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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE 30051

Now, we cannot make too much of this, Mr. Speaker, or emphasize it too much. The President and the Speaker of the House have brought to the attention of across-the-board savings, maybe not even a penny on every dollar, but savings enough to make sure we stay out of the Social Security Trust Funds.

We welcome back the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. Greuel), the minority leader. We are pleased he is back in town, back from his campaign cash swing on the West Coast. We hope now he will sit down and solve the problems. We can get it done.

Mr. SCHAEFFER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH) for joining us.

I just want to point out one more time that the Department of Education tomorrow will tell the Congress that it is unable to account for its spending in 1998. Its books are not auditable.

This is a threat to American school children around the country. It is a threat to our efforts to try to get dollars to the classroom. It is a huge problem that the White House needs to come to grips with and deal with. We on the Republican side want to fix this mismanagement problem we have over in the Department of Education.

At this point, I would, before I yield back, just ask subsequent speakers to be sure to address this topic of unauditable books over in the Department of Education, tell us whether they are willing to help work with the Republicans to correct this mismanagement, and direct the White House to get us to a point where the Department of Education, a $120 billion agency, will be able to audit its books.

REPORT ON HOUSE RESOLUTION 382, PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. DREIER (during the Special Order of Mr. Schaffer) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-475) on the resolution (H. Res. 382) providing for consideration of motions to suspend the rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON RULES

Mr. DREIER (during the Special Order of Mr. Schaffer) from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-476) on the resolution (H. Res. 383) waiving a requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII with respect to consideration of certain resolutions reported from the Committee on Rules, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

NATIONAL ALZHEIMER’S MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. Nussle). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. Morella) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Speaker, I want to have a Special Order on National Alzheimer’s Month, which is this month of November.

In 1906, a German doctor named Dr. Alois Alzheimer noticed plaques and tangles in the brain tissue of a woman who had died of an unusual mental disease. Today, these plaques and tangles in the parts of the brain controlling thought and memory and language Dr. Alzheimer observed are hallmarks of Alzheimer’s disease.

Today, Mr. Speaker, Alzheimer’s disease is the most common cause of dementia in older people, affecting an estimated 4 million people in the United States. An estimated 7 to 10 million more adults and elderly will learn more about this disease, after almost a century’s worth of research, its cause remains unknown and there is no cure.

Unless scientific research finds a way to prevent or cure the disease, 14 million people in the United States will have Alzheimer’s disease by the middle of the 21st century.

Despite this, we have learned much about Alzheimer’s disease during this century of research. We know that Alzheimer’s disease is a slow disease starting with mild memory problems and ending with severe mental damage. At first the only symptom may be mild forgetfulness, where a person with Alzheimer’s disease may have trouble remembering recent events, activities, or the names of familiar people or things. Such difficulties may be a bother, but usually they are not serious enough to cause alarm.

However, as the disease progresses, symptoms are more easily noticed and become serious enough to cause people with Alzheimer’s disease or their family members to seek medical help. These people can no longer think clearly and they begin to have problems speaking, understanding, reading or writing.

Later on, people with Alzheimer’s disease may become anxious or aggressive or wander away from home. Eventually, patients may need total care. On average, a person will live 8 years after symptoms appear.

Let me pause at this moment, Mr. Speaker, because the fact that so many Alzheimer’s patients may need total care in the future is so very important. Congress must take a long hard look at the way we finance the future health care needs of the Nation’s elderly.

With the aging of our population, we can expect an increase in the number of people with Alzheimer’s and other age-related diseases that will require nursing facility care at some point. Since that long-term care increases the likelihood of long-term care.

At least half of all nursing home residents have Alzheimer’s disease or another dementia, and the average annual cost of Alzheimer nursing care is $45,000. And that is not the limit.

Unfortunately, for many people paying for long-term care out of pocket, it would be a financially and emotionally draining situation as assets worked over a lifetime to build could be lost paying for a few months of long-term care.

Congress must take action to encourage private initiatives, such as expanded use of private long-term care insurance to help families plan for the long-term care needs of their elderly relatives, and they need to in a wide variety of settings that are currently available.

That is why I am proud to have this support of 125 of my colleagues for my bill, H.R. 1111, the Federal Civilian and Uniformed Services Long-term Care Insurance Act of 1999.

This legislation, developed in consultation with the Alzheimer’s Association, makes long-term care insurance available at group rates to active and retired Federal civilian personnel, active and retired military personnel, and their families. I hope that my Federal and military long-term care bill will serve as an example for other employers that would lead to increased societal use of long-term care insurance. Having coverage eases the pressure on Federal entitlement spending while protecting the hard-earned assets of American families.

In addition to meeting the needs of America’s patients, H.R. 1111 also seeks to ease the financial burden on spouses or other family members who often provide the day-to-day care for people with Alzheimer’s disease.

As the disease gets worse, people often need more and more care. This can be hard for caregivers and can affect their physical and mental health. It can affect their family life, their jobs, their finances.

