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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer: Lord God, all the times and seasons are in Your hands because all is fixed by You in the laws of nature.

But through natural disasters, Lord, many people have recently suffered great losses due to hurricanes and earthquakes. Have mercy on them all. Even as we continue to pray and assist those already afflicted and in great need, we now are aware of another approaching storm named Wilma.

Lord, help all those who prepare for the worst. In their fear and anxiety keep them safe, law abiding, and compassionately concerned for others.

Lord, steer this storm away from our shores, and let Your powerful Word calm the sea and bring to Your people a sigh of relief.

This we hope and pray by calling upon Your Holy Name. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GENE GREEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an

amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3204. An act to amend title XXVII of the Public Health Service Act to extent Federal funding for the establishment and operation of State high risk health insurance pools.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed bills of the following titles in which concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1736. An act to provide for the participation of employees in the judicial branch in the Federal leave transfer program for disasters and emergencies.

S. 1894. An act to amend part E of title IV of the Social Security Act to provide for the making of foster care maintenance payments to private for-profit agencies.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 109-59, section 1909(b)(2)(A)(vi), the Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the National Surface Transportation Policy and Revenue Study Commission:

Francis McArdle of New York.
Tom R. Skancke of Nevada.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will recognize up to 10 one-minutes on each side.

REDUCING COSTS IN MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SPENDING

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, 80 percent of the Nation's total medical care costs, including Medicaid expenditures, are spent in the treatment of chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, and cardiovascular disease. Chronic disease often involves multiple diagnoses, hospitalizations, tests, and treatments. All of this is expensive and

complex, and as health care costs soar we can save lives and money using better patient management.

Under patient care management plans, patients are monitored by nurses to coordinate their complex care, monitor prescription use, watch out for problems, and empower patients to get involved in their own care. Money spent up front dramatically lowers health care costs and, most importantly, improves patient outcome.

A patient management program at the Washington Hospital in southwestern Pennsylvania taught patients to self-manage their disease through diet, lifestyle changes, medication monitoring, and depression screening. The result has been a remarkable 50 percent decrease in hospital readmission rates.

I urge my colleagues to learn more about reducing costs in Federal Medicare and Medicaid spending through better patient care management programs by visiting my Web site at murphy.house.gov.

CONGRATULATING NATIONAL LEAGUE CHAMPION HOUSTON ASTROS

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to congratulate the Houston Astros, the major league baseball team which last night defeated the St. Louis Cardinals to earn the right to go to the 2005 World Series. This is the first World Series for the City of Houston and the first World Series for the State of Texas. The Astros and the Texas Rangers were founded in 1962 and 1961 respectively.

Also, first congratulating the team for its hard work and dedication, I want to express thanks to our owner

□ 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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