

valuable than any numbers could ever show. The men and women who work to get it are heroes and deserve our help to help themselves.

DRUG COMPANIES STEAL AND ROB FROM OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

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

Mr. BERRY. Mr. Speaker, in the 1st Congressional District of Arkansas, the greatest health care problem we have is the fact that this government, this Congress, this majority, this President has made it possible and even more able for the drug companies to steal and rob from our senior citizens. It is an incredible act, the Medicare reform that was passed. That is the only thing it accomplished, was make it possible so that the drug companies could continue to rob and steal from the American people.

In Arkansas, we usually think of thieves as coming in the dark of night or committing a violent act to steal your property, but now, because of the Medicare Reform Act and these Medicare cards, we have made it possible for the drug companies to steal, cheat and rob our senior citizens without hardly putting out any effort, and we have created so much confusion that it is an easily accomplished act. It is time to put an end to this.

ENERGY REFORM LEGISLATION

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, last week, an article in Biofuels Journal stated that, according to a new report by economist John Urbanchuk, motorists would be facing much higher gasoline prices, an additional 30 cents per gallon, were it not for the growing ethanol industry adding billions of gallons to U.S. fuel supplies.

Without ethanol, our country would be even more reliant on foreign imports of gasoline, and the pain at the pump would be much more severe. More than 30 percent of all U.S. gasoline is blended with ethanol. Without ethanol, refiners would be forced to import about 217,000 barrels per day of high-octane, clean-burning gasoline blending components.

Over the last 25 years, while no new U.S. refineries have been built and scores have been closed, 78 new ethanol plants have been built and 10 more are under construction today.

Ethanol use will bolster U.S. gasoline supplies by more than 3.3 billion gallons in 2004 alone.

We need the Senate to pass H.R. 6, the first comprehensive energy legislation Congress has put forth in years. It will increase our use of renewable fuels like ethanol and biodiesel and reduce our continued overdependence on foreign oil.

VETERANS 2006 CUTS

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend our Nation came together and honored the thousands of veterans who have dedicated and sacrificed so much to protect our national security. I had the privilege and honor to join World War II veterans here on our Nation's Mall in Washington, D.C., for the dedication of the World War II Memorial, to honor them and their many contributions to our great democracy and, yes, to remember the 400,000 who died during World War II.

At a time when a new generation of veterans is being created in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are some in Congress who want to cut funding for veterans. The administration's proposed budget for 2006 would cut \$900 million from the Veterans' Administration. A loss of \$900 million would force the VA to disenroll 140,000 veterans and lay off about 10,750 full-time employees, among many other things.

It is all about priorities. We must keep our promises to our veterans.

PARTIAL BIRTH ABORTION BAN

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

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, yesterday a Clinton-appointed Federal judge in California granted a permanent extension or injunction against the partial birth abortion ban that was passed by the Congress and signed by President Bush. This is not surprising, since Judge Phyllis Hamilton made it crystal clear that she was ideologically opposed to the ban on partial birth abortion. What is outrageous and defies sound reason is that she found the ban unconstitutional.

In acting to prevent this hideous practice, the elected branches of our government affirmed a basic standard of humanity, the duty of the strong to protect the weak. Partial birth abortion is cruel and inhumane. This is the widespread agreement amongst men and women on this issue, regardless of their political affiliations.

Life cannot be granted or denied by government, elected officials or judges abusive of their interpretive function. Judge Hamilton's ruling is yet another example of activist courts gone wild and is the next decision in the domino effect of legislating from the Federal bench.

I join with our President and will vigorously defend this law against judges who would construe it in contravention to our Constitution and the American public.

AFFORDABLE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Health and Human Services rolled out a new Medicare drug card. Yet, today, seniors across America are still wondering when we in Congress will take real steps to help them afford the drugs they need and are prescribed.

The manufactured chaos, confusion and consternation all could have been avoided. This mess was created by their government and by the special interests, but we have an opportunity to open markets and allow for importation of safe, affordable drugs from Canada and Europe, where prices are 50 percent cheaper than they are here in the United States; real competition to bring prices down, not competition by the special interests between themselves, but competition that allows seniors the choice to pick on affordable prices that are 50 percent cheaper than what they are in Canada and Europe. We need that competition here at home.

A Families USA study showed that seniors in America pay four times the rate of inflation for prescription drugs. Prices have gone up 22 percent in the last 3 years alone.

This discount card is just like a sale at Neiman Marcus. Prices get jacked up 30 percent right before they offer you a 10 percent discount. We need to allow seniors access to affordable drugs their doctors prescribe.

WE HAVE PROGRESS IN IRAQ

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, amidst the violence and struggle that always attends the transition between tyranny and liberty, we have progress in Iraq.

Yesterday, a Shiite Muslim, part of a population that suffered for 30 years under the iron fist of Saddam Hussein, a Shiite Muslim, Iyad Allawi, was named prime minister along with Ghazi al Yawar, a Sunni Muslim, and those two men will lead a free and democratic Iraq.

Mr. Allawi said memorably, in this country that was torn by tyranny for three decades, that he was pledged to establishing a democratic and federal system under which people enjoy free citizenship in a state of laws and freedom. A quagmire, hardly. Difficult, yes. But an ethnically diverse country coming together under the rule of law and democracy is genuine progress in Iraq and worthy of celebrating in this Congress.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

(Ms. SOLIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SOLIS. Mr. Speaker, I raise my voice this morning in concern about the new Medicare prescription drug card that took effect yesterday.

