the provision that bans the Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) from negotiating with drug companies for lower prices, and instead requires the Secretary to develop a workable negotiation process to secure affordable drug prices. Now, for instance, where private plans have failed to rein in outrageous drug prices, the Secretary will be allowed to use his bargaining power with the drug companies.

Contrary to Republicans' claim that this bill would destroy the free market system, today's New York Times editorial page notes that, the bill "is sufficiently flexible to allow older Americans to benefit from the best efforts of both the government and the private drug plans."

Moreover, by requiring Medicare to negotiate rates with drug companies, the leftover