

February 10, 2000

PHARMACEUTICAL ACT OF 2000

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Pharmaceutical Freedom Act of 2000. This legislation ensures that millions of Americans, including seniors, have access to affordable pharmaceutical products. My bill makes pharmaceuticals more affordable to seniors by reducing their taxes. It also removes needless government barriers to importing pharmaceuticals and it protects Internet pharmacies, which are making affordable prescription drugs available to millions of Americans, from being strangled by federal regulation.

The first provision of my legislation provides seniors a tax credit equal to 80 percent of their prescription drug costs. As many of my colleagues have pointed out, our nation's seniors are struggling to afford the prescription drugs they need in order to maintain an active and healthy lifestyle. Yet, the Federal Government continues to impose taxes on Social Security benefits and limits senior citizens' ability to earn additional income by reducing Social Security benefits if a senior exceeds the "earnings limitation." Meanwhile, Congress continually raids the Social Security trust fund to finance unconstitutional programs! It is long past time for Congress to choose between helping seniors afford medicine or using the Social Security trust fund as a slush fund for big government and pork-barrel spending.

Mr. Speaker, I do wish to clarify that this tax credit is intended to supplement the efforts to reform and strengthen the Medicare system to ensure seniors have the ability to use Medicare funds to purchase prescription drugs. I am a strong supporter of strengthening the Medicare system to allow for more choice and consumer control, including structural reforms that will allow seniors to use Medicare funds to cover the costs of prescription drugs.

In addition to making prescription medications more affordable for seniors, my bill lowers the price for prescription medicines by reducing barriers to the importation of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals. Under my bill, anyone wishing to import a drug simply submits an application to the FDA, which then must approve the drug unless the FDA finds the drug is either not approved for use in the U.S. or is adulterated or misbranded. This process will make safe and affordable imported medicines affordable to millions of Americans. Mr. Speaker, letting the free market work is the best means of lowering the cost of prescription drugs.

The Pharmaceutical Freedom Act also protects consumers' access to affordable prescription drugs by forbidding the Federal Government from regulating any Internet sales of FDA-approved pharmaceuticals by state-licensed pharmacists. As I am sure my colleagues are aware, the Internet makes pharmaceuticals and other products more affordable and accessible for millions of Americans. However, the Federal Government has threatened to destroy this option by imposing unnecessary and unconstitutional regulations on web sites which sell pharmaceuticals. Any fed-

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

eral regulations would inevitably drive up prices of pharmaceuticals, thus depriving many consumers of access to affordable prescription medications.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to make pharmaceuticals more affordable and accessible by lowering taxes on senior citizens, removing barriers to the importation of pharmaceuticals and protecting legitimate Internet pharmacies from needless regulation by cosponsoring the Pharmaceutical Freedom Act of 2000.

TRIBUTE TO LOS ROBLES BANK

HON. BRAD SHERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Los Robles Bank headquartered in Thousand Oaks, California for its continued Superior Customer Service contributions and continued success as a financial institution during its 12 years of existence in the Conejo Valley.

Since Los Robles Bank's inception on July 2, 1987, its marketing plan has always been to provide superior service to the small-to-medium sized businesses in the Conejo Valley and contiguous communities.

Under the very capable leadership of its President and Chief Executive Officer, Robert B. Hamilton and Jerry H. Miller, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Los Robles Bank has grown to operate Branches in Thousand Oaks, Westlake Village, and Camarillo. The Bank has grown to assets of over \$153,000,000 as of June 30, 1999.

Los Robles Bank was selected as the Outstanding Business of the Year for 1998 by the Thousand Oaks/Conejo Valley Chamber of Commerce and for two consecutive years received the Readers' choice award as "Best Bank in Conejo Valley" based upon votes cast by Daily News' readers.

Other Significant Corporate Citizenship includes roles in and contributions to Under One Roof, Rotary International, Optimist Clubs of Thousand Oaks, Pleasant Valley Lions Club, Thousand Oaks Police Department, Ventura County High Schools and College Scholarship Funds, Conejo Free Clinic, Year-Round Star Program and Youth employment and Training Programs, Junior charity League, American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, Hospice, United Way, many Mansions, Mana, Conejo-Las Virgenes Future Foundation, Park Oaks Elementary School Reading Program, Conejo Valley Days, and Special Kids Day.

In High School sports Los Robles Bank has continuously supported athletic programs at Thousand Oaks, Newbury Park, Westlake and Aldolfo Camarillo High Schools.

The Bank is an active sponsor for California Lutheran Universities Academic program through membership in the Community Leaders Club and the Matthews Business Management Forum.

Recently Credit Swisse Bank sent a top official to Los Robles Bank to learn about the Bank operations and approaches to banking in general. The Swisse Bank representative upon

1131

his departure stated that he was most impressed with Los Robles Bank's customer service and employee relations skills—something that is continually stressed by the Bank's Management.

Mr. Speaker, distinguished colleagues, please join me in recognizing Los Robles Bank for its accomplishments and successes in both the Banking and Civic communities over the past 12 years.

HONORABLE EVELYN DIXSON

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 10, 2000

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of Brooklyn's grand dames, Mrs. Evelyn Dixon.

Mrs. Dixon has provided a lifetime of public service to the people of Brooklyn. She was elected to eight consecutive two-year terms as a Democratic State Committeewoman for the 56th Assembly District. She is a past President of the Brooklyn Club of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. and is presently an advisor to the Club. She is also a former member of the Board of Directors of Elected Officials of New York State; a past President of the Bedford Stuyvesant Lioness Club; and a charter member of the Stuyvesant Heights Lions Club International. A long time member of Cornerstone Baptist Church, Mrs. Dixon is President of the Cornerstone Federal Credit Union and President of the Board of Directors for Cornerstone's Sandy F. Ray Elderly Housing.

As a result of her community activism, Evelyn Dixon has received numerous honors and awards including the Sojourner Truth Award, The Churchwoman of the Year Award from Key Women of America and the Melvin Jones Award from Lions International. She has also been honored by a number of elected officials like Brooklyn's Borough President, Howard Golden, and the New York State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators, Inc. The Pratt Area Community Council also honored Ms. Dixon by naming one of its affordable housing projects in 1994, "The Evelyn Dixon Houses". The Dixon Houses are seven newly rehabilitated buildings in Brooklyn.

A former teacher, Mrs. Dixon was also Executive Administrative Assistant for the Taxi and Limousine Commission of New York City. She is an alumna of North Carolina State College. She also studied at Bank Street College and the New School for Social Research in New York City specializing in Early Childhood Education.

I am pleased to bring the achievements of one of Brooklyn's finest citizens, Mrs. Evelyn Dixon, to the attention of my colleagues.