

Nixon, who used it as a political tool. It needs to stop.

#### PHARMACY BENEFIT MANAGERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. JOLLY). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I come here today, as I have on many other occasions, to discuss an issue that is close to my heart, but it is also close to every small community and every large community across the country, and that is the plight of our community pharmacists. Community pharmacists are struggling to survive each and every day in light of the anti-competitive behavior of pharmacy benefit managers, PBMs.

Let me state up front: I have no problem with a company doing business. I have no problem with them playing in the bounds of what is fair and what is legal, and PBMs have a role in the marketplace. However, what we found out just in the last few weeks in the Judiciary Committee in a hearing is there is still a lack of regulation, enforcement, and transparency, and it is threatening the very existence of our community pharmacists in which the PBMs are acting not as competitors but, many times, as bullies.

To make matters even worse—and this is what was amazing to me—community pharmacists cannot even speak out about the appalling practices of the PBMs that they are forced to do business with because, when they do, the repercussions are swift and severe. It has been amazing to me to talk all across the country to community pharmacists who simply want to talk about what is going on in their business model in which they are put at a distinct disadvantage, and yet there are many of them saying: I can't say anything publicly because I know I will be reprimanded or my contract will be changed or my contract will be withdrawn, and I will be out of business.

Mr. Speaker, that is just wrong. No matter what is said, we have seen firsthand that in relation to State laws that have been in response to this issue, the States have enacted transparency reform with generic drug prices and reimbursement systems called the MAC transparency laws.

In fact, to date, 24 States have enacted such laws. The goals of these laws is to increase transparency and provide structure around the generic drug pricing and reimbursement system. But when community pharmacists speak out in support of these reasonable reforms, the PBM community has retaliated through business lawsuits against the State and even discussing it in the contracts with community pharmacists saying: Well, it would be better if we get these laws repealed.

There is just a problem here. When you have the ability to force your competitors to be audited by you and to be controlled by you to where there is no

transparency, where there are issues of community pharmacists simply barely able to survive, the PBMs are not representing the best interests of consumers; the PBMs are representing themselves. If they were truly acting in the best interest of consumers, as they claim, they would not oppose virtually every single transparency reform effort on the State and the Federal level. In fact, it is really interesting. They come to Congress and say one thing to Members, and then they turn around and behave however they wish in the pharmacy marketplace without fear of enforcement or oversight.

As I said from this floor a few weeks ago, I will continue this fight because they can't audit me. They can audit my community pharmacists, and my community pharmacists are scared because they know their very livelihood is being put out by those who would come with shiny objects and savings that many times never materialize, but at the same time funneling money to their own businesses.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to change, and it is time to change it now. We must preserve pharmacy access for patients, especially those in rural areas like north Georgia, and we must put an end to the bullying that seems to be going on.

What is amazing is a PBM can make a mistake and say that a pharmacy was not part of the new network, and when called on that, saying that we are part of that new network, they say: Well, we will send out a retraction when we get around to it. Pharmacists lose business based on these kinds of letters, and, yet the PBMs say: Oh, well, we will get around to it when we can.

That is why I am proposing H.R. 244, because community pharmacists routinely incur losses of approximately \$100 or more on prescriptions because PBMs reimburse pharmacies well below their cost to acquire and dispense generic prescription drugs, and they have skyrocketed in price. The PBMs may wait weeks or months to update the reimbursement benchmarks they use to compensate pharmacies while drug prices increase virtually overnight. This situation jeopardizes pharmacists' ability to continue to serve patients because it leaves community pharmacists with unsustainable losses.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge you and other colleagues to cosponsor H.R. 244. This reasonable legislation would require PBMs to update their maximum allowable cost benchmark every 7 days to better reflect market costs and allow pharmacists to know the source by which PBMs set reimbursements for their community pharmacist.

Many times we come to the floor fighting for businesses both large and small. But this is a time in which we are coming and I am coming to the floor fighting for community pharmacists who many times are the main source of health care in a community.

