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## House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. ISSA).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
June 24, 2002.

I hereby appoint the Honorable DARRELL E. ISSA to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Monahan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2594. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Treasury to purchase silver on the open market when the silver stockpile is depleted, to be used to mint coins.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-277, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the appointment of the following individuals to serve as members of the Parents Advisory Council on Youth Drug Abuse:

Darcy L. Jensen of South Dakota (Representative of Non-Profit Organization), vice Kerrie S. Lansford, term expired.

Dr. Lynn McDonald of Wisconsin, vice Robert L. Maginnis, term expired.

George L. Lozano of California, vice Darcy Jensen, term expired.

Rosanne Ortega of Texas, vice Dr. Lynn McDonald term expired.

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of Janu-

ary 23, 2002, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) for 5 minutes.

### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I must say that I am pleased to see that the Republican leadership may bring a prescription drug bill to the floor this week before the July 4 recess, but I am very disappointed with the legislation that they have brought forward; and I can only hope that when they bring the bill to the floor, they will allow a Democratic substitute, Medicare prescription drug bill, which is far superior and will be the only legislation I think that would accomplish the goal of making sure and guaranteeing all seniors have a decent prescription drug benefit. I would ask that the Republican leadership make sure that we be allowed as Democrats to bring up our substitute when this matter goes before the Committee on Rules this week.

I want to talk about two areas that I think are important with regard to this prescription drug initiative. First of all, the Democrats insist that a prescription drug benefit be under Medicare. Medicare has been a very successful program that has worked in terms of providing hospital care and physician care over the last 30 or 40 years, and the only way that we are going to have an effective prescription drug plan is if we use the Medicare model and if we make sure that the prescription drug benefit is guaranteed under Medicare. That assures that every sen-

ior has a guaranteed prescription drug benefit, that it is a benefit where they know what the premium is, they know what the deductible is and what the Federal Government is going to provide.

What the Republicans have done in their bill is to ignore Medicare, and they have basically decided to throw some money to private insurance companies in the hope that they will offer a prescription drug plan for seniors, and it will not work. The bottom line is if this bill were to become law, very few, if any, seniors would be able to actually find a private insurance company that would provide them with a prescription drug plan. So it is a hoax. It is not a real prescription drug benefit that is going to be meaningful.

In case anyone questions my motives in saying that, I will simply read from the editorial that was in this Saturday's New York Times. It is a section that says "House Republicans who regard traditional Medicare as antiquated would provide money to private insurance companies, a big source of GOP campaign donations, to offer prescription drug policies. The idea of relying on private companies seems more ideological than practical. The pool of elderly Americans who will want the insurance is likely to consist of those who have the most need for expensive medicine. Even with Federal subsidies, it is unclear that enough insurance companies would be willing to participate and provide the economies that come from competition."

The bottom line is under the Republican plan there will not be any insurance policies and there will be nothing for seniors to have and there will not be a prescription drug benefit.

The other major problem with the Republican proposal contrasting with the Democratic proposal is the Republican proposal does not deal with price. The biggest problem facing seniors now is that the cost of prescription drugs

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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