

all-type program. The design of the bill is to give seniors choices to better fit their families' needs as far as prescription drugs are concerned. So seniors have a choice whether they are going to sign up for the prescription drug coverage.

Also, if you look at the larger body of the bill and look at the choices that the seniors will have, they can actually now have a choice of the type of health insurance coverage that they access. Much like we do here in Congress, they have a decision to make about which plan bests fit their medical need. It puts seniors back into the driver's seat.

One of the, I think, most interesting parts of the bill is we really tried to improve the quality of health care that seniors can receive, much like many in the private sector enjoy today, much like we here as Members of Congress enjoy. We enjoy improved quality of care through accessing preemptive health care screenings. So in the Medicare bill, we included new screenings, diabetic screenings, blood screenings to detect cardiovascular disease. These are tests that are indicative of disease and have a broad array of applications. Medicare participants will now have access to these screenings.

Also, we put in a provision for a free physical for the new entrants to Medicare. There is also now a provision which allows seniors to access a disease management function. I know a lot of us know senior citizens who deal with a lot of specialists, and sometimes those specialists do not talk to one another. Well, this disease management function, while voluntary and optional, will and may help many of our senior citizens.

Also in the Medicare Modernization Act, we try to deal with the very pressing problem of low-income seniors, and we gave help to those who need it; and any senior who falls within 135 percent of the poverty level will now pay very little as far as their health care coverage and certainly as far as prescription drugs. Essentially, their drug bills will be eliminated.

I think the final version of this bill did include a provision which allowed for the creation of health savings accounts, I think something that is revolutionary and will, once again, put the spotlight back on the doctor/patient relationship and putting the seniors back into the driver's seat as far as which type of health care that they can access, and it also ensures that the seniors themselves can make their medical decisions without the intervention of a third party that may not be familiar with the particular health of that senior.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am here tonight to make sure that we in this body realize that we have gone and taken the first step toward modernizing health care for seniors. We have given them choice. We have given them hope for a discount on their prescription drug bills. This June, there will be the introduction of discount cards that will afford

seniors up to 50 percent of a discount on the cost of prescription drugs. So there is immediate relief that our seniors across the Nation will experience.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). 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 came here tonight to talk about jobs and mismanagement of our budget and economy by the President, but we are going to have a moment's discussion on the previous speaker outlining the Medicare bill.

The fact is the prescription drug, Medicare privatization bill is not working for seniors, and it begs the question, why is the administration spending 80 million of our tax dollars to advertise this bill to try to get seniors convinced that this law works, and it does not even go into effect until 2006? The President has made a decision to spend 80 million tax dollars, instead of putting it into a drug benefit, spend 80 million tax dollars to convince people that this new drug law, this new Medicare privatization law is good for the public, when, in fact, the Medicare privatization bill increases the profits for drug companies in this country by almost \$180 billion; and this drug bill, this privatization bill gives a direct subsidy of tax dollars to insurance companies to Medicare HMOs of \$46 billion.

The reason the bill is not popular, the reason the law is not going to work is it was written by the drug and insurance industries. Why did the drug and insurance industries write the bill? Why did the President allow the drug companies and the insurance companies into the Oval Office to write this privatization bill? Frankly, because of major political contributions from the drug companies and the insurance companies to President Bush and to Republican leadership.

The word on the street in this town is that the drug companies are going to give \$100 million to President Bush's reelection. If that does not tell you something about this drug bill, this Medicare privatization bill, it speaks volumes.

JOB AND MISMANAGEMENT OF THE BUDGET AND ECONOMY BY THE PRESIDENT

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, to shift gears for a moment, Vice President CHENEY came to my State, to Dayton, Ohio, to defend the President's economic record. In Ohio, one out of six manufacturing jobs has been lost since President Bush took office; 300,000 people in Ohio have lost their jobs. That is 2,000 people every week. That is 260 Ohioans have lost their jobs every day since President Bush took the oath of office on January 20, 2001.

