

the Senate so the bill could be addressed in the House before the adjournment of the 109th Congress.

PREMATURITY RESEARCH EXPANSION AND EDUCATION FOR MOTHERS WHO DELIVER INFANTS EARLY

SPEECH OF

HON. ANNA G. ESHOO

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Ms. ESHOO. Mr. Speaker, as the Democratic sponsor of this bill, I am proud to rise today in strong support of this legislation.

Since 1981, the CDC estimates that the number of infants born too soon has increased by over 30 percent. More than 500,000 infants are born prematurely each year. Tragically, premature infants are 14 times more likely to die in their first year of life and premature babies who survive may suffer lifelong consequences including cerebral palsy, mental retardation, chronic lung disease, and vision and hearing loss. Preterm delivery can happen to any pregnant woman and in nearly half of the cases, no one knows why.

This legislation will help identify the causes of prematurity and reduce the episodes of preterm labor and delivery. It also aims to reduce the risk of pregnancy-related deaths and complications due to pregnancy, and reduce infant mortality caused by prematurity. But the overarching goal of this legislation is to bring hope to the 1,305 babies born too soon each day, and extend hope to their families. This legislation gives us a chance to make a difference.

The PREEMIE Act requires HHS and the CDC to expand and coordinate their research activities on preterm labor and delivery and infant mortality, and to conduct research on the relationship between prematurity, birth defects, and developmental disabilities. In order to increase awareness of preterm birth as a serious, common and costly public health problem, the bill also requires the Surgeon General to conduct an expert conference on prematurity and report to Congress its recommendations for how the public and private sectors can identify the causes of and risk factors for preterm labor and delivery, and improve treatments.

This bill has the strong endorsement of the March of Dimes, which has worked closely with us to craft this legislation. I salute and thank them for their advocacy.

This legislation has broad bipartisan support in the House of Representatives and the Senate. I thank the bill's many cosponsors for their support and I especially want to pay tribute to the sponsor of this legislation, Congressman FRED UPTON, for his leadership on this issue. We introduced this bill together in previous Congresses and I'm proud to have worked with him to make this bill a reality.

I also want to thank the bill's champions in the Senate, Senators LAMAR ALEXANDER and CHRIS DODD. It has been a rewarding experience for me to work in a bipartisan, bicameral fashion to enact this legislation, and I think our collective efforts have made this bill stronger because of it.

I want to thank Chairman BARTON for acknowledging the importance of acting on this

legislation before the end of the year and bringing it to the floor today. I also want to thank the staff members who have put so much time and energy into this legislation: Page Kranbuhl with Senator ALEXANDER, Tamar Magarik with Senator DODD, Jane Williams with Representative UPTON, Randy Pate with Chairman BARTON, and Jennifer Nieto of my staff.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important bill which will help make a difference in the lives of families across America and around the world and I urge my colleagues to support it.

PANDEMIC AND ALL-HAZARDS PREPAREDNESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. ROGERS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Pandemic and All-Hazards Preparedness Act and specifically the Biodefense and Pandemic Vaccine and Drug Development Act.

I would like to thank Chairman BARTON, and the Energy and Commerce Committee staff for their support. I would also like to extend a special thanks to my colleague Congresswoman ANNA ESHOO for her work on the issue.

Biological weapons have been proven to work, are capable of causing massive disaster, are relatively cheap, and are increasingly easy to design, build and disseminate.

The materials and technical know-how needed to make a bio-weapon that could infect hundreds of thousands of people are already widely distributed around the planet, and the number of people who possess the expertise needed to create bioweapons is rapidly growing as biotechnology and pharmaceutical research and production expand into developing countries.

Preventing either a natural epidemic or a bioterrorist attack is, unfortunately, unlikely. Therefore, the Nation's ability to rapidly and effectively respond in the face of a bio-security crisis must be a central pillar in our bio-security strategy.

Medicines and vaccines that can counter illnesses caused by exposure to bioterror agents are obviously an essential component of biodefense and would be critical to controlling the spread of contagious disease.

This legislation will enable the government to better develop, procure, and make available countermeasures to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear agents for use in a public health emergency.

Bioterror countermeasures for agents of terrorism have no market other than the government. This legislation will provide assurance to companies that the government is fully engaged and a willing and able business partner.

This legislation will speed up the development and procurement process by reorganizing and enhancing these responsibilities into the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Agency, BARDA.

1. BARDA would create a single point of authority within government.

2. BARDA would streamline the approval and acquisition process to help bridge the

"valley of death" for bio-pharmaceutical research.

3. BARDA is an aggressive partnering with universities, research institutions and industry on the advanced development of promising drugs and vaccines and would of these countermeasures.

As the Chairman and my colleagues on both sides of our aisle know, the House passed version of this legislation also included specific authority under BioShield for HHS to enter into procurement contracts with multiple companies for multiple products and technologies.

We all know from lessons learned that this is a complicated and uncertain process. These vaccines and other medical countermeasures are only in the early stage of development and history suggests that most will not be successfully developed or only a few will receive FDA approval.

That is why the House-passed bill included a provision intended to direct a risk mitigation strategy that the Department not put all their eggs in one basket.

Is it the understanding that while the bill passed by the Senate had no similar provision, that currently the BioShield statute provides authority for the Department to enter into multiple procurement contracts for products and technologies for the development and acquisition of countermeasures and that this is an important risk mitigation strategy for the government.

I have been in communication with Senator BURR and he agrees with this policy.

I urge your support of this important piece of legislation.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 5682, HENRY J. HYDE UNITED STATES-INDIA PEACEFUL ATOMIC ENERGY COOPERATION ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 8, 2006

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to affirm the significance of our Nation's friendship with India through implementation of the U.S.-India Nuclear Cooperation Promotion Act of 2006.

Our friendship with India is among the most important bilateral relationships for our Nation's security and prosperity. As a fellow partner in democracy, India has stood firm with the United States in many different arenas—from fighting the war on terrorism, to advancing both the U.S. and Indian economies, to assisting in the formulation of a productive dialogue with China. Time and again, India has shown herself to be a proven ally and this legislation represents yet another historic milestone in the association between our two great nations.

This agreement marks a 180-degree policy shift pertaining to nuclear relations between India and the United States. This agreement permits the U.S. to sell technology to India for nuclear power development and in return, India will open up for inspection its civilian nuclear program, agree not to test nuclear weapons, and abide by nuclear export controls. In essence, this legislation brings India to the