

priorities. There is a lot of money down here to do different things, and it is about priorities. So I think it is all together appropriate to talk about what the priorities of this administration and the priorities of this Congress are.

Corporate tax rates are the lowest they have been since the 1930s. If you are a corporation today in America, you are getting just about everything you want. We have enough money down here for a tax cut for the top 1 percent. The top 400 families in this country get an average tax return of \$8,500,000.

We have passed free trade agreements that have eroded our manufacturing base. We have a farm bill that has more pork in it than a Christmas ham. We threaten vetoes of Buy American provisions, Buy American provisions in the Defense appropriations bill. This administration has threatened to veto the bill if it has Buy American provisions in it. We have enough money to rebuild Iraq's schools and hospitals and universal health care; and then what takes the cake is they have enough time and energy to remove the anti-profiteering provision of the Iraq supplemental. It is time for people in this country to be outraged. If we cannot take care of our veterans, who can we take care of?

□ 2015

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

(Mr. MURPHY 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 the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take my Special Order time at this time.

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

There was no objection.

HONORING JAY S. PIFER

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

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and honor Jay S. Pifer, a businessman and friend, as he plans his retirement after more than 40 years with Allegheny Energy Company, an integrated energy company with a balanced portfolio of businesses. At a

time when too many corporate leaders are failing in their obligations to their customers, employees, investors and community, it is a rare privilege to be able to honor a man who demonstrates on a daily basis what integrity and leadership truly mean.

Mr. Pifer, who began his tenure with Allegheny as an apprentice engineering technician, was named interim president and CEO before being named chief operating officer in June. Like many in the energy production and distribution business today, Allegheny has suffered significant erosion in its financial health which has resulted in a virtually completely turnover in the company's management. During this time of turbulence and upheaval, Jay served to hold the company together, facilitating the transition from the old management team to the new. Further, he agreed to stay on to help the new team while it got its bearings. During this period, Allegheny faced ice, snow and thunderstorms capped recently by Hurricane Isabel, and Jay and his crews performed spectacularly with speed and grace.

Financial troubles notwithstanding, Jay Pifer and Allegheny led the industry in customer satisfaction, named recently as second best on the East Coast. His dedication to his employees, customers, and community served by Allegheny is legendary, and we hate to see him leave. However, his dedication to his family and his faith is even greater, and we understand his desire to spend his time with those who have supported him during these 40 years.

Jay has held many leadership positions with the company, including president of Allegheny Power energy delivery subsidiary, which supplies power throughout the State of West Virginia, as well as Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Ohio. During that time, J.D. Power and Associates recognized Allegheny Power as the second best company in customer satisfaction in the East, and 10th best in the Nation with improvement in each of the last 10 years.

In addition to his service with Allegheny, Jay has been involved in many civic and community activities, only a few of which include serving on the boards of the United Way, the Business Round Tables of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, and the West Virginia Education Alliance. His commitment to young people includes a long association with the Boy Scouts of America, and he currently serves on the advisory board of the northeast region of the Boy Scouts. He is also an ordained lay Pastor in the United Methodist Church.

In what was described in the Washington Post as perhaps an unprecedented effort to showcase a new approach to conservation, Jay oversaw the sale of a large tract of Allegheny Power land to the Canaan Valley Institute which included one of the largest wetlands east of the Mississippi River, which will now be preserved as a habi-

tat for threatened and endangered wildlife, as well as public recreation. Land and stream management practices are being developed on this land as part of the Canaan Valley Institute's land and water stewardship education program. Jay was instrumental in the expansion of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, the Nation's 500th national wildlife refuge.

On February 14, 2002, he once again demonstrated his commitment to conservation by engineering the sale of 12,000 acres to the refuge. I was honored to work with Jay on these land transfers which will benefit generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, it would be impossible to catalog here tonight all of Jay's accomplishments and contributions, yet these few examples illustrate what an outstanding gentleman Jay Pifer is.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring Jay S. Pifer.

