

solution to the drug use problem. That is what Governor Johnson's legalization plan would bring to our Nation.

I urge the Governor to reconsider his stand.

#### WEST VIRGINIANS DESERVE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. WISE. Madam Speaker, today, almost 200,000 people in West Virginia in HMOs and thousands more in managed care are watching Congress today. Today, this Congress has a chance to pass real health care reform.

If one's car is sick, one gets to choose one's mechanic. Do not my colleagues think people have the same rights when they are choosing their doctor?

This bill provides guaranteed access to emergency room care. It protects the doctor-patient relationship. It gives more rights to choose OB/GYNs and pediatricians. It has strong enforcement provisions against violation of patient rights. It holds HMOs and insurance companies accountable for their medical decisions. It has a real appeals process when an insurance company denies treatment.

From the Northern Panhandle, where 44 percent of all insured in Ohio County alone are in HMOs, to the growing 25 percent in the Kanawha Valley, to the thousands more across the State of West Virginia, there is a bill of rights for all citizens. Should there not be a bill of rights for patients in managed care?

I urge Congress to pass this today.

#### BIENNIAL BUDGET: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, in the next 3 weeks, we will see, perhaps, the best and worst of democracy in action; and that is why I have called for a biennial budget review process.

I have a bill, H.R. 493, I hope my colleagues will look at this. I am a firm believer that, by adopting such measure, we will remove this inherent politics every year that so often occurs during budget negotiations.

What I would like to see is the first session of Congress being dedicated to passing all of the 13 appropriations bills, then the second session of Congress would be dedicated to authorizing these bills, and then to look at oversight of the laws that we have passed.

Let us investigate and evaluate all these laws we pass every year. The current way of doing business often leads to a stalemate where politics prevails. This country deserves better.

#### IT IS NOT MANAGED CARE ANY MORE, IT IS MANAGED COSTS

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Madam Speaker, America's the land of the free, but one cannot choose one's doctor. Freedom of speech; but doctors are gagged. Judicial review; HMOs are judge and jury.

Madam Speaker, health care in America has gone from the Constitution to HMOs. Beam me up. It is not managed care any more; it is managed costs. It is time for Congress to vote on behalf of the American people and pass the Patients' Bill of Rights, stone cold simple remedy today.

I yield back more medicine than ever in America and less health care.

#### IMPORTANCE OF INCREASING AWARENESS OF THYROID DISEASE

(Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, the women of our country form the backbone of strong, healthy families. However, it is American women who are often subject to debilitating and sometimes life-threatening diseases which subsequently deteriorate the stability of American households.

This week, I had the privilege of speaking to a remarkable woman who fights a valiant battle against a thyroid disorder known as Graves disease. This woman is none other than three-time Olympic track and field gold medalist Gail Devers. In spite of her illness, Gail will compete in the upcoming Olympics.

Approximately one in eight women will develop a similar thyroid disorder during her lifetime, and more than half of American women over 40 experience three or more common symptoms; yet, they fail to discuss them with their doctors.

To help raise awareness, Gail has joined forces with the American Women's Medical Association to launch a public, nationwide education campaign designed to increase awareness of thyroid disease.

Yesterday, the Congressional Prevention Coalition provided free thyroid screening, and I encourage all of our colleagues to embark on an educational campaign on the dangers of thyroid diseases.

#### BIPARTISAN CONSENSUS MANAGED CARE IMPROVEMENT ACT

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2723, the

Bipartisan Consensus Managed Care Improvement Act of 1999.

Enactment of this bill is the answer to the letter I received from a mother and a constituent in my district. She wrote, "When my middle son was born, the insurance company wouldn't let my son stay in the hospital one extra day to finish the course of antibiotics. They sent him home with a shunt in his arm. The neonatologist has warned us that typically in babies so small the shunt comes out and then you have to start the antibiotics all over again orally and that they would upset the baby's symptom, causing severe intestinal distress and diarrhea, not good for a newborn. My son's shunt came out, and he screamed for 2 weeks."

This baby deserved better. This bill assures that doctors, not insurance companies, decide how long newborns get to stay in the hospital when they are sick. Let us act now. Let us pass H.R. 2723.

#### GOVERNOR JESSE VENTURA SHOULD BE HONORED WITH NATIONAL DAY OF RECOGNITION

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Madam Speaker, I am here today to propose a national holiday in honor of the Governor in Minnesota, Jesse Ventura.

After all, he confounded the pundits, the pollsters, and the prognosticators by winning the highest office in the State at a time when most voters thought of him as "Jesse the Body."

He continues to confound everyone. Not too much notice was made when he indicated he would like to be re-incarnated as a large bra, but eyebrows did raise when he referred to members of the Armed Forces as Frankenstein monsters that cannot be controlled.

Then, of course, he outdid Oliver Stone by suggesting that President John Kennedy was killed by our own military-industrial complex in order to stimulate business.

Who can forget his plunge into theology? "Organized religion is a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people who need strength in numbers," the Governor said.

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So today I am proposing we name a day after Jesse Ventura, and the day I have chosen is April 1. That is right, April Fool's Day, because I can think of no one that so embodies the spirit of that day as the Governor of Minnesota.

#### AMERICANS SHOULD VOICE THEIR SUPPORT FOR NORWOOD-DINGELL BILL

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)