The response to this bad news from the President and the Vice President, who seem so out of touch, do not seem

to understand people's anxieties, people's fears, people's difficulties when they lose their jobs, their answer is always more tax cuts for the most privileged people in society, the 1 percent richest people, hoping the tax cuts will trickle down and help the rest of the country and more trade agreements that send jobs overseas.

Mr. Speaker, I would hope that instead of Vice President CHENEY going to a fundraiser in Dayton, like he did, and then trying to defend the Bush economic plan, pretty indefensible, difficult thing to do, I wish the Vice President would have been with me in Akron, about 3 weeks ago in my district, meeting with a group of mostly Republican business owners, machine shop owners in Akron in Summit County, Ohio.

Right before I spoke to these 60 owner/operators of small machine shops, tool and dye makers and others, a gentleman walked up and put this stack of fliers on my table, a little bit more than this actually. He said this is 1 month of fliers that he has received from companies around the country that are going out of business. These are fire sale fliers from small businesses, manufacturers that are going out of business because of the Bush economic plan and because of the Bush budget.

Let me just show you some of these. A company in Cleveland, Ohio, auction, going out of business; company in Norristown, Pennsylvania, public auction; public auction company in Nashua, New Hampshire; machine tool auction, Tipp City, north of Dayton, Ohio; facility closed, all must go, Medina, Ohio; absolute auction, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, everything must go; plant closed, everything sells, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Marion, Ohio, complete shop close-out action; high-tech manufacturing plant closeout, Elk Grove, Illinois, near Chicago; large-capacity fabricating machine shop closing, Bingham, Massachusetts; precision shop, CNC job shop downsizing, Houston, Texas, President's own State; complete stamping and machine tool shops, two of them going out of business, Mansfield, Ohio, the community I grew up in; public auction, Charlotte, North Carolina, everything must sell, plant closes; South El Monte, California, facility closing; public auction, Newark, New York. One thing after another.

The President does not get it. We should extend unemployment benefits. We should pass the bipartisan Crane-Rangel bill, which will give incentives, not the way the President does to all large companies including those that are moving out of the country, but those that provide jobs in the United States of America. This simply cannot keep happening in our country.

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

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear

hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

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

There was no objection.

OUTSOURCING AND FREE TRADE

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

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, recently there has been a great deal of discussion, angst and some protectionist legislation concerning the so-called outsourcing of American jobs to foreign countries. In fact, companies choosing to purchase services abroad have been termed "Benedict Arnold" companies by some.

But despite all the inflammatory language and distorted facts, the truth is that outsourcing is only one side of a two-way street known as free trade. Almost one-third of our economy is dependent upon that two-way street. Thus, we should examine the little-noticed other side of the street called insourcing.

Data from the Commerce Department shows that during 2003, the U.S. posted a \$53 billion surplus, surplus, in trade and private services with the rest of the world. We outsourced \$77 billion in services overseas, but foreigners turned around and insourced \$130 billion of services from the U.S. In other words, foreigners demand more of our services than we demand of theirs.

Unfortunately, Americans are presently hearing only one side of the outsourcing story. They only hear about the jobs that are going out of the U.S. They do not hear anything about the jobs coming into the U.S.

According to the Treasury Department, insourcing accounted for 6.4 million jobs nationwide in the most recent survey; and these insource jobs paid 16½ percent more than the average domestic job. Even though many foreign workers work for less, jobs are insourced into the U.S. because our workers tend to be better educated. They tend to have better skills. They tend to be more productive. We can compete internationally.

If you want to get a better idea of the kind of insourcing coming to America, let us just take a look at the automobile industry. Honda is hiring 2,000 new Americans in Alabama to build SUVs, and Nissan will add more than 2,000 jobs by expanding their plants in Tennessee and Mississippi. Toyota will add 2,700 jobs in my home State of Texas in the next 2 years. In fact, Mr. Speaker, foreign corporations now employ almost half a million workers in my home State. Nearly one in 10 jobs

in the U.S. is directly linked to the export of U.S. goods and services.