REIMPORTATION IS THE RIGHT PRESCRIPTION

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this week's issue of Congressional Quarterly Weekly reports that on the subject of drug reimportation, FDA Commissioner Mark McClellan said the following in an October 20 speech to the National Press Club, "These Members are out of touch with the realities of keeping our drug supply safe, and the clear and present dangers to America's supply of drugs that their bills would create."

Evidently, it is Mr. McClellan who is out of touch with reality. Millions of Americans are finding prescription drug reimportation from Canada and other countries to be a viable and necessary alternative to high-priced drugs in the United States. The number of those Americans is growing every day. It would be wrong for Members of Congress to ignore this reality and to ignore the excessive cost of prescription drugs in America.

If Mr. McClellan thinks Americans are content to allow price gouging on prescriptions to continue, he is mistaken. American consumers are understandably fed up.

Large pharmaceutical manufacturers have long been gouging American consumers by charging substantially more, in some cases up to 90 percent more, for prescription drugs sold in the United States than in Canada and other industrialized countries. Americans refuse to be exploited by the pharmaceutical industry any longer. The exploitation of American consumers must end. The excuse that most of the world's pharmaceutical research and development takes place in America does not justify the continued degree of cost shifting onto the backs of American consumers. Profit levels of American, foreign, and multi-national pharmaceutical firms are huge, as is the

level of their advertising budgets and their level of inducements offered to prescribing physicians.

This Member firmly believes that many of the safety issues which opponents have brought to the forefront in this debate are really red herrings. The real issue is the prices Americans pay for the medicines they need.

According to a recent Washington Post-ABC News poll, there is strong support for opening drug markets, despite warnings by FDA that it cannot guarantee the safety of these life-saving medicines. Even with the possibility of a drug safety issue being mentioned in the question, more than two-thirds, or 69 percent of respondents, said it should be legal for Americans to buy prescription drugs from Canada or other industrialized countries. In fact, 12 percent of those surveyed said that they or a family member had purchased prescription drugs from Canada or other country in order to obtain a better price.

The reimportation debate is not a battle of right versus left, it is a battle of right versus wrong. It is simply wrong to require Americans to pay the world's highest prices for prescription drugs, so they thereby can subsidize consumers everywhere else on earth to generate the research, advertising and profit revenues for pharmaceutical companies.

As a Member of Congress serving in the people's House, this Member has a responsibility to do what is right for Nebraskans and all Americans. This Member supports prescription drug reimportation because Americans deserve access to quality drugs at world market prices and reimportation seems to be the only solution immediately available to reduce the gross overcharge of American consumers for prescription drugs.

A typically cynical comment was made by an unnamed health care lobbyist found in the November 1, 2003, Congressional Quarterly Weekly regarding the Medicare bill and the likelihood that the final bill will include importation provisions that will never be implemented. The unnamed source is quoted as saying, "You tell them that this will only kick in after FDA has appropriated \$100 million for border safety, or FDA has a counterfeit, tamper-resistant device packaging system in place." The lobbyist concluded, "Whatever the trigger is, just say it will never be met."

Mr. Speaker, there have been rumors that the Medicare conference report will come out of committee with a drug reimportation provision which will contain language under which the FDA can say they cannot responsibly or legally implement, as they did on two previous congressional efforts to provide for prescription drug reimportation. This is unacceptable.

Governor Rod Blagojevich, our former colleague in the House, is asking the FDA to allow Illinois to explore a plan to import approved medications

from Canada, and knows this issue well. He recently said, "It is awfully hard to stop an idea whose time has come." He is absolutely right in that assessment. Americans will find a way to buy FDA-approved drugs from abroad, either legally or illegally. The FDA needs to face the fact and get on with the method of discharging its responsibilities given those realities.

Mr. Speaker, there is a serious call for action from the American people. We must open the drug markets so Americans can obtain the prescription drugs they need when they need them most and at affordable prices.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD an article published in the Los Angeles Times today entitled, "Open Door to Drug Imports."

