



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 107th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 148

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, JUNE 18, 2002

No. 81

House of Representatives

The House met at 10:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PENCE).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
June 18, 2002.

I hereby appoint the Honorable MIKE PENCE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for 5 minutes.

REQUEST TO ADDRESS THE HOUSE FOR ONE MINUTE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, the gentlewoman from Florida would like to ask unanimous consent to do a 1-minute.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair cannot entertain a 1-minute request at this time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Could I ask the gentleman to yield a minute of his time?

Mr. PALLONE. Can she not take 5 minutes ahead of me?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from New Jersey has the floor for 5 minutes and may yield.

GOP PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 23, 2002, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN).

RECOGNITION OF ANTHONY ZECCA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his kindness in yielding.

I would like to recognize Anthony Zecca on his retirement as chief of police for the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians. Chief Zecca has been a pillar of strength and trust for his community and has provided assistance and protection for all. His leadership as a law enforcement officer over the last 45 years has earned him respect and admiration from his community.

Chief Zecca began his career as a police officer with the New York Police Department and came to the Miccosukee Tribe in 1976. Within a year he was promoted to lieutenant and was appointed chief of police in 1978.

Please join me in recognizing Chief Anthony G. Zecca for the commendable service he has provided and for his commitment to the south Florida community. And I thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), and I know that he knows the Miccosukee Tribe very well and knows Chief Zecca.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN). I met the chief on one occasion when I went down there with the gentlewoman's husband, and he is really an outstanding individual.

Let me say, Mr. Speaker, that the reason that I am in the well this morn-

ing is because of my concern about the Republican leadership effort to bring up their prescription drug bill today in the Committee on Energy and Commerce and in the Committee on Ways and Means. I have said many times that I am glad that the Republican leadership is finally willing to bring up a bill; however, it is quite clear that their legislation does nothing more than throw some money to private insurance companies in the hope that they will provide some sort of prescription drug benefit. And I am very concerned that, unlike the Democratic proposal which provides for a guaranteed Medicare benefit, 80 percent of which is being paid for by the Federal Government, and which brings down costs by giving the power to the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to have 30 or 40 million seniors who can now negotiate lower drug prices, this is what we need. Democrats are proposing a Medicare benefit, a guaranteed benefit, 80 percent paid for by the Federal Government, just like what we have now for part B of Medicare that covers your doctor bills.

What the Republicans are proposing and bringing up in committee today and tomorrow is a sham. It is nothing more than an effort to try to convince the American people that somehow they are going to provide a benefit that will not exist. It is illusory because it is nothing more than giving money to private insurance companies without any guaranteed benefit, without any Medicare benefit, and without any cost control.

But I have said over and over again that Members do not have to take my word for it. In the last few weeks, commentators in the New York Times and various media around the country have pointed out rather dramatically that the Republican proposal will not work, that it is designed for failure, and if I could just use a couple of quotes to

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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