

Act, better known as PDUFA, and to express my concern about the path this Congress took to reauthorize it for the next 5 years.

As we all know, this is an important law affecting millions of Americans and their health every day. We have an obligation to examine it closely and debate it in great depth. Yet, by considering the bill under suspension, this Congress has neither explored nor understood its full ramifications.

As we move ahead with PDUFA, this reauthorization clearly offers powerful reforms and poses still greater challenges. There is a lot to be proud of in the bill, adding new transparency, providing new resources to ensure the safety of the drugs and devices that we count on every day to fight disease and to stay healthy.

To be sure, it is certainly stronger than the bill that passed on the Senate side, and that is a good thing. This bill expands the FDA's ability to monitor the safety of drugs and medical devices after they have been approved and marketed, and increasing by \$225 million over 5 years the user fees the agency can use for post-market safety monitoring. The FDA would be required to revisit the drug several years later for further analysis. And for riskier drugs, there would be regulation limiting prescribing authority to trained physicians.

In addition, by providing funds for the active analysis of large medical databases, this bill will also help us quickly detect drugs with major short and long-term safety problems. However, there are significant improvements we could have made to the bill if it were taken up under regular order and amendments were debated.

This bill, for example, does not provide any mandatory recall authority for the FDA to immediately pull products off the shelves after they have been found to be dangerous. I do not need to remind my colleagues that many of the high-profile drugs recently taken off the market had to be removed voluntarily, and that was only after significant damage had already been done.

So Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to look at this bill a little closer. You will get an idea of just how much influence the drug industry has on this Congress.

Indeed, there were a number of very strong provisions in the original subcommittee draft bill that were unjustifiably weakened during the markup process. For instance, this bill creates a new risk evaluation and mitigation strategy for new drugs that would create specific requirements and criteria for each drug. Under the original draft, drug or device companies would have been subjected to a \$20 million maximum fine for a single violation, and a \$100 million maximum fine for several violations. These figures were reduced, however, to \$250,000 and \$1 million as the bill moved forward. As you know, this is mere pocket change

for drug companies, and provides virtually no deterrent to companies that choose to ignore the new process.

In addition, the original draft would have granted the FDA discretion to ban direct consumer advertising for a new drug for up to 3 years, yet this provision was weakened as well, making it completely voluntary, while giving the FDA zero authority to require changes.

Worse still, if a drug company chooses to volunteer for the review system and pays a fee, it can run its advertisements regardless, rendering the system utterly useless.

And finally, when it comes to addressing significant conflicts of interest at the FDA, the language here is actually weaker than what the FDA itself proposed earlier this year. The agency, in fact, would have prevented any Members with conflicts of interest from voting on an advisory panel, and would have prevented any Member with more than \$5,000 worth of investments from even serving on the panel. This bill, however, allows the FDA to grant waivers overriding its already lenient current conflict-of-interest rules.

Today the pharmaceutical industry argues that interaction between drug companies and doctors who serve on these advisory committees are beneficial. Well, we know it is beneficial to the drug companies. It is time to end the influence drug companies have in our doctors' offices and at the FDA.

By providing additional resources and boosting the FDA's post-market surveillance activity, this bill takes us in the right direction. But we got here the wrong way, under suspension of the rules. As a result, with no debate and no amendments, the final legislation serves the American people poorly.

It is no surprise that drug companies are always working to improve their bottom line. They are big businesses with stockholders to please. But we have an even bigger responsibility to meet. We have a tremendous obligation to protect the public health and to ensure a safe America for everyone.

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OUR HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, last week this House voted to end the occupation of Iraq. Some of those who opposed that action argued that bringing our troops home out of Iraq will increase the violence there and perhaps even lead to a humanitarian catastrophe. But what they forget, or choose to ignore, is that a humanitarian catastrophe has already occurred in Iraq. It is getting worse every day. That catastrophe includes the refugee crisis in that devastated nation.

Last week the United States Committee for Refugees reported that the

number of refugees in the world rose last year to its highest level since 2001. One of the main reasons was the great exodus from Iraq. All told, more than 2 million Iraqis have been forced to flee their country. Close to 2 million more have been displaced internally. That is a total, Mr. Speaker, of 4 million refugees, 50 percent of whom are children, and tens of thousands more are leaving every single month.

Many of the refugees are in dire straits. Recently United Nations inspectors visited one refugee camp and found more than 2,000 people living in tents. They had no clothes except for the clothes on their backs. They had no medical care. They had no drinkable water. They had no toilets. Many of the children had typhoid and other illnesses and were living among snakes and scorpions.

Sweden, to its great credit, is accepting more than 1,000 refugees every month. The population of Sweden is only 9 million people. The United States, with a population of 300 million, accepted only 202 last year. Not 202,000, but 202. We have accepted only somewhere around 700 since our occupation of Iraq began.

That is a disgraceful record. Every Member of this House should feel ashamed. That goes for all of us; those who support the war and those who oppose it. We may disagree about policy, but surely we can agree that we have a moral obligation to do more about a terrible refugee problem that our occupation has created. After all, many of the refugees have had to flee because they cooperated with our troops in the first place, or they cooperated with American contractors. We can't turn our backs on them now.

That is why I am urging all of my colleagues to support H.R. 2265, the Responsibility to Iraq Refugees Act of 2007, sponsored by Representative BLUMENAUER along with Representative SHAYS and Representative SCHAKOWSKY.

I especially challenge those Members who want our occupation of Iraq to continue to support this bill. Don't just warn us about a humanitarian crisis. Do something about the one that already exists.

