

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Tuesday, October 12, 1999

The House met at 12:30 p.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT).

### DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,  
October 12, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JUDY BIGGERT to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
*Speaker of the House of Representatives.*

### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mrs. McDevitt, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 560. An act to designate the Federal building and United States courthouse located at the intersection of Comercio and San Justo Streets, in San Juan, Puerto Rico, as the "José V. Toledo Federal Building and United States Courthouse".

The message also announced that the Senate had passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 858. An act to amend title 11, District of Columbia Code, to extend coverage under the whistleblower protection provisions of the District of Columbia Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act of 1978 to personnel of the courts of the District of Columbia.

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

S. 1567. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 223 Broad Street in Albany, Georgia, as the "C.B. King United States Courthouse."

S. 1595. An act to designate the United States courthouse at 401 West Washington Street in Phoenix, Arizona, as the "Sandra Day O'Connor United States Courthouse."

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 105-277, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, announces the appointment of the following individuals to serve as members of the Parents Advisory Council on Youth Drug Abuse—

Robert L. Maginnis, of Virginia (two-year term); and

June Martin Milam, of Mississippi (Representative of a Non-Profit Organization) (three-year term).

### MORNING HOUR DEBATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 19, 1999, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 30 minutes, and each Member, except the majority leader, the minority leader, or the minority whip, limited to 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

### CALLING FOR MORATORIUM ON ANTHRAX VACCINE UNTIL LONG-TERM SAFETY IS DETERMINED

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, for the past several months, I have taken a strong interest in the Department of Defense's mandatory anthrax vaccine program. The Third District of North Carolina, which I am proud to represent, has a large military presence that has increased my awareness to the anthrax vaccine. As a result, it has also raised my level of concern about the safety, the efficacy and necessity of the vaccine for our men and women in uniform. Given the lack of information we have about the shot, it is not surprising that a growing number of our Nation's Reserve, Guard and active duty members are choosing to leave the service rather than take a potentially unsafe vaccine. The harmful effects this issue is having on the readiness of our Nation's military is the driving force behind my efforts to change the mandatory nature of the program.

Recently the Washington Post featured an article about the overdue anthrax inoculations intended for our reserve force. The paper reported that these delays might threaten the effectiveness of the anthrax vaccine. However, even if the shots are administered on schedule, there is little, if any, evidence supporting an exact number of shots that are needed to reach immunity.

Despite the lack of information, the anthrax vaccine is currently being administered to our troops in a series of six shots followed by an additional shot each year the individual serves. A man or woman who serves our Nation for 20 years must receive over 25 separate anthrax vaccinations. As the Post reported, only 350,000 of the 2.4 million military personnel scheduled to take

the vaccine have received their first shot. Current figures indicate that less than 1500 have received all six shots.

Madam Speaker, the Department of Defense reports that it has evidence of only 300, 300 adverse reactions and 200 personnel refusing the vaccine, but there are still millions of vaccines left to be administered. While we wait for every member of the military to receive their full course of shots, we risk losing even more military personnel who resign to avoid their anthrax vaccine date.

Madam Speaker, it costs millions of taxpayers' dollars to train each of our men and women in uniform to defend this Nation. We cannot afford to lose even one soldier, sailor, airman, or marine to a vaccine that has many questioning its safety and efficacy; but it seems that the more time passes, the more troops we lose and the more questions surface about the current program.

The relationship between the Department of Defense and BioPort, the only company that produces the anthrax vaccine, is beginning to draw concerns. BioPort is not even licensed by the Food and Drug Administration to manufacture the anthrax vaccination. Now despite its financial failings, the Department of Defense has doubled the amount of its original contract with BioPort. This aspect of the program alone has caused concerns among those who must take the shot.

Madam Speaker, the need to protect our United States military from potential chemical and biological warfare is critical, but we cannot accept the risk of exposure as the only reason to mandate the shot and ignore the lack of information on the long-term safety of the vaccine. If the anthrax vaccine is safe and can effectively combat the threat of anthrax for our military, the Pentagon has failed to convince the very people it is trying to protect. The questions being raised are serious, legitimate questions that must be addressed in order to ensure our military receives the answers it needs.

I introduced legislation this summer to make the current anthrax vaccine program voluntary. My colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), introduced a bill to institute a moratorium on the program until more testing can determine it is long-term safety.

Madam Speaker, we are becoming more reliant upon our reserve force to help defend the security and interests of this Nation. If these men and women

☐ 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.