

divide our Nation for the sake of partisan politics.

I ask, is the political gamesmanship worth letting our infrastructure continue to crumble? Is it worth ignoring the opioid crisis in our country? Is it worth undermining our democracy to attack a duly elected President?

We have real problems in this country that the American people elected us to solve, and we cannot ignore these problems while we focus on this improper and partisan political process.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues across the aisle to stop the political games so that we can get back to work on the issues that are important to the American people.

□ 1215

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

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

Mr. SCHRADER. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019.

It is high time that our struggling seniors are given the right to negotiate drug costs just like we have in commercial plans, the Veterans Administration, the Department of Defense, and Medicaid.

Seniors should not be subject to artificially high copays and out-of-pocket expenses because of an out-of-date law that prohibits Medicare from negotiating prices with pharmaceutical companies. Price negotiation is a free market principle that our country embraces in almost every other aspect of life. Why should our seniors not have the same right?

H.R. 3 also limits Medicare part D out-of-pocket expenses to \$2,000 a year. This aligns closely with how the private market works and a Senate companion bill.

Making sure seniors can afford their medicines keeps them out of the expensive hospital system and saves patients and taxpayers, alike, lots of money.

Finally, there is an effort in the bill to limit the inflationary impact on drug costs that have been on the market for a long time and improve price transparency so we can actually shed some light on what is going on.

This is long overdue. It is time for bipartisan and bicameral action on one of the most pressing issues of our day for seniors and all Americans.

FIND AGREEMENT ON USMCA

(Mrs. AXNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. AXNE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to continue to work with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer to find agreement on the USMCA soon.

I visit each of the 16 counties in my district every month, and whether it is touring manufacturers, visiting with

farmers, or stopping into small businesses, everywhere I go the message is loud and clear: Uncertainty is hurting our bottom line.

Agriculture is the backbone of Iowa's economy. One out of every \$5 is produced from Iowa agriculture in our State. Supporting farmers is neither a partisan nor a political issue; it is simply the right thing to do.

Between devastating weather events, ongoing trade wars, and the EPA's unprecedented abuse of biofuel waivers, our farmers have been put through enough. They are asking for our help. As elected Representatives, we owe them the right answer. We must answer their call and get this deal done right and without unnecessary delay.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for the work they have done, and I urge them to expedite negotiations and finalize this agreement soon to make sure that we can make lives whole for the people suffering in the State of Iowa and across this country.

MINOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

(Mrs. TRAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. TRAHAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of millions of Americans to call "foul" on Major League Baseball.

This week, Major League Baseball is discussing a proposal to cut the number of minor league franchises by 25 percent. The Lowell Spinners, a Red Sox affiliate, is among the 42 teams being forced out.

This plan is a betrayal of the fans and players as well as stadium vendors and employees around the Nation. It is an affront to the people of Lowell who swung for the fences in building LeLacheur Park, one of the Nation's best minor league parks.

As the World Series gets underway, remember that the minor league system produces the talent we see on the baseball diamond. MLB's plan is way off base and will hurt so many communities across the country that rely on minor league teams' presence.

Let's call it a balk and get back to rooting for the home team.

THE NEW NORMAL: BLACKOUTS

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

Mr. HARDER of California. Madam Speaker, I rise in frustration for my constituents in California's Central Valley. Folks across my community are reeling from blackouts caused by greed, corruption, and mismanagement at our State's largest utility, PG&E.

I am not the only one who is fed up. More than 1,000 people in my district had their power cut by PG&E, some for days.

Now the company is saying more blackouts could be coming this week and that it could be the new normal for

the next decade. I refuse to accept that.

Regular people can't choose to not pay their bills, and PG&E shouldn't be able to abuse that fact by refusing to invest in their grid. These blackouts are happening because rich executives decided to give themselves millions of dollars in bonuses instead of investing in their crumbling infrastructure.

Hundreds of thousands of people lost power because of these executives' greed. PG&E even proposed handing out another \$16 million in additional bonuses this year. It took a judge to stop their plan. Meanwhile, their shut-offs are estimated to cost our families more than \$2 billion.

MEDICARE LOW-INCOME LEGISLATION

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

Mr. DELGADO. Madam Speaker, I rise today on behalf of seniors in upstate New York.

This August, I joined a forum with AARP in New Paltz on the need to address the skyrocketing cost of prescription drugs in our communities. I heard harrowing stories from seniors, many of whom are on fixed income, who have seen the medication they rely on triple in price.

The system is working against our seniors. Right now, qualified covered retirement accounts are included in determining income and eligibility under the Medicare part D low-income subsidy program, and this means seniors must choose between saving for retirement and lifesaving medication.