Now, protectionist anti-outsourcing legislation unfortunately threatens each and every one of these jobs. If we do not permit the outsourcing of jobs overseas, other nations will not permit the insourcing of jobs into the U.S. It is free trade that creates more job opportunities for the unemployed, increases their wages and improves the standard of living for American workers. Free trade also delivers a greater choice of goods and services to our consumers at lower prices. That means American families get better products using less of their paycheck.

Competition has always helped the consumer. It does not matter if that competition comes from Canada or Kentucky. Over the past few years, prices have dropped for a wide array of goods and services that face foreign competition. For example, TVs cost 10 percent less; computers cost 25 percent less. Yet we pay a lot more for services that do not receive foreign competition, goods and services, for example, college tuition, prescription drug goods, and cable TV service.

Those who care about creating jobs and reducing unemployment here at home should stop fighting free trade and its outsourcing component and start fighting the root cause of job flight overseas, mainly too many taxes, too many regulations, and too many frivolous lawsuits.

The Small Business Administration found in the year 2000 that Americans spent \$843 billion complying with Federal regulations. Too many mind-numbing regulations send jobs offshore.

Mr. Speaker, the cost of litigation now accounts for one-third of the price of the aluminum ladder. It doubles the price of a football helmet, and it adds \$500 to the sticker of a new car. Too much litigation sends jobs offshore.

The United States has a higher corporate tax burden than any industrialized nation with the exception of Japan. This even includes several of the former Soviet bloc countries. Too much taxation sends jobs offshore.

Mr. Speaker, beyond the obvious economic benefit of free trade, fundamentally we must recognize that nations do not trade with nations; people trade with people. Every American citizen and every American company should have the right to determine the origin of the goods and services they want to purchase.

With the exception of national security considerations, it should not be the role of the Federal Government to tell consumers or companies where they buy their goods. Besides our financial well-being, it is our fundamental economic liberty that is at stake.

□ 1830

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KLINE). Under a previous order of the

House, the gentlewoman 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.)

PUTTING AMERICA'S WORKERS FIRST

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the problem we have with America's unemployed workers.

My Texas colleague talks about how outsourcing is so good, and offshoring, well, I know it is not good in the area I represent because it is a blue collar district. For years and years we have suggested to our young people to go and get a high-tech skill so they can become a computer programmer, so they will not have to be a machine shop owner or a machinist, that they can go into the new economy. All of a sudden now we are finding out that that new economy, if you are making \$45,000 a year in the United States, you are having to compete with someone around the world who is happy to make \$15,000 a year with your same level of education. So we do have a problem.

Tomorrow marks the end of March and the 3-month period since the temporary extended unemployment compensation program began phasing out. During this last 3-month period, over 1 million American workers have exhausted their regular unemployment benefits and have been unable to receive additional help. There are 72,000 unemployed workers in my own State of Texas that have exhausted their benefits. There is no comparable figure in more than 30 years when this country has had so many unemployed workers exhausting their benefits.

Despite these undisputable facts, the administration and our Republican colleagues refuse to extend this important program, saying economic growth will yield job creation. Well, it has not for the last 3 years. Every indicator out there disputes this logic and tells the same story: This country is facing a jobless recovery. If it is a jobless recovery, it is not really a recovery where I come from.

Mr. Speaker, these indicators are bad enough, but, unfortunately, there is another story behind them that makes the outlook even worse. The unemployment rate is currently 5.6 percent, but the true story is that rate does not take into account the 2.8 million Americans who have given up looking for a job and left the labor force altogether. These Americans are just as unemployed as those counted by the Labor Department; and if we include them in our statistics, the true unemployment rate stands at 7.4 percent.