They are the ones that are trusted. They are the ones that are needed. And it is time for this body to stand up for them, against the anti-competitive tactics of PBMs and the bullying behavior that has got to stop.

#### OUR CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, in a conversation that I had recently, speaking about the other body, it was mentioned that that body is the deliberative body. There are opportunities for collaboration between Members, Democrat and Republican. But I am in the people's House, and I believe that Members also have the duty and commitment to collaborate and to be deliberative and thoughtful.

This morning, I would like to offer just a number of points about our wonderful Constitution.

I first want to begin by saying this is Restore the Vote Tuesday, and I am wearing a pin that highlights the importance of voting and the responsibilities of our civic constituency. My colleague from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL) is on the floor, and I join her in recognizing how special this right is and to know that many of us—I attempted to register sharecroppers in South Carolina, North Carolina, and Georgia in my college days, people who were still frightened about voting. I saw what the 1965 Voting Rights Act did, and we need to restore it.

We have an election coming up in Houston on Saturday, and I want to say to my constituents that we will do all that we can to prevent any prohibitive barriers from voting, from your voting.

That is a right, Mr. Speaker, just as it is the right to have the right to freedom of expression, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion.

Mr. Speaker, one of our Presidential candidates took to the airwaves in the last 24 hours to pronounce or announce or demagogue, saying that no Muslims should be allowed in this country. Mr. Speaker, I believe that we, as Members of Congress, should be empathetic and sympathetic to the concern of the American people. Maybe some are frightened. I do not make light of that.

I have been on the Homeland Security Committee since 9/11, and I now serve as the ranking member of the Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations Subcommittee. I take these obligations very seriously. For any of us who have been to Ground Zero even at that time and since that time, it is seared in our minds.

I know the people in San Bernardino, those of us reflecting on Paris, but now our own brothers and sisters realize that government must act in a way for Americans to feel safe and secure. But I would say that having met and stood with the Muslim community in my district on Sunday, late in the afternoon,

we stood in front of the Mickey Leland Federal building with Christians alike. Arm in arm we prayed. But I just stood back and listened to one Muslim representative after another come and proclaim their patriotism and denouncing the violence and distortion of their faith.

A young imam who had just moved from New Jersey just moved me. He began to articulate the elements of the Koran: benevolence and love. As a 25-year-old, he stood up to denounce this violence. That is the kind of American partnership that we need.

When we concluded that meeting, we had a press conference and vigil. We said that we would form a task force. I encourage Members throughout this body to have task forces on this very issue: How can we help?

Then as the President spoke—I want to thank him, for maybe people were not listening—the President was very clear that he is going to take the hunt and hunt down terrorist plotters to any country where they are. The President also indicated he will continue to provide training and equipment to Iraqi and Syrian forces and work with friends and allies to stop ISIL's operations; and with American leadership, the international community has begun to establish a process and timeline to pursue cease-fires and a political resolution to the Syrian war. Our President is focused. The Congress needs to be focused.

Yes, we need to be able to put forward legislative ideas, not contentious. No terrorist should have the ability to get a gun. Therefore, we should pass this bill that indicates that any terrorist on the terrorist watch list should not be able to buy a gun in the United States of America. I have legislation in the Judiciary Committee that we are preparing to come to the floor: no-fly for foreign terrorists, stopping them in their tracks, from wherever they come from, from getting on any plane coming to the United States of America. That is not hostility. That is saying to the American people we care. As they say in the community: We have got your back.

Then we must go back to the alert system, Mr. Speaker. We did it after 9/11. We understand the Secretary is offering that thought, the red alert. It is interesting that I thought about that, to give the American people some sense.

But let me finish, Mr. Speaker, by simply saying that I love this country. What a wonderful set of principles in the Constitution. And I want to say to the American people that, with our God, with our faith vested in a higher power, and the knowledge of democracy, we are going to withstand, survive, fight, and have a better nation. I know that that is the better way, not demagoguery and condemnation of a faith. I would never do that.

