

visa waivers for international medical graduates that a State may request from 20 to 30. Rural Americans deserve access to quality health care, and the J-1 visa program helps to achieve this goal. In fact, thanks to the J-1 visa program, over 60 doctors have come to Nevada over the past few years to practice medicine in underserved areas.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support the successful program and vote for H.R. 4858.

THE PRESIDENT'S MIDDLE EAST SPEECH

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

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I commend the President's speech on the Middle East, and I strongly support his vision. In calling for new Palestinian leadership and democratic reforms, the President has announced the end of the Arafat era.

Never has an end been so richly deserved. Having been handed an opportunity after an opportunity, Yasser Arafat has led the Palestinians to death, murder and destruction. Now, as President Bush made clear, it is time for the Palestinians to choose a new leader, a new type of leader, non-violent, democratic and noncorrupt, if there is to be hope for peace.

Every American agrees that the nations committed to peace must oppose regimes that support terror, nations such as Iraq and Iran, and that the dictatorship in Syria, whose foreign minister last week defended suicide bombers by saying "they have a right to their opinion," must once and for all close all terrorist camps and expel all terrorist organizations not only from Syria but from Lebanon it illegally occupies.

As for the Palestinians, Mr. Speaker, if they reject the culture of death and embrace the President's prerequisites for peace by electing new leaders, building democracy, ending anti-Israel incitement, committing to non-violence, and destroying their terrorist infrastructure, I shall fight as hard as I can for the President's program, including humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people.

ENERGY

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

Mr. REHBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge those across the aisle to once and for all end their negative rhetoric and support a comprehensive energy plan for America's future. I understand that there are those that would have the United States continue to import almost 60 percent of our oil from many of the very same terrorist-sponsoring regimes our sons and daughters are bravely fighting today. I, however, will not.

Mr. Speaker, I have an 18-year-old son; and I will do everything I can to not allow this Congress to place him and thousands of other young boys and girls in harm's way simply to appease a few extremist groups here in Washington. The President's energy plan balances the needs of our environment while recognizing that America must develop our domestic sources of energy if we are to truly be an independent nation.

I urge my colleagues to support American independence through the passage of H.R. 4.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Republicans are telling us repeatedly that seniors deserve better prescription drug options like those available to Members of Congress. I wholeheartedly agree, but it is difficult to see how a Republican plan that requires seniors to go outside of Medicare and purchase inferior HMO-like private drug insurance would deliver such coverage.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, the Republican plan is 40 percent less valuable than the coverage offered to Members of Congress. During last week's markup, I offered an amendment that would have replaced the standard coverage in the Republican bill with the same coverage under the Federal health benefits program that Members of Congress receive. But the night before our amendment was offered, Republicans adjourned early so they could attend a \$30 million fund-raising dinner underwritten by America's drug companies. The CEO of GlaxoWellcome, a British pharmaceutical company, gave \$200,000 to the GOP that night and chaired the event.

When the markup resumed the next day, it came as no surprise when Republicans voted the amendment down, meaning this week Congress will be forced to vote on legislation that will give seniors less than Members of Congress have.

SPREADING AWARENESS ABOUT ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, Alzheimer's disease affects 4 million Americans, and that number is expected to triple within the next 50 years. Nearly half of those over the age of 85 have Alzheimer's. It is a disease that touches almost every American family in some way, and I believe it is time to increase funding for Alzheimer's research to find a cure.

The disease process can begin in the brain as many as 20 years before the

symptoms appear; and, once diagnosed, a person's average life-span is 8 years. Due to lost productivity of employees who are caregivers and the health care costs associated with Alzheimer's, the disease costs American families more than \$61 billion annually.

South Carolinians are particularly concerned about Alzheimer's because one of our favorite sons, former Congressman and Governor Carroll Campbell, is undergoing treatment for the disease and is being encouraged by his devoted wife Iris with his sons Carroll, Jr., and Mike.

I would like to commend the efforts of the Coastal Carolina, Mid-State and Upstate chapters of the Alzheimer's Association along with the Alzheimer's facility of the Lexington Medical Center. These South Carolinians have worked tirelessly to spread awareness about this disease, and their efforts today to find a cure will hopefully save many Americans in the future.

THE IRONY IN PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND DEBT LIMIT ISSUES

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

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Congress is faced with two difficult votes coming up. One is to start a prescription drug program for seniors. The other is to increase the debt limit. I see a certain degree of irony in the fact that, while we are increasing the debt, or, if you will, the mortgage on our kids for them to pay off in the future, at the same time we are voting to expand and implement the largest, most expensive entitlement program that we have had in many, many years. It is a challenge. But everybody needs to realize that it is going to be the young workers, that sometimes are in a more difficult financial situation than the seniors, that are going to have to pay increased taxes for a giant increase in the Medicare program and the cost of increased debt. In other words taxpayers pay for the prescription drugs for seniors.

It is coming to grips with that irony that is the challenge; I think we need to move very carefully in our decisions of what new welfare programs we enact and how we pay back the increased debt.

PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN

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

Mr. ADERHOLT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to join with 83 Members of Congress in cosponsoring H.R. 4965, the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act. I commend the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) for sponsoring this legislation. The time has come for us to take a firm and decisive stand against this deplorable procedure.

I have cosponsored two previous Partial-Birth Abortion Acts, in 1997 and