

developing alternative fuels and achieving energy independence.

Keeping fuel prices under control is essential to working Americans who are struggling to make ends meet. Mr. Speaker, in light of the Republican leadership's unwillingness to address the energy concerns of American families, I ask unanimous consent to bring up H.R. 4479, a bill to repeal subsidies for big oil companies and give them to consumers, low-income heating programs, and small businesses.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the settled guidelines previously cited, the gentleman's request cannot be entertained.

NO CONGRESSIONAL RECESS UNTIL ACTION IS TAKEN ON PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leaders of this Congress talk about what they have accomplished during this session. But the fact is, that we have met fewer days than any Congress in history. I am ashamed to say that they have made us the most do nothing Congress ever to serve.

Instead of actually tackling the issues that concern average American families, the Republicans have passed legislation to help their wealthy friends and the huge corporations that support their campaigns.

One example of this is the flawed Medicare prescription drug benefit. This program could have provided significant help to those who need it the most. Instead, it now helps those who need it the least, the drug companies. Democrats believe that the Secretary of Health and Human Services should have the authority to negotiate for lower drug prices under Medicare, just as the VA does.

And so I call on the Republican majority, again, to allow HHS to negotiate drug prices. It will help our seniors and it will help balance the Federal budget.

REAUTHORIZE THE RYAN WHITE ACT

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

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I am extremely disappointed that after an entire year, we cannot get the Ryan White reauthorization process right.

We should not be robbing Peter to pay Paul. That means we should not be cutting precious funds from places like New York, New Jersey, California, and many other States that have historically borne the burden of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

We should have enough money to take care of the people who are most at risk, regardless of where they live. The

amendment that I offered in committee that would have added the needed funds was defeated. But I plan to offer it again on the floor, and I hope that the outcome is very, very different.

We need to get the money to places that have substantially high HIV/AIDS populations, particularly African American and Hispanic women and men, and substance abusers. We cannot leave these most at-risk populations without medications and care.

This reauthorization in its present form does just that. And it is wrong, and I am hoping that the Members of this body will realize that we need to do something about this and should not leave people just to die and die because we are not acting properly.

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REAUTHORIZE THE RYAN WHITE ACT

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, the international war chest of AIDS is black Africa, and in our country it is black America. How did half the cases become African American? Even worse, new cases are overwhelmingly black.

We have seen this disease stereotyped as homosexual and now as black. The one constant is its spread. Yet, unlike many diseases today, AIDS is preventable and can be contained and defeated.

The answers are not complicated, beginning with far more visible and substantive leadership, leadership on testing—I will be tested on the Capitol complex grounds in a D.C. health van this afternoon to set an example to help prevent the epidemic spread of this disease among African Americans—leadership on safe sex and condoms; leadership on overcoming homophobia, which is in league with this disease in the black community; and above all, leadership from the Congress of the United States, which must not go home without reauthorizing the Ryan White Act.

HONORING BRUCE CARLSON

(Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Santa Ana Police Deputy Chief Bruce Carlson, who passed last Thursday after his long fight with liver cancer.

Bruce loved our community and the people of Santa Ana. Bruce joined the Santa Ana Police Department on January 7, 1973, as a patrolman. Through his dedication to service and understanding the concerns of others, Bruce rose in rank to become Field Operations Bureau Commander, overseeing the largest and the most complex operation at the department.

His legacy in Santa Ana is not confined to his work with the police department. Bruce's closest friends know him to be caring, to be a thoughtful man who would go out of his way to help his community.

Bruce demonstrated true courage and maintained a very positive outlook on life throughout his struggle with cancer. He was a tremendous leader and made many significant contributions that helped to make the Santa Ana Police Department the national leader that it is today, especially on homeland security.

Bruce Carlson is survived by his wife and his two children, and our thoughts and our prayers are with him today and with them.

COLLEGE LOANS

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

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, middle-class Americans are feeling more and more squeezed by the economy that values productivity, but not enough to reward it with an increase in pay. Wages are simply not keeping up with inflation, making it more difficult for families to afford monthly bills.

One of the most daunting bills families face today is the bill for their children's college education. The average cost for a 4-year college at a State university is \$40,000 and the cost for private colleges top \$107,000.

Democrats want to help families better afford these ever-increasing costs. Republicans, on the other hand, refuse to join us in making college more affordable. Earlier this year, they actually made college more expensive for our Nation's students when they cut \$12 billion from the higher education budget, forcing college kids to pay more interest on loans.

Valuable dollars for college assistance are being siphoned off by the war in Iraq, which this administration chose to wage rather than to devote dollars not only to domestic priorities but to finding Osama bin Laden.

Thank you, President Clinton, for telling it like it is and making the administration more accountable for their lack of vision and failed policies.

CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP

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

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, when this House votes to adjourn, we will be voting to put politics above policies, to put the needs of us as politicians over the needs of the American people, for leadership will insist that we leave without dealing with energy independence; leave while our seniors are falling into the donut hole provided in the poorly planned part D of Medicare; leave before we deal with college affordability; before we deal with tax relief for the middle class, especially the