In fact, 70 percent of people with Alzheimer’s live at home and 75 percent of home care is provided by family and friends. What a strain.

Under H.R. 1111, participating carriers would give enrollees the option of receiving their insurance benefits in cash, as opposed to services, to help family members who must rearrange their work schedules, work fewer than normal hours, or who must take unpaid leaves of absence to provide long-term care.

In addition to meeting the financial needs of people with Alzheimer’s disease today, we must continue our research into treatments and cures for Alzheimer’s. This is something that
the National Institutes of Health is doing as we end this ‘decade of the brain’ that we are working to double the budget of NIH by 2003, and this year we will have made that second installment.

So, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues, I look forward to working with all of them to ensure that the Federal Government continues to fulfill its investment in medical research well into the next century so that some day Alzheimer’s disease will be history.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS OF CONGRESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker’s announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Pallone) is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, let me say that what I wanted to do during some part of this hour this afternoon was to talk about the unfinished business of this Congress.

Last night, myself and several of my colleagues on the Democratic side took to the floor to basically point out how frustrated we are with the fact that a year has passed, the first year. If you will, of this 2-year congressional session in the House of Representatives, and yet the main issues that the American people seek to have us address, whether it be HMO reform or the need for a prescription drug benefit under Medicare for senior citizens, or campaign finance reform, gun safety, minimum wage, the issues that our constituents talk about on a regular basis when we are back home and when we go back home after the budget is concluded here in the House, we will be hearing about these issues again, and yet every time we try to bring these issues to the floor or pass legislation, we are thwarted by the Republican majority.

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, would the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Pallone) yield?

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I will not yield at this point.

I just want the gentleman to know I intend to use the hour for the Democratic side.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. PALLONE. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I tried to get my colleagues to yield a few minutes ago. And typically on this floor we have that courtesy between one another so we can debate the issues rather than just to hear the rhetoric, which is what we heard for that last hour. They were not willing to do it.

And so, as much as I would like to and I know my colleague would yield as a courtesy to our colleague from Arizona (Mr. HAYWORTH), maybe next time they will know that this is a two-way street up here, even if they only have a five-minute second installment.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments by my colleague from Texas.

Let me just say that before I get to this unfinished agenda, which I have to say is my real concern, because most of the debate that has occurred and most of the arguments that we have heard over the last few weeks about the budget, although, obviously, we need to pass a budget, do not deal with these other issues which are really the most important issues that face this Congress that have not been addressed by the Republican majority.

I did want to say I was somewhat concerned by some of the statements made in the previous hour by Republican colleagues. Because I think I need to remind my colleagues and my constituents that the Republicans are in the majority in this House and in this Congress, in both the House and the Senate, and the bottom line is that the budget, the appropriation bills, were supposed to have been completed by October 1 of this year, which is the beginning of the fiscal year.

The fact that they are not completed, in my opinion, is totally the fault of the Republican majority. They are not going to say, well, they passed bills. But many of the bills they passed and sent to the President they knew would be vetoed. They knew that there was not agreement between the President and the Congress on the legislation.

Rather than spend the time, particularly during the summer, trying to come up with appropriation bills and a budget that would actually get a consensus and could pass, they spent the time last 6 months prior to that trying to pass in place a trillion dollar tax cut which primarily went to wealthy Americans and also to corporate interests, to special interests, to stockbrokers, to lobbyists, to the Republican majority leader LOTT who acknowledged on September 18 when he stated, ‘I think you have to be honest and acknowledge that we’re not going to meet the caps.’ That was in the Washington Post, September 18.

Indeed, according to the latest CBO estimates of October 28, the Republican spending bills have histed the fiscal year 2000 outlay caps by $30.7 billion, although they declare about $18 billion of this is emergencies and thereby exempt from the cap.

So when we talk about the Republican leadership, they are the ones that are going on the spending spree with these appropriation bills. In many cases the President has vetoed the bills because they spend too much. And, of course, they spend it on the wrong things.

Secondly, on October 28, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, they came out and they said, they have mentioned this many times to the point where we get tired of repeating it, but the CBO certified then that the GOP leadership had broken their promise not to dip into the Social Security trust fund. Specifically, on October 28 the CBO sent a letter to Congress certifying that on the basis of CBO estimates of the 13 completed GOP appropriation bills, the GOP bills spent $17 billion of the Social Security surplus, even after their 1 percent across-the-board cut.

I know we heard from the other side about across-the-board cuts, how this is holding up the budget and all that. The bottom line is their own appropriation bills, their budget that they put together and sent to the President, spent a significant amount of money of the Social Security surplus. I am not looking to stress that, as my colleague from Texas knows. It is just that they keep bringing it up and they keep bringing it up, they do not pass the bills, they cannot get the budget passed. Now we are here and finally we think in the next day or two it is going to be passed, but we have all these