The bill would provide special immigrant status to 15,000 Iraqis every year for 4 years. The bill would also provide a safe haven for at least 20,000 more Iraqis, including children, who have been left all alone in the world. Giving these young people a chance in life is not only honorable, it is smart because these impoverished children could become prime targets for recruitment by terrorists.

To me, this bill represents the true heart of America, the good and caring heart that has compassion for the people of the world. But our leaders do not seem to share this compassion. Recently, for example, former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton denied that the United States has any responsibility

for the refugee crisis. He said, "Our obligation was to give the Iraqis new institutions and provide security. We have fulfilled that obligation. I don't think we have an obligation to compensate for the hardships of war."

This is the kind of arrogance, Mr. Speaker, that has destroyed America's reputation and credibility around the world. We must reclaim our moral leadership. We can start by helping the Iraqi refugees. It's the right thing to do. It's the right thing to do as we bring our troops home.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

ON IRAQ, WE NEED LEADERSHIP, NOT INEFFECTIVE COMPROMISE

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, Americans are aching for our leadership to end the war in Iraq. Instead, they find the President and his enablers in the House and Senate doing everything they can to block legislation that would require him to bring the troops home by a date certain. Each day seems to bring some new proposal that purports to be progress.

Upon examination, however, they leave the President free to pursue his discredited policies and serve his diversionary tactics by politicians searching for cover. One proposal calls for the President to submit a plan by mid-October to narrow the use of U.S. troops in Iraq to fighting terrorists and securing borders and U.S. interests. It won't bring home a single American serviceman or woman.

Another proposal seeks to "change the mission" of American forces, but doesn't guarantee when or even if their redeployment will begin. Supporters of "changing the mission" claim it would result in troop reductions, but they offer no evidence of that. Americans will remain the targets of violence, and U.S. policy will continue to sow resentment in the Muslim world. In my opinion, "changing the mission" is the war supporters' latest excuse to avoid decisive action to bring the war to a conclusion.

This is not the leadership the American people expect and that our national security demands. The failure of the President's surge strategy means he has lost the ability to shape events in Iraq in a positive direction. Only by redeploying our forces from Iraq can we rebuild our depleted military, restore our global reputation and redirect resources to fight al Qaeda.

Just last week, the National Counterterrorism Center reported that al Qaeda has regrouped in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, enabled by the President's diversion of resources to Iraq.

I opposed the Iraq war from the start and take no comfort in the fact that many of my most ominous predictions have proven true. In a September 6, 2002, op-ed in the Portland Press Herald, I predicted that the war would be fought "in city streets filled with civilians, making precision bombs useless and casualties high. It will cost billions to wage the war and billions more to rebuild."

America has suffered nearly 30,000 casualties, including more than 3,600 combat deaths. The war has cost half a trillion dollars, resulting in huge deficits that will burden our children's future.

On October 8, 2002, during the House debate on the war resolution, I said, "If the U.S. acts unilaterally or with just a few other nations, there is a far higher risk of fueling resentment in Arab and Muslim nations and swelling the ranks of the anti-U.S. terrorists." Unfortunately, this is exactly what has happened.

I voted against the war and have been an outspoken critic of the case made to justify it, the mismanagement of the occupation and the failure to hold the administration accountable for its so many mistakes.

More than 18 months ago, I called for a deadline to redeploy our forces. A firm deadline was, and is, the best way to end the U.S. involvement in Iraq and force the Iraqis to assume responsibility for their own security. As former Maine Senator George Mitchell demonstrated in his Northern Ireland diplomacy, a firm deadline can be a very effective way to get parties in conflict to compromise their differences.

Nothing but the force of law will move President Bush to alter his stay-the-course strategy. Nonbinding resolutions are not sufficient to compel a real change in policy and get us out of

Iraq. This President is stubbornly determined to delay the inevitable at the cost of additional precious American lives. More than 600 of our troops have died since the surge began.

The other costs include greater hatred of the U.S. in the Islamic world, more terrorists inspired by that hatred and, with our Armed Forces stretched to the breaking point, great insecurity for our Nation.

Unless Members of Congress who supported President Bush's war policy steadfastly for 5 years stop looking for cover and do the right thing, the President will prevail and our troops will remain in Iraq.

Our Armed Forces have done all that we asked of them and have performed their mission with great skill and courage. President Bush will keep our troops in the crossfire of the Iraqi civil war until Congress sets binding dates for their redeployment. That action represents the leadership needed to bring our troops safely home.

CLEANING UP FEMA

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

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, on the 3rd of July in my hometown of Memphis, Tennessee, I discovered there was ice being disposed of by being dumped on a driveway, more or less, at Spottswood and East Parkway. What that was about was FEMA dropping and disposing of ice.

FEMA had purchased thousands and thousands and thousands of pounds of ice after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita when they didn't have enough ice. To try to compensate, they bought way, way, way too much ice.

I have discovered that FEMA spent in purchasing, in transporting and in storing ice in 23 different American cities, Mr. Speaker, \$67 million of our taxpayers' money, and FEMA is now spending nearly \$4 million to dispose of that ice over a period of 11 months. That means over \$70 million of American taxpayer dollars going down the drain. That is not the way an American government or any government should work, any business should work, or what Americans should expect of their government.

Fortunately, this Democratic Congress is doing what legislative branches are supposed to do; oversight. We have lacked oversight for the last 6 years, Mr. Speaker, and faults of the administration have gone unnoticed. But as I deal on the subcommittee that deals with FEMA, I will see to it on August 29th when that subcommittee meets in New Orleans on the second anniversary of that horrendous event, Hurricane Katrina, that we will ask the director of FEMA and the others about their programs, of why they buy excess commodities and excess ice, of why they spent \$70 million of American taxpayers' money on an ice folly, and why