

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN MEMORY OF DARCY POHLAND

HON. KEITH ELLISON

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 12, 2010

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness I rise today to mourn the passing of my friend and Minnesota news pioneer, Darcy Pohland.

Ms. Pohland was born in Mendota Heights, Minnesota and graduated from Sibley High School. She started her career as an intern at WCCO-TV's Washington, D.C. bureau while attending George Washington University.

In 1963 Pohland accidentally dove into the shallow end of her apartment's swimming pool and broke her neck, causing permanent paralysis from the chest down. After months of rehabilitation at the University of Minnesota, Pohland was hired by WCCO-TV in 1986 as a part-time dispatcher and quickly worked her way to the assignment desk in 1989. In August of 1994, she became one of the nation's first quadriplegic reporters when she was assigned as a full-time local news reporter. Soon she was covering top stories, making her one of WCCO's top reporters.

She will be remembered for being positive, opinionated, and smart. Her love of Minnesota sports was second to none. Most of all, Darcy will be remembered for being the friend you could always count on.

Madam Speaker, the world is a smaller place because of the passing of Darcy Pohland.

A TRIBUTE TO COLONEL ROBERT PURCELL

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 12, 2010

Ms. GRANGER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Air Force Colonel Bob Purcell who died in Fort Worth, Texas, on December 6, 2009.

He was born on February 14, 1931 in Louisville to the late William Tilden Purcell and Mary Baldwin Purcell. He was a 1949 graduate of St. Xavier High School in Louisville. Upon graduating from St. Xavier, he attended the University of Louisville, Speed Scientific School. He attended primary flight training at Marianna Air Base in Marianna, Florida. He received his basic training at Greenville Air Force Base in Mississippi. He graduated in December 1954 as a 2nd lieutenant and also received his pilot wings. He went to advanced training in the F-100, assigned to Kadena AFB in Okinawa. He subsequently upgraded to the F-105 and flew combat missions in Vietnam until he was shot down on July 27, 1965. He was the 17th American captured. He remained a prisoner of war for seven-and-a-half years. He repatriated on February 12th, 1973.

After repatriation, he returned to school and completed studies earning a BA from Bellarmine University and an MA in Political Science from Auburn University. He was also a graduate of the United States Air Force Air University Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base. He finished a distinguished Air Force career as a full Colonel.

After he retired from the Air Force, Percy became a simulator pilot Instructor with American Airlines in Ft. Worth, Texas. He was a former member of St. Louis Bertrand Catholic Church in Louisville where he also attended elementary school.

He loved his family, his friends and his country. He was a true American hero, and I am honored that we live among such men of courage and character.

THE REPUBLICAN MYTH OF SOLVING HEALTH CARE WITH TORT REFORM

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 12, 2010

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to debunk some of the health care myths we've heard from my friends across the aisle. Listening to my Republican colleagues, you'd think that lawyers were single handedly responsible for breaking our health care system. It's one of the major pillars of their health care proposal they recently unveiled and has long been one of their favorite talking points. They seem to have little else to talk about when it comes to health reform.

I have always believed that you can have your own opinion but you can't have your own facts. For years, Republicans have claimed that because patients are able to sue doctors at whim for inordinate sums of money, doctors have been forced to buy expensive malpractice insurance. This system, they say, is one of the major causes of the nation's beleaguered health care system. But it seems Republicans have been very inventive with their facts.

A new report from Public Citizen undercuts the Republican refrain that health care costs have skyrocketed because doctors have been forced to practice "defensive medicine." The report found that the value of malpractice payments is actually at its lowest since 1999, and when adjusted for inflation, malpractice payments are at their lowest since 1992. The report goes on to show that for five consecutive years, the number of medical malpractice payments has fallen and for six straight years, the value of malpractice payments has fallen. Have we seen a corresponding decrease in health care costs for the last five years? Absolutely not. Quite the opposite, in fact: health care spending rose a staggering 83 percent between 2000 and 2009, while malpractice payments actually fell 8 percent during the same period. Litigation costs were found to be

less than one-half of one percent of health care costs. Blaming our health care crisis on litigation costs is just baloney.

So instead of looking into how we can hold the insurance industry more accountable, my Republican colleagues have made a boogeyman out of devilish trial lawyers. But medical malpractice costs have been wholly stagnant and represent an inconsequential portion of our total health care spending. It's time the Republicans brought some new ideas to the table.

The rest of us know the real reasons why our health care costs are spiraling out of control. Medical inflation continues to outpace general inflation. Insurance companies are making record profits and rewarding their executives with jaw-dropping salaries. The third quarter net income for Humana was almost \$300 million, a 65 percent increase from the third quarter of 2008. The CEO of Aetna made almost \$24 million last year while the CEO of WellPoint made nearly \$10 million. In many areas of the country, people can only get health insurance from only one or two companies, and with such diminished market competition, those companies can charge whatever they want. And the list goes on and on. But my Republican colleagues have conveniently buried their head in the sand and have literally chosen to ignore 99.5 percent of the reasons for our nation's broken health care system.

Sure, it is easy to demonize the trial lawyers. But if we fail to address the true reasons for rapidly escalating health care costs, we will never fix the real problems we're facing and health care costs will continue to skyrocket. To do otherwise would force prevent us from taking this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get reform right. While I know the final health reform bill will be far from perfect, it will still include meaningful and enduring reforms that will drive down costs and help millions of Americans. In the meantime, I hope my Republican colleagues will find themselves a new theme song.

INTRODUCTION OF "THE NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1 PRESERVATION ACT OF 2010"

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 12, 2010

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, I am here today to introduce "The Next Generation 9-1-1 Preservation Act of 2010." This bill represents the hard work of my colleague and E9-1-1 Caucus Co-Chair, ANNA ESHOO, as well as our Senate Co-Chair counterparts, Senators AMY KLOBUCHAR and RICHARD BURR.

Representative ESHOO and I have worked on 911 issues for many years and I appreciate her reaching across the aisle to work on these issues. As we both sit on the Commerce Committee, which has jurisdiction on these issues,

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