#### MASS SHOOTINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, last week's shooting in San Bernardino, California, happened to be the second shooting of the day and the 355th of the year, equating to more mass shootings than days in the year. The social media pages of some of the most influential leaders in Congress expressed sympathy, thoughts, and prayers to the victims and their families. But what many failed to express was a commitment to act on this issue to make mass shootings and horrendous gun violence a far less common instance in America.

While no grand solution exists to end all gun violence, we know from the experience of other countries that a combination of small but practical policy solutions can severely reduce it. But Congress continues to choose inaction.

Last week, immediately following the devastating news coming out of Paris and San Bernardino, a majority of Members blocked the House from even debating bipartisan legislation to close the outrageous loophole that allows suspects on the FBI's terrorist watch list to buy guns. It may be hard for some to believe, but in the U.S., individuals on the Federal terrorist watch list are shockingly still not prohibited from purchasing firearms.

Quite simply, Mr. Speaker, this means you can be on the terrorist watch list, considered by the Federal Government to be a potential risk to the national security of the United States and be prohibited from boarding a plane, but still have the ability to walk into any Walmart around the country and purchase a semiautomatic weapon.

Current Federal law prohibits nine categories of dangerous people from purchasing or owning firearms; suspected terrorists on FBI watch lists, however, are not one of them. I don't have to explain to Members of the House the growing terrorist threat that this country is facing from lone-wolf extremists which are often unpredictable and incredibly difficult to thwart. Even just one unsophisticated lone-wolf extremist with a gun can do a remarkable amount of damage.

This isn't some sort of theoretical threat either. A GAO investigation found that individuals on terrorist watch lists successfully purchased guns 1,321 times between February 2004 and December 2010. And that was before the rise of ISIS and their persistent social media campaign to recruit homegrown terrorists.

Mr. Speaker, I have worked with Congresswoman LOWEY in the Appropriations Committee on a commonsense amendment to allow the Attorney General to deny firearms sales to individuals known or suspected to be involved in terrorism. Unfortunately, our attempts to pass this amendment in committee have been rebuffed every time. But this week, we have an oppor-

tunity to change that. This week, we can show our enemies, intent on destroying Americans and our way of life, that Congress cares more about protecting the safety of its citizens than it does about the gun lobby by finally closing this terror gap in our gun laws.

The American people, gun owning and not, overwhelmingly support responsible, commonsense gun reforms. If this isn't the definition of responsible and commonsense reform, I don't know what is. There is also widespread support specifically among gun owners for closing the gap. In 2013, a survey found that 80 percent of non-NRA gun owners support prohibiting people on the terrorist watch list from obtaining guns. Mr. Speaker, 71 percent of NRA gun owners support prohibiting people on this watch list from obtaining guns.

It is naive to think that al Qaeda and ISIS are not paying attention to what is happening here in Congress. Fixing this loophole is simple, responsible, and the right thing to do for public safety. Let's not pass on this critical opportunity to close a dangerous loophole that threatens our national security.

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#### HOMEOWNERSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight an issue that is incredibly important. It is probably the number one issue going on in my district today. And that is the whole issue of housing: housing, and the opportunity to own your own home, to provide a safe haven for your family, to build wealth.

You see, owning your own home for almost everybody in our country is the first rung of the ladder of wealth creation. Yet today, that dream—and it is a dream for many of our citizens, particularly those in the Latino and minority communities—is just that, a dream. Latinos, like all Americans, are committed to building a better and stronger future for their families and for their communities. It starts by becoming a homeowner, to own a piece of America, to have a real stake in America.

That is one of the reasons homeownership is so important. It is important because it creates wealth—as I said, the first rung on the ladder for people to have an investment. It creates social stability. It creates a haven for the family, for family get-togethers. A home is really one of the most important assets for a family to have. Owning a home has far-reaching consequences in our economy for communities.

This fall, I had the opportunity to be a keynote speaker at a bipartisan leadership forum on achieving the American Dream, hosted by First American