

and our prospects, which this budget will lay out an economic vision, that still results in 2½ million Americans in the last 3 years who have lost their jobs, 43 million Americans without health care, nearly \$1 trillion worth of corporate and individual assets have been foreclosed on, and 2 more million Americans have walked out of the middle class into poverty. If we are going to do nation-building, we must do it here at home, not just overseas.

MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. PRYCE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak on behalf of Ohio's seniors and America's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, about 14 million low-income seniors, 438,000 of them in Ohio alone, will now be receiving their medications for a mere \$2 to \$5. They understand that this new law, the new law about Medicare reform and prescription drugs, is a step in the right direction. The countless baby boomers who devote portions of their monthly paycheck to help buy grandma and grandpa's medicine, they understand that this expansion of Medicare is important. They know that when they are able to devote a little less money to prescription medicines for their parents, they might be able to devote a little more of that money to their kids' college tuition.

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The many older Americans who have experienced a tragic illness that requires a litany of medications, they understand the peace of mind that this law provides to the catastrophic coverage. Because of this law, the cost of their many, many medicines is kept at a minimum, instead of spiraling off into infinity.

The millions of seniors who live in rural areas across America and doctors who serve them, they understand the benefits of this new law, especially the increased financial assistance to rural providers.

The hundreds of patient organizations who endorsed and support this new law, groups like AARP, the American Medical Association and the Alzheimer's Association, they understand that the law represents a good first step in improving the lives of millions and millions of patients.

I could go on and on, showing the countless benefits of this new law. Instead, I will boil it down into the simplest of terms: while this plan may not provide the entire solution for every senior's particular medical and financial problem, it does provide some solutions to the substantial number of seniors who formerly were choosing between food and medicine, gasoline and medicine, heating fuel and medicine. Those choices were untenable.

The law is not 100 percent perfect, but it is 100 percent more than what seniors had before, which was nothing. Unfortunately, there are some who do not share the same mind set. Indeed, there are small group of obstructionists who seek to mislead seniors about this new law, instead of informing them about how to use it to their advantage. Their goal is to scare, instead of to educate; and their tactics aim to thwart instead of to improve. It is really sad.

A prime example is the left-leaning Families USA, who have taken their MediScare campaign across the country. In fact, they are scheduled to be in my home State of Ohio during the coming weeks.

To the seniors in my home State and to the seniors across the country who will be subject to the half-truths that Families USA and their allies will be pushing, I will say, beware of those who peddle fear and distrust. The flashy videos and the shiny brochures that these groups will provide will do nothing but tell you what is wrong with this new law. They will tear it down and trash the very thing that seniors have been pleading Congress to do for years, add prescription drug coverage to Medicare. They will not bat an eyelash nor turn the slightest shade of red while they claim there is absolutely nothing good about this new law.

Mr. Speaker, I have too much faith in Ohio's seniors. I know that they will not be used as pawns in the politicization of a new law of the land. I know that our seniors will take the time to learn more about this law, and they will like what they see. They will understand that Congress acted to improve the quality of their lives. This is a good first step. They will understand that groups who scare them about what a law does not do are not helpful nor productive, and that the people who instruct them about what a law does are actually trying to make a difference in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be to Ohio seniors one of those who helps them, helps them understand what this law does do for them. I want to be part of that productive group, that group that knows that progress comes in incremental steps and understands that obstructing and thwarting accomplishes nothing, that group that looks for solutions, not partisan points.

Passing a Medicare drug plan and getting it signed into law with President Bush's cooperation is finally a step forward for this Nation's seniors. Let us not ever step back.

ADDRESSING UNEMPLOYMENT IN AMERICA

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I want to talk for a moment about Vice

President CHENEY's trip to Dayton, Ohio. But before that, I just want to mention that the Medicare drug law that my friend from Ohio mentions just happened to be legislation written by the drug and the insurance industries. The drug industry will get \$140 billion additional profits under this law. The insurance industry gets a \$46 billion direct gift subsidy from taxpayers.

This bill was written for the drug industry, written for the insurance industry. In fact, the word in Washington is that President Bush will receive about \$100 million in contributions from the drug industry. I think that is probably all you need to know. And that is why seniors simply do not like this drug bill, do not like the new Medicare law; and that is why the Republican Party, the President, is spending upwards of \$80 million in taxpayer dollars to advertise to try to convince America's seniors that this is good legislation, that it is good law. It is clearly not.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Vice President came to Dayton, Ohio, last week to try to explain away what has happened to the Ohio economy. One out of six manufacturing jobs has disappeared since President Bush took office; 300,000 in Ohio have been lost. That is 2,000 jobs every single week of the Bush administration. That is 260 jobs have disappeared every single day in Ohio since George Bush took office.

In response to the bad economic news which cascades across my State, bad news almost every week on the economy, 600 people just laid off from a phone center in Trumbull County, near the district of the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STRICKLAND) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN).

In response to the bad news, the President has got two solutions every time: more tax breaks for the most privileged in our society, with the hope that some of these benefits trickle down to the rest of the people in this country. That has not worked. And the second response, the second solution is more NAFTA-like trade agreements that continue to ship jobs overseas, that continue to hemorrhage jobs. We have lost hundreds of thousands of jobs in this country, manufacturing jobs, because of these trade agreements. They simply are not working.

The question always is, How out of touch can our government's leaders be? The answer to that is I do not know. Something seems to be new every day. The economic report of the President, which came out a couple or 3 or 4 weeks ago, signed by George Bush, signed by the President, the economic report of the President talks about outsourcing jobs, one of the biggest problems in our economy; and the President's Chief Economic Adviser, Gregory Mankiw, said outsourcing jobs is a good thing because it makes the economy more efficient.

Well, let him look in the eye of a computer operator, let him look in the