Saving for retirement shouldn't jeopardize how low-income subsidies for Medicare part D beneficiaries are distributed. That is why I joined my colleagues in introducing H.R. 4655, the Enhancing Retirement Security for Medicare Beneficiaries Act of 2019, to remove retirement accounts from that determination and lower out-of-pocket costs for our seniors.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4655.

ELECTION REFORM

(Mr. HIGGINS of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Madam Speaker, this Saturday, October 26, early voting begins in New York State for the first time, expanding the window for voters to select their government representatives.

This country has long upheld its protection of free and fair elections, keeping the power and decisionmaking where it should be: with, and only with, the American people.

Foreign interference in our elections is real, and its existence is threatening the legitimacy of our elections, national security, and the democracy this Nation was founded on.

Today the House will vote on the SHIELD Act, adding further transparency in campaigns, stiffer penalties for voter deception, and further restrictions against foreign interference, including making campaigns mandatory reporters if there is any offer of foreign assistance in those campaigns.

Madam Speaker, I urge others to join me in voting to protect the vote of the American people.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

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

Mr. RUIZ. Madam Speaker, I rise today because seniors in my district are walking out of the pharmacy without their medications after they look at the out-of-pocket price and say to themselves, “I can’t afford this.” They are not taking the medications they need, which jeopardizes their lives, and this is unacceptable.

It is their health—their very lives—that are on the line. That is why, when we are talking about prescription drugs, we must focus on lowering the out-of-pocket costs for seniors.

That is why I support H.R. 3, the Lower Drug Costs Now Act, because it requires Medicare to negotiate drug prices so that my constituents can get a fair and affordable price for their medication. It also caps the annual out-of-pocket costs for those seniors who require many medications or expensive medication.

No one should have to choose between buying groceries to eat or getting medications they need, and H.R. 3 will lower costs so seniors don’t have to make that decision.

BRIDGETON VFW

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

Mr. VAN DREW. Madam Speaker, today I want to show my appreciation for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post of Bridgeton in south Jersey. This community provides a space for veterans to come together and connect with others, and these are other folks who understand the hardships and the rewards of serving our Nation.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars meet monthly to share their experiences and bond with one another in Bridgeton. They also organize special services for holidays, like Memorial Day and Veterans Day, so the members can commemorate these days together.

In addition, the VFW reaches out to the greater Bridgeton community by hosting barbecues, community dinners, and other festivals to connect with their neighbors and sometimes raise funds for important charitable causes.

I would like to thank the brave veterans of the Bridgeton VFW. Their service to our Nation is tremendous. I

am overjoyed that this community has given them a safe place to remember their service together.

Madam Speaker, they are our best; they are our shining stars; and they are our heroes.

May God bless them.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, October 23, 2019.

Hon. NANCY PELOSI,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on October 23, 2019, at 9:21 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 1590.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4617, STOPPING HARMFUL INTERFERENCE IN ELECTIONS FOR A LASTING DEMOCRACY ACT

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 650 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 650

Resolved, That at any time after 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. 4617) to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to clarify the obligation to report acts of foreign election influence and require implementation of compliance and reporting systems by Federal campaigns to detect and report such acts, and for other purposes. 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 chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on House Administration now printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the five-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 116-35 modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read. All points of order against that amendment in the nature of a substitute are waived. No amendment to that amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed

in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules. Each such amendment may be offered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered as read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question in the House or in the Committee of the Whole. All points of order against such amendments are waived. At the conclusion of consideration of the bill for amendment the Committee shall rise and report the bill to the House with such amendments as may have been adopted. Any Member may demand a separate vote in the House on any amendment adopted in the Committee of the Whole to the bill or to the amendment in the nature of a substitute made in order as original text. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

□ 1230

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COLE), my friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members be given 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Mr. HASTINGS. Madam Speaker, on Tuesday, the Rules Committee met and reported a rule, House Resolution 650, providing for consideration of H.R. 4617, the Stopping Harmful Interference in Elections for a Lasting Democracy, better known as the SHIELD Act, under a structured rule.

The rule provides 1 hour of debate, equally divided and controlled by the Chair and ranking member of the Committee on House Administration. The rule also executes a manager’s amendment from Chairwoman LOFGREN, makes in order 14 amendments, and provides one motion to recommit on the bill.

Madam Speaker, it is going to be interesting to watch my Republican friends twist pretzel-like today to convince themselves that voting against a bill that will protect the sanctity of our electoral process from foreign interference is the right thing to do for the American people.

Through today’s rule, the Democrats bring to the floor a bill that states that those campaigns that are offered assistance from foreign actors should be required to report such attempts at assistance.

Sadly, I predict that my Republican friends will vote against such protections.