

especially harmful to the poor and the working people in the middle-income field because it destroys jobs and drives up prices for everything. So that is a problem that we really need to do something about.

The second thing I want to mention is something that I mentioned in the 1-minutes this morning, but I would like to expand on just a little bit.

The top headline in the Washington Post says today that oil prices have hit a 10-year high. This is something else that we could easily do something about, and yet we have these environmental extremists who not only do they not want us to cut any trees, they do not want us to drill for any oil.

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The U.S. Geologic Survey tells us that in one tiny part of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which is 19.8 million acres, 19.8 million acres, the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is that big, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park which is the most heavily visited national park, a large portion of which is in my district, is less than 600,000 acres, so we are talking about an area 33 times the size of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, in only two or 3,000 acres on the coastal plain of Alaska, the U.S. Geologic Survey tells us there is some 16 billion barrels of oil. This is equivalent to 30 years of Saudi oil. There are billions more barrels offshore from this country. Yet the administration, the President signed an executive order putting 80 percent of the Outer Continental Shelf off-limits for oil production. He also vetoed legislation which would have allowed us to produce this oil in Alaska.

So if people like high gas prices, they should write the White House and these environmental groups and tell them thank you for the high gas prices that we have in this country today.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening as I have done on many, many occasions to talk about the most important quality-of-life issue for seniors in my State and around the country, and that is the issue of prescription drugs and the high costs that they are having to pay. Not only do we know that seniors who have no insurance are paying twice as much as others when they go to the drug store and get their medications, but we have a health care system that has been in place now for 35 years, a very successful health care system called Medicare that simply needs to be modernized to cover prescription drugs so that our seniors can

continue to get the promise of health care that we made to them 35 years ago.

I have been asking people in my district and around the State of Michigan to write letters that I will share on the floor of the House of Representatives. Once again this evening, I wish to do that, to read a letter from Annabelle Lewis from Hillsdale, Michigan, who writes about her own struggles to pay for her prescriptions.

She says:

I stopped taking the Provachol 20 milligrams for high cholesterol in January 1999, having previously cut pills in half. In December 1999, a year later, my cholesterol was 339. Having received some free samples, my cholesterol came down to 198. Presently this medication is \$122.99 per month, not including \$30.58 for Estrogen replacement. Medicare part B deductible this month has reduced my Social Security to \$505. This covers house expenses with little left over. Having this medication available certainly would be less expensive than a nursing home should I have a stroke. I am able to continue working as a nurse but I find it very difficult due to my depressed state. I hope this information is useful and you will be blessed in your efforts.

Sincerely, thank you, Annabelle Lewis.

Under the plan that I am supporting for Medicare coverage, a voluntary, optional, comprehensive Medicare benefit we would add to Medicare, Annabelle Lewis would be saving \$438, important dollars, the difference between eating breakfast, lunch or dinner, paying the utility bill, having the quality of life that I am sure as a nurse she has worked hard all these years to acquire and now finds herself having to struggle with issues of cholesterol, whether or not she will be healthy or have a stroke.

Seniors in our country deserve better. I know right now with all the confusion and all the numbers and all the private plans and proposals that are out there, the real bottom line that all of this is about is the fact that the prescription drug companies do not want the 39 million seniors of this country to be organized under Medicare and have the clout to get a reduced price, just like anybody else in any other insurance plan. Coming together they would have the combined clout to get a group discount of great magnitude. That is the real fight about Medicare. That is the fight we are in right now. Do we just simply modernize Medicare, or do we set up some complicated system with insurance companies that say they do not want to cover prescription drugs? And they do not intend to cover prescription drugs, saying instead it is a hollow promise to go that direction.

I would urge, Mr. Speaker, that this House come together and recognize and celebrate Medicare, which is a 35-year success story for our country, 35 years of health care for seniors, for the disabled in this country, that only does not work now because we do not cover the new way that health care has pro-

vided today, which is simply prescription drugs. If we simply modernize Medicare, we will be able to continue to keep the promise.

It seems to me in these great economic times, we have two important challenges: we need to pay our bills and we need to keep our promises. The promise of Medicare is something that our seniors are counting on. We need to pass a comprehensive, voluntary prescription drug plan now.

#### CALLING ON CONGRESS TO STRIKE LANGUAGE IN TRADE BILL IN REGARD TO SUDAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I am appalled and outraged that language was included in a recent bill that unanimously passed the House that will lift the embargo on gum arabic from Sudan.

Language was included in H.R. 4868, the Miscellaneous Trade and Corrections Act of 2000, which does not even mention the word or country of Sudan or gum arabic. Yet the passing of this language is a significant foreign policy issue for the U.S. The language was known about by very few Members of the House. This is very cryptic language that was used to describe a major foreign policy issue for the U.S., whether to lift significant sanctions against one of the worst regimes in the world.

The regime in Khartoum harbors gobs of terrorists. Abu Nidal, Hamas, and all of the terrorists who are doing so much to disrupt the Middle East have training camps in Sudan. Virtually every major terrorist group in the world passes through Khartoum, many under the tutelage and sponsorship of the government of Sudan. The government of Sudan was implicated and behind the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The government of Sudan condones slavery. Slavery exists in the 21st century. Yet the Congress voted to help a country that has slavery. Over 2 million people have died because of the war conducted and generated by the northern-led government.

The government of Sudan indiscriminately and repeatedly bombs and kills innocent civilians. They are killing hundreds of Catholics in Bishop Max Gassis' diocese in the Nuba Mountains. Just over the past few weeks, the Sudanese regime has shut down a U.N. humanitarian relief Operation Lifeline Sudan that feeds millions of people in southern Sudan, by repeatedly bombing and attacking and killing workers and planes.

Chinese troops are now supposedly present in Sudan, most likely guarding the precious oil fields that are now