

HONORING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE MORTON SALT PLANT

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

Mr. REGULA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the achievements of the Morton Salt plant, a company from Wayne County in Rittman, Ohio. I am confident that you will recognize this company by the Morton umbrella girl, a familiar sight on the Morton products, and by the slogan "When It Rains It Pours." What you may not know is the long history of safety that the Rittman plant has experienced.

Today, I rise to recognize the dedicated employees of the Morton plant in Rittman, Ohio, for the recent achievement of 5 million work hours without a lost-time incident. This is a record within the Morton Salt Company as well as the entire North American salt industry.

Since 1848, the Morton Salt Company has been North America's leading producer and marketer of salt for home, water conditioning, industrial, agriculture, and highway use. Morton's Rittman's facility employees process thousands of tons of household salt each day.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, mining and manufacturing can be high-risk professions. This plant employs approximately 285 employees. And since June of 1995, injury accidents have not forced any worker to take time off from work. This milestone shows the dedication to health and safety of these people. I congratulate all of them for their outstanding achievement.

RECOGNIZING JACK DANIEL'S DISTILLERY ON THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF WINNING THE GOLD MEDAL AT THE 1904 ST. LOUIS WORLD'S FAIR

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

Mr. DAVIS of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker and Members of the House, as the current Member of Congress representing Jack Daniel's and its employees, it is my honor to pay tribute to this Tennessee treasure.

Since 1863, in the spirit of George Washington, the father of the American distillery industry, the Jack Daniel's distillery, has produced the most popular Tennessee whiskey. Jack Daniel's has produced and responsibly brought a part of Tennessee heritage to millions of adult consumers in 135 countries around the world. Jack Daniel's Tennessee whiskey is the United States' number one exported distilled spirit.

Jack Daniel's, located in Moore County in the 4th Congressional District of Tennessee, has a long tradition of bringing friends and neighbors together. Furthermore, it has been a

major source for employment and tourism revenue in Moore County and Lynchburg, Tennessee.

I would like to express the U.S. House of Representatives' heartfelt congratulations on the 100th anniversary of Jack Daniel's 1904 World's Fair Gold Medal.

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG DISCOUNT CARDS

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

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, 2 months from today, American senior citizens will begin to realize discounts on their pharmaceutical medications. June 1 is when Medicare-approved prescription drug discount cards hit the streets, and savings between 10 and 25 percent on their life-saving drugs take effect.

This is a much-needed first step for seniors seeking relief on their monthly bills. These Medicare-approved discount cards are part of the new Medicare law that Congress passed and the President signed. It includes coverage of pharmaceutical costs, some new preventative care benefits, like free physical exams and better care for seniors with chronic illnesses.

To learn more, I am urging my constituents in northern Illinois to call 1-800-MEDICARE, that is, 1-800-MEDICARE, or log on to WWW.MEDICARE.gov. These two informative sources run by the Department of Health and Human Services will provide unfiltered, unfettered news seniors can use about their new drug benefits.

MEDICARE PROVIDES EMPLOYERS INCENTIVE TO KEEP PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE FOR RETIREES

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to set the record straight on the Medicare prescription drug plan. Since the mid-1980s, the number of employers offering prescription drug coverage to their retirees has been declining steadily. In 1988, 66 percent of employers provided these benefits to retirees. In the year 2000, it was only 34 percent.

To address this alarming trend, the Medicare prescription drug bill provides employers an incentive to keep their coverage. They are going to get 28 cents for every dollar that they spend on prescription drug benefits for their retirees. This applies to all employer-sponsored prescription drug coverage and those of corporations, unions, and government entities.

Because of these incentives, AARP and the American Medical Association endorse the bill that we passed last

year. It is unfortunate that Democrats continue to twist the truth and distort the facts by scaring seniors into believing that this bill would cause them to lose benefits. That is the furthest thing from the truth. What the Democrats do not tell seniors is that for the first time Congress has acted to slow this trend.

THE NEW HIGHWAY BILL

(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, since the days of the Roman Empire, nations have understood the connection between roads and prosperity and national security. And today Congress will deliberate on a new highway bill, which I will support only if it can be fiscally responsible and fair to so-called donor States like Indiana.

But I rise at the outset of this debate to congratulate the gentleman from Alaska (Mr. YOUNG) and the membership of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure for resisting the temptation to raise gasoline taxes. With the news this morning that OPEC will be cutting production and raising the cost of crude, that gasoline is at \$3 a gallon on the West Coast, I am personally grateful to the chairman of the transportation committee and all of its membership for saying with regard to this highway bill, no new taxes.

LET US SOLVE THE INEQUITIES IN THE TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, as we debate the transportation reauthorization bill today, I think we need to abide by one simple principle: solutions for transportation safety, congestion, and pollution and transit should not be determined by which Members face difficult campaigns or which Members sit on influential committees. These kinds of determinations are being made in H.R. 3550 unless we make some changes to it.

This approach to funding is inconsistent, especially with the stated objectives of the bill, and it results in inequitable distribution of funding between the States.

As we debate the reauthorization, we need to consider solutions that give States discretion and flexibility in the use of funding, financed by their own citizens and highway users.

I have an amendment before the House today that would neither strike nor prevent Members from securing earmarks for their district. What it would do, however, is prevent those States that benefit disproportionately from earmarks from drawing funding away from States that, in spite of a few earmarks, end up faring much worse.