Last week, I visited numerous senior centers in my district to learn that many of those in my district are very confused because they do not have basic information about the program. The low-income seniors I met with are especially frightened because the information was not provided in their language, many who speak Spanish and many who speak Chinese.

□ 1015

There are 7.2 million low-income seniors whose needs are being ignored, yet the cost of medication is up 27 percent according to AARP.

Additionally, pharmaceutical companies and lobbyists spent \$2.7 million to pass this legislation. Plus, the new Medicare law hurts seniors because a stringent and complex asset test is now in place, prohibiting many seniors in my district from taking full advantage of this program. They are even concerned about their burial plots, that that is going to be used against them.

How dare we implement such legislation. My seniors ask me, Congresswoman, who is there to protect me? We voted for the Congress to protect us. Where are they when we need them? Who is looking out for us?"

ONE STEP CLOSER TO SOVEREIGNTY

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday was a big day for Iraq. As The Washington Post reports this morning, "A diverse group of secular figures, political independents, and technical specialists was appointed Tuesday to serve as Iraq's caretaker administration."

As we come to the turnover of sovereignty to this government, we must keep in mind how important our effort in Iraq is. A free Iraq would be a death blow to the terrorists. For too long the people of this region have had no say in the direction of their nations. On June 30, we move one step closer to seeing a nation choose its own course.

The President has been a firm, steady leader during this trying time. He has rightly said that we have not freed Iraq to make them into Americans; we have freed Iraq to allow them to live in freedom. Iraq has the potential to be a great ally in the Middle East. Success there is critical.

THE ECONOMY

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, a moment ago we heard the majority

leader say that numbers alone do not give the full picture about the economy. Well, I could not agree more, with the spiraling deficit, more tax cuts for people who are already well off, the refusal of the President and the Republican leadership to fund the No Child Left Behind initiative, or ignoring the promises of candidate Bush to enhance Pell Grants, along with a refusal to tap unemployment insurance funds to help the long-term unemployed.

Americans understand that numbers alone do not give the full picture about the economy. But what I find, meeting with the long-term unemployed in my community, they are looking at misplaced priorities and broken promises; and they, like most Americans, do not like what they see.

THE NEED FOR AN ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the greatest threat to the economic recovery now under way, rising energy prices. Since 2001, the price for a gallon of gasoline has increased by 52 percent, U.S. oil imports have increased by more than 10 percent, the cost of natural gas by more than 92 percent; and Alan Greenspan has repeatedly testified that energy prices are the single greatest threat to job creation.

Mr. Speaker, to meet our growing needs and address these rising energy prices, this House has passed comprehensive energy legislation three times. All three times it has been blocked through legislative obstruction in the other body. This obstruction hurts America. To oppose the President's comprehensive energy legislation while calling for more domestic energy production and lower gasoline prices is hypocritical beyond belief.

Mr. Speaker, for too long America has relied on other nations to provide the raw materials for our energy needs. It is time for us to move towards self-reliance so we are not susceptible to the threats, blackmail, and production fluctuations from abroad. The Congress must move forward with a responsible energy policy. Voting "no" for the energy bill is not an energy plan for America.

NEGATIVE CAMPAIGN ADS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, here we go again. Republicans cannot lead, so they attack the Democrat that will lead America. Here is the proof:

Through the last weekend, the President's campaign has aired 49,050 negative ads against JOHN KERRY, and that

is just in the top 100 media markets. 49,050 times the administration has tried to mislead America about Senator KERRY; 49,050 times the administration has tried to divert America from the administration's absolutely incompetent record on the economy.

Gasoline in Washington State is \$2.75 a gallon. I did not miss that because of the ads. There are countless more negative ads coming from the Republicans because they only know how to tear down, not to lead. JOHN KERRY will lead and win this election. JOHN KERRY will lead and build a stronger America. It starts on November 2.

Meanwhile, America, every time the administration turns on another ad, get up and go to the kitchen for a bag of Fritos. You will not miss a thing.

DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS

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

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, never before have American seniors been able to go to one place to price, shop, and compare their prescription drug options. America's seniors are now eligible to receive a Medicare-approved drug discount card at their local pharmacies to save between 10 and 40 percent off the price of most drugs, particularly generics.

It is important to mention the Department of Health and Human Services is the authorized distributor of these nationwide-accepted prescription drug cards. Seniors should be sure that the cards they acquire are approved by the HHS.

Millions of low-income seniors will receive an additional \$600 on their discount card to help pay for prescription drug medicines. Any unused amount of the \$600 credit in 2004 will carry over to the next year.

The competition between organizations offering cards will also help drive down prices. It is time to afford the Greatest Generation the quality prescription drug coverage that they deserve.

JOB TRAINING

(Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, since President Bush took office, 2.2 million Americans have lost their jobs. Americans are suffering through the longest unemployment period in 20 years and the most dismal job picture in almost 40 years.

And what is the Republican leadership doing about it? Having the House vote on tired proposals for job-training vouchers that do not actually create jobs for the millions of Americans who are out of work. Unemployed Americans need jobs and benefits immediately so that they can provide for