

Speaker's table the Senate bill (S. 1895) to temporarily extend the programs under the Small Business Act and the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 through March 15, 2004, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1895

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF PROGRAM AUTHORITY.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Any program, authority, or provision, including any pilot program, authorized under the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 631 et seq.) or the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 661 et seq.) as of September 30, 2003, that is scheduled to expire on or after September 30, 2003 and before March 15, 2004, shall remain authorized through March 15, 2004, under the same terms and conditions in effect on September 30, 2003.

(b) EXCEPTION.—Notwithstanding subsection (a), section 303(g)(2) of the Small Business Investment Act of 1958 (15 U.S.C. 683(g)(2)) is amended by striking "1.38 percent" and inserting "1.46 percent".

The Senate bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2660, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 7(c) of House rule XXII, I hereby notify the House of my intention tomorrow to offer the following motion to instruct on House conferees on H.R. 2660, the fiscal year 2004 Labor-HHS-Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Act.

The form of the motion is as follows:

Mr. MARKEY moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2660 be instructed to recede to the Senate funding level for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

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ANNOUNCEMENT OF INTENTION TO OFFER MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 2660, DEPARTMENTS OF LABOR, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, AND EDUCATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2004

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 7(c) of the House rule

XXII, I hereby notify the House of my intention tomorrow to offer the following motion to instruct House conferees on H.R. 2660, the Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2004.

The form of the motion is as follows:

I move that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the bill, H.R. 2660, be instructed to agree a level of \$8,410,000,000 for the Limitation on Administrative Expenses of the Social Security Administration, as proposed by the Senate.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES ON H.R. 1, MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I offer a motion to instruct.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. INSLEE moves that the managers on the part of the House at the conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 1 be instructed as follows:

(1) To reject the provisions of subtitle C of title II of the House bill.

(2) To reject the provisions of section 231 of the Senate amendment.

(3) Within the scope of conference, to increase payments by an amount equal to the amount of savings attributable to the rejection of the aforementioned provisions to—

(A) raise the average standardized amount for hospitals in rural and other urban areas to the level of the rate for those in larger urban areas; and

(B) to raise the physicians' work geographic index for any locality in which such index is less than 1.0 to a work geographic index of 1.0.

(4) To insist upon section 601 of the House bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Pursuant to clause 7 of rule XXII, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE).

(Mr. INSLEE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, we are bringing a motion today on this most important of issues in an effort to give seniors what they deserve, which is a real guaranteed prescription drug benefit under Medicare. Unfortunately, unless we pass this motion, or some equivalent motion, the generation that fulfilled their duties on Iwo Jima, that is The Greatest Generation, will not get a first class double-A rated guaranteed prescription drug benefit under Medicaid. They will get something approaching the flimflam that they have had for so long from the United States Congress.

Mr. Speaker, we are here to offer a motion which will boldly instruct the conferees to cure both a sin of commission and a sin of omission in their plan. Now, let me address those sins of commission and omissions.

First, there are multiple sins of omission from the proposal of the conferees we have heard to date, one of which is their abject and total failure to do anything for America's senior citizens to restrict the incredible rise in drug prices they have been experiencing. And, Mr. Speaker, certain other motions will address that issue. But it is amazing to me that at the moment in time when our seniors are yelling, and justifiably so, about the incredible rise in their drug prices, that not only does this conference report refuse to do anything affirmative about it, it has actually shackled Uncle Sam from doing anything about it and from negotiating better drug prices. That is a sin of omission that other motions have dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, this motion deals with two other fundamental ones that need to be remedied. One is to prevent this conference report from driving a dagger through the heart of Medicare by privatizing this entire system, which this conference report would result in as sure as God made little green apples. And it would do so slowly but surely by this nefarious plan to force every single senior citizen to either accept a privatized system in the morass of the insurance industry, or to accept essentially higher premiums and less coverage. That is a sin of commission.

But there is a sin of omission as well that our motion would cure, and that is the fact that we are not providing adequate reimbursement to physicians, to providers, to nurses, to physical therapists, to oncologists who treat our senior citizens. And as a result of these low payments, as a result of these low payments now in the State of Washington, over 50 percent of the physicians are no longer taking new Medicare patients. Why not? They cannot afford to under the reimbursement rates. And are we fixing this problem in this bill? No.

Over 50 percent of the people in the State of Washington now go to try to get their physicians and they are not being accepted. And, frankly, a prescription drug benefit that does not solve this problem is not going to be a solution to the problem. It does no good to have a prescription drug benefit if you cannot get into a physician to have a prescription written for you. Half the doctors in the State cannot afford to do it right now, because under the Republican plan, in order to fund the tax cuts for Enron, we are adopting measures to screw down Medicare and to screw down benefits over the long term under the Medicare system.

Now, there is a tricky little effort that slowly but surely will accomplish former Representative Newt Gingrich's great dream, which is to see Medicare wither on the vine. And it will accomplish it by saying a few years out from now, people who want to stay in the Medicare system to get a guaranteed benefit would be forced either to go into a privatized system at the whim of the insurance industry or accept less