[From the Los Angeles Times, Nov. 6, 2003]

OPEN DOOR TO DRUG IMPORTS

In the 2002 election cycle, the U.S. drug industry gave political candidates nearly \$30 million. For the 2004 cycle it has already spent more than \$3 million, two-thirds of it on GOP members of Congress. The industry is getting a good return on its money. Bush administration officials and sympathetic legislators are still trying to add a \$400-billion drug benefit to Medicare that prohibits, not just omits, cost controls. House and Senate conferees have proposed forbidding the federal government to negotiate better prices, as such countries as Canada and agencies as the Department of Veterans Affairs do.

The glimmer of good news is that at least one consumer-friendly reform may survive. The conferees, pressured by state and local leaders, last week began considering an amendment to let consumers buy drugs directly and more cheaply from Canada.

The Bush administration and most legislators on the conference committee, including some Democrats, say it is dangerous to legalize drug purchases from Canada. They echo Food and Drug Administration head Mark B. McClellan's line that the agency can't guarantee the safety of drugs that aren't manufactured, stored and distributed under FDA guidelines. McClellan says he fears tampering by shippers as well. Canada, however, has one of the world's most stringent pharmaceutical quality oversight systems. As for adulteration in shipping, that can happen in any mail-order operation.

Californians are right to ask why importation from Mexico, which also has lower prices than the U.S., was excluded. Legislators argue that Mexico's prescription drug oversight is too lax, but it's also because strong proponents of drug importation—Reps. Bernard Sanders (I-VT.), Gil Gutknecht (R-Minn.) and Jo Ann Emerson (R-Mo.)—are in states closer to Canada.

A temporary solution, which the Canada measure would be, is better than no solution. Plenty of individuals and even municipalities are already importing from Canada, mostly over the Internet. Legalizing the practice would allow for better safety regulations.

On Tuesday, two top negotiators on the conference committee, Rep. Bill Thomas (R-Bakersfield) and Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), said the Medicare drug benefit was "on life support," imperiled by partisan disagreements. That's good news, because the bill would create a gigantic, cost-ineffective benefits shaped behind closed conference doors.

Regional leaders whose budgets are being busted by drug prices—including Minnesota

Gov. Tim Pawlenty and New York City Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg, both Republicans—are pressuring the conferees to pass the Canada measure even if a larger Medicare drug benefit dies. As Pawlenty recently framed the issue: "There's a rebellion brewing across America. It is the prescription drug equivalent of the Boston Tea Party."

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

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

WHAT IS THE PLAN IN IRAQ?

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

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, today the President signed the bill taking \$87 billion to deal with Iraq.

I will include for the RECORD an article from the Everett Herald entitled, "Parents Who Protested War Mourn Death of Soldier Son." This man from my district leaves behind a wife who is pregnant to deliver in 1 month and two small girls.

As we held the memorial service today for the 15 troops that were killed on Sunday in Iraq when one of our Chinook helicopters went down, I could not help thinking about the memorial service that will be held for the person who died last night and the one who died this morning, and there will be more and more. The memorial service for Benjamin Colgan from my district is down the road yet.

This morning I spoke about the President's need to present a plan for stopping the bloodshed. As far as we know, there is no plan. Our experience shows us there was no or little planning about what would happen after the military action stopped. They have never stopped because there was no plan. Now, apparently we are going to sit in Iraq while the President continues to say "bring 'em on" until the war on terror is won, until Iraq has free enterprise, until Iraq has good roads, until Iraq loves Americans. Well, it is not going to happen.

The war on terror is much like the war on drugs or the war on poverty, we have to keep at it, but we are not going to defeat the enemy and get a surrender sign on the battleship Missouri. If the President says we are going to keep troops in Iraq until the war on terror is over, then the President is planning to keep troops in Iraq forever.

Maybe the Iraqis are ingrates or foolish, or maybe they are reacting like people have reacted since time immemorial to occupations. Many have lamented the way the President squandered the good will of the nations of the world after September 11. Now, the President is squandering the goodwill of the Iraqi people, most of whom were