

SUPPORT NATIONAL  
AUCTIONEERING DAY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. LONG) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LONG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of the cornerstones of American capitalism and my profession for over 30 years, that being auctioneering. Auctioneers sell approximately \$250 billion in assets each year in the United States, and this figure does not include the millions of transactions that occur online with online auctions.

It's estimated that there are 20,000 auctioneers in the Nation, the vast majority of which are small business owners. Auto auctions make up the largest volume of auctions, with over \$80 billion in vehicles being sold by auctioneers annually in the United States. If you drive a used car, chances are very good it's been across the auction block.

Auctions and auctioneers have existed for over 2,000 years. Auctioneering was fundamental in the creation of commerce here in the United States. Auctioneers first arrived in the United States when the Pilgrims arrived.

You go to an auction in Kalamazoo, Michigan; Branson, Missouri; Tucson, Arizona; Portland, Oregon; Miami, Florida—anywhere you go to an auction in this country, we all go by one handle, and that handle is "colonel." You can walk up to an auctioneer in any auction in the United States, you don't know that auctioneer's name, you say, "Hey, Colonel," they'll turn around and answer you.

Why "colonel"? That dates back to the Civil War in this country. After the Civil War, they needed a way to get rid of the mules and tack and things they had left over, supplies; so they did that by a matter of public auction. They nominated the Army colonels to serve as the auctioneers. Now, they didn't have any professional training as auctioneers; however, they would just say, "I'm at a dollar for this saddle, a dollar-fifty. Anyone give two dollars? Sold at a dollar-fifty." So when you hear the term "colonel," that's where it originated, back in the Civil War.

Auctioneers were instrumental in the formation of early commerce by selling crops, imports, livestock, tools, tobacco, fur, and farms. Even President George Washington was a big auction fan and an avid buyer at public auction.

For over 30 years, I had the honor of selling real estate at public auction. Did I sell depressed, distressed real estate? Once in a very great while. But I sold real estate as people's first option, not their last resort. So keep in mind, auctions could be a way to achieve the highest value in the shortest amount of time. If you've got a hot property, instead of having it listed and sold in 1 day or 2 days, put it up at public auction and see what happens.

Every day auctioneers work with banks, attorneys, accountants, busi-

nesses, individuals, and government agencies to liquidate property seized and surplus property. Auctioneers create a competitive marketplace and connect buyers with sellers every day.

The National Auctioneers Association and its members strive to advance the auction methods of marketing and upholding the highest standards of professionalism to the national public. For over 20 years, National Auctioneers Day has been observed by State and local governments.

For those reasons and more, JEFF DUNCAN, another freshman auctioneer Member of Congress here, and I want to make this, the third Saturday in April, National Auctioneers Day. We will be dropping a bill to that effect. This would heighten the awareness of people in the United States of the contributions made by auctions and auctioneers to the history of the Nation and its economy.

Auctions are the last stronghold of the competitive free market enterprise system and continue to be the most effective means of establishing a fair market value.

Also, one other thing. Being an auctioneer in Congress, the way our debt is running out of control, they find it very handy to have JEFF DUNCAN and me here in Washington. We are two of the few people that can actually keep up with the national debt:

I'm at a trillion now 2, 2 trillion dollars now 3 woodygive 3 trillion, 3 trillion bid and now 4, 4 trillion, now 5, 5 trillion dollars now six are ye able to buy 'em at 6, 6 trillion now 7, woodygive 7 trillion, 7 trillion dollars bid now 8, 8 trillion dollars now 9, 9 trillion now 10 woodygive 10 trillion dollars, 10 trillion dollars now 11, 11 trillion now 12, do I hear 12 trillion dollars, 11 trillion bid now 12, 11 trillion bid now 12 now 12 woodygive 12 trillion dollars, 12 now 13, 12 trillion bid now 13, 13 trillion now 14 woodygive 14, 14 trillion dollars now 15 woodygive 15 trillion. Sold, 14 trillion dollars.

Thankfully, Mr. Speaker, we also can say those numbers backwards; so when we get the spending under control here, I'll be back.

#### ELIMINATING HIV/AIDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RANGEL. I thank you for the opportunity to greet a group of ministers that have come to the Nation's capital in order to support the resources to eliminate HIV and AIDS virus infections.

It is strange how God has made us forget the blessings that we have with good health until, of course, that health is endangered, and then we recognize that what we have depended on may be threatened or may be gone or may not even exist for the 40,000 people that don't enjoy health insurance.

But because this disease has such a stigma and because a million Ameri-

cans suffer from it, and 500,000 Americans have died from it, it has been a very costly situation in terms of providing the medication to stop the disease and to prevent death. And death is certain without treatment.

These ministers have formed, some 20 years ago, in a group that was headed by Deborah House—and today it is directed by C. Virginia Fields, and Pastor Calvin Butts from the Abyssinian Baptist Church, a landmark in Harlem, New York City, and the country—have brought together ministers from all over the country as well as the National Medical Association and other outstanding people to make people aware of the fact that this disease is not only caused by the infection of the virus, but it's caused by reckless sex, unprotected sex, actions of men that are in prison, actions that when they come home they transmit through sexual activities to their wives.

□ 1050

So to a large extent, it is the ignorance of people that has caused this disease to explode and to spread beyond the communities where it was initiated.

It has cost a lot of money in order to make certain that we control the spread of this disease, but it doesn't really take that much money to be active in making certain that people are educated about the threat of those diseases.

And that is why they come to Washington today, when there is a belief that Medicaid that provides health care for the very, very poor—that it is not in jeopardy by people who want to transfer a Federal, a national, responsibility to the States, as we find proposals coming up this week.

That is why Medicare, which is a national program, is being threatened by the idea that people can get a voucher and go out and get insurance from an insurance company. Imagine going to an insurance company, being infected with AIDS, a terminal disease, and seeing what costs the private insurance company would ask you for without Federal assistance.

So it seems to me that all people—black, white, Catholic, and Protestant—could come together in terms of answering the question, How do you treat the lesser among us? How do you treat the poor in our community? And isn't it a fact that if we reach out a hand and provide the medicine and the support for those people who are infected with HIV and with AIDS, in the longer sense what we are doing is allowing Americans to be more productive, healthy, having healthy families and healthy children so that they will be able to get an education, a decent job, and provide America with the type of talent that is so important if we are going to meet the obligations of this new age where technology is going to be so important if we're going to be competitive.

So now is the time, where these ministers have come to our Nation's Capital, perhaps to reach out to people of