

Senator from Illinois described the 2003 Medicare bill—and this was in a speech on the floor—as being written by the pharmaceutical industry. But the non-interference clause first appeared in legislation introduced by Democrats who now oppose the same provision that is in present law.

Now, the opponents of the Medicare drug benefit always say that the non-interference clause is proof the present law was written by the drug industry. My question, Mr. President, is this: If that is what they want to think, then did the same pharmaceutical industry write these bills that the Democrats introduced in 2000, 2001, and 2002?

I bet you are wondering how many Democratic bills had the now infamous noninterference clause in it—that is, the prohibition on Government negotiation. Well, here is the whole timeline. As you can see from chart 4, that prohibition on the Government negotiating, the noninterference clause, has been in seven bills by Democrats between 1999 and 2003, including a bill introduced in the House on the same day, H.R. 1, which eventually became the bill the President signed. There were seven. Here they are. The first is the Moynihan bill, April 2000; Daschle-Reid bill, May 2000; Eshoo bill, June 2000; Gephardt-Pelosi-Rangel-Stark-Dingell-Stabenow—when she was in the House and is now a Senator—introduced June 2000. STARK had it in a motion to recommit in June 2000. Senator WYDEN from Oregon introduced it as part of S. 1185 in July 2001. THOMPSON of California had it in a House bill in June of 2003.

It seems to me that on the other side of the aisle there ought to be some consideration of where did Republicans get this idea. I hate to steal ideas from Democrats, but if they work, they work. I spoke yesterday about how this provision—or the present way of doing it. The Federal Health Employee Benefit Program has been doing it for 50 years, and it has been saving senior citizens lots of money, not just on the price of prescription drugs but prescription drugs and premiums and a lot of other things—not only saving senior citizens money out of their own pockets but saving the taxpayers with a new judgment on what the cost of the drug program is going to be that was projected back when it was signed by the President. It is \$189 billion less than the Congressional Budget Office, the CMS, and the OMB said it would cost.

Now, I know what the response will be. It will be that even though Democratic bills had nearly the exact same prohibition on Government negotiation—practically word for word in seven bills over a long period of time—opponents now think the approach is no longer the best for Medicare. That's sort of like “we supported it before we opposed it.” Beneficiaries and the public deserve more than that.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Florida is recognized.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, it is my understanding we are in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator is correct.

#### HONORING THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA'S NCAA FOOTBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I am here with a big smile on my face, with an orange and blue tie, to recognize the signal accomplishment of the University of Florida Fighting Gators, and not only now with the national championship in football, but in the same season, the 2006 season, to have the unusual achievement of having the national champions in basketball as well as football.

Throughout the season, this team was challenged time after time and was underrated in the press; yet, they had the heart to win and keep fighting. The score of 41 to 14 last night clearly shows who are the national champions.

On behalf of our State of Florida, later today, I will be introducing a resolution commending the University of Florida for being the national champions and urge our colleagues to join in this Senate resolution.

I will only additionally call to the Senate's attention that with my colleague, SHERROD BROWN of Ohio, we engaged in a friendly wager. This is not like the normal wager that years ago, when a Florida team was playing a California team and the junior Senator from California, Senator BOXER, and I entered into a friendly wager of a crate of oranges versus a barrel of California almonds—and our office enjoyed those almonds for several months. No, this was a different kind. This was a wager with Senator BROWN of Ohio that the losing team's Senator would do the number of military pushups equivalent to the score of the game in public in front of the cameras. So with a score of 41 to 14, that is 55 pushups. I will even extend the olive branch to Senator BROWN that if he doesn't want to do all of them, I will do part of them with him. But it is a great day for college football, and it is certainly a great day for the State of Florida and for the University of Florida.

#### STAR PRINT—S. 21

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that S. 21 be star printed with the changes that are at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for 15 minutes.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### IMPACT OF THE WAR IN IRAQ

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, this morning and in the days leading up to today, we have seen and heard a great deal of discussion, particularly by the media, describing the issue of the President's speech tomorrow evening and all of the discussion in the political system as a political tug of war about Iraq. It is not that. This is not a political tug of war. It is a serious moment for this country to try to evaluate what to do about something that overlays almost everything else we are considering these days; that is, the current war in Iraq. What do we do about what is happening there? It is about the lives of our soldiers. It is about our country's future. It is about how to make change in Iraq, how to create the kind of change that will give us the opportunity to do the right thing.

I intend to listen carefully to what the President says in his speech to the nation tomorrow night. I am not going to prejudge what he says, but let me suggest what I think the President has to answer for us, for me, for the American people.

There is considerable discussion about the fact that the President will likely call for a surge or an increase in American troops going to Iraq. There is also discussion that perhaps he will call for additional funds that would be sent to Iraq for reconstruction or other things Americans would contribute.

One point the President will have to explain is the testimony that was given less than 2 months ago before the Senate by General Abizaid, the top military commander in Iraq. I am talking about the top military commander of American troops in Iraq. Here is what General Abizaid said in November, less than 2 months ago. He said:

I met with every divisional commander, General Casey, the corps commander, General Dempsey. We all talked together. And I said, “In your professional opinion, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does that add considerably to our ability to achieve success in Iraq?” And they all said no. The reason is because we want the Iraqis to do more. It is easy for the Iraqis to rely upon us to do this work. I believe that more American forces prevent the Iraqis from doing more, from taking more responsibility for their own future.

This is testimony before a congressional committee of the top U.S. military commander in Iraq saying he has asked all of his top commanders, if we were to bring in more American troops now, does it add considerably to our