

the very spot where this organization first got its start. Undoubtedly, this marker represents the VFW's wonderful tradition of service to our community in central Ohio and to our great Nation.

□ 1015

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

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

Mr. ALLEN. Madam Speaker, after fighting tooth and nail against Democratic efforts to provide seniors with prescription drug coverage, the Republican leadership now appears willing to make a small concession. They will agree to let pharmacies buy drugs from Canada for sale to U.S. citizens. This is the bipartisan crumb that may be given to seniors by the 106th Congress.

The Republican leadership believes that if they govern as Republicans for 22 months, they can win elections by talking like Democrats for the last 2.

Governor Bush barely mentioned the words "prescription drugs" during the primary season. Now he says he has a plan, but it will not help middle-income seniors with huge drug bills. He says that Medicare is a government HMO. It is not. It is reliable. Medicare does not pick up and leave a State if it is not making money.

It is cost effective. Medicare has 3 percent administrative costs instead of 30 percent for the private insurance companies. It is fair. Medicare covers all seniors, not just a few.

A Medicare prescription drug benefit with negotiated lower prices for all seniors, that is the Democratic promise.

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR AUTISM RESEARCH SPONSORS "WALK FAR"

(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, autism strikes one out of every 500 children. In Florida, 50 percent of all children and adults afflicted with autism reside within my congressional district. I have become very familiar with this disorder because my close friend, Patience Flick, has two children, Bonnie and Willis, with autism.

On November 4, we will be participating in Walk FAR, Friends and Relatives, sponsored by the National Alliance for Autism Research. This first walk of its kind is being organized by the cochairs, Michelle Cruz and Marie Eileen Whitehurst, two south Florida mothers whose children have autism.

South Florida will come together that Saturday to raise research funds

for the National Alliance for Autism Research, which in only 4 years has committed \$3 million for 50 specific projects and fellowships around the world to combat this devastating disorder.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Michelle and Marie Eileen, as well as Karen London, founder of the National Alliance for Autism Research, Dr. Michael Alessandri, director of the University of Miami Center for Autism and Related Disorders, and the hundreds of south Florida families who will join forces to begin the eradication of autism.

SENIORS MUST HAVE MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

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

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Madam Speaker, today, once again, America awoke to the story of another senior citizen that finds the difficult choices in their life because of the cost of prescription drugs.

Winifred Skinner, 79 years old, of Des Moines, Iowa, yesterday told the Vice President how on her \$800-a-month income, \$250 will go to prescription drugs, which leaves her very little for her other costs of maintaining her household. Therefore, she spends 2 and 3 hours a day collecting aluminum cans to turn in to provide food for herself. She is reduced to walking the streets and the roads of Des Moines, Iowa, so that she can collect cans to provide food because of the high cost of prescription drugs. She has no prescription drug benefit.

Madam Speaker, we have been trying now for almost 2 years to get the Republicans to agree to have a Medicare prescription drug benefit so people like Winifred Skinner will have a reliable benefit to help pay for the medicines that they need; not a plan that depends on whether or not their HMO is in business or out of business; not a plan that depends on whether or not an insurance company will write the benefit or not, but a guaranteed plan within the Medicare system so that seniors know that they can rely on it.

The time has come so Winifred Skinner does not have to keep walking the roads.

MEDIA WATCHDOG ORGANIZATION NEEDED

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Madam Speaker, since Labor Day, the traditional start of presidential campaigns, ABC, CBS and NBC evening newscasts have given AL GORE 55 percent positive cov-

erage and George Bush only 35 percent. The networks, which are the primary source of information for most Americans, did not cover several possible scandals involving the Gore campaign.

Sometimes I wonder if they are trying to control our political process. The media do not have a license to lie or mislead or slant or skew the news. We should hold biased members of media accountable and encourage them to be fair, impartial, and balanced.

One way is to form a citizen's watchdog organization. If the media will not police themselves, and if we cannot allow the government to intervene, then it is up to us to take the initiative.

Good government and fair media coverage demands that we take such an action.

OIL AND FUEL PRICES

(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, gasoline is going up to \$2 a gallon. Home heating oil fuel is going up 50 percent. Diesel fuel is so high we will get a nosebleed.

Beam me up. We do not need to open up emergency oil reserves. That helps oil companies and monarchs who can continue to gouge. It is time for Congress to slap huge fines on those companies that gouge the American consumer.

But, finally, it is also time to tell those monarchs and dictators from the OPEC countries the next time Saddam Hussein comes calling, dial 911 for the Boy Scouts, because they are on their own. I guarantee in 30 days this thing will be resolved.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the fact that America is being gouged as much by American companies as they are by these monarchs and dictators overseas.

TAXPAYERS' CHOICE DEBT REDUCTION ACT

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

Mr. SANFORD. Madam Speaker, Eisenhower apparently once said that he believed that there could be no surplus as long as our Nation was in debt. I come from that school of thought, and yet that is not exactly where we are right now in Washington.

Where we are right now is debating whether or not 90 percent or 50 percent, or some number in between, of these projected future surpluses should be allocated to the debt.

What struck our office is the fact that really more than just the Congress should be involved in that debate. It is for that reason that I introduce today the Taxpayers' Choice Debt Reduction Act.

Madam Speaker, what it would do would be to simply take the 1040, the tax return as we now know it. And right now, we can send \$3 to the presidential campaign. This would create another box wherein we could send 3 bucks to debt reduction. That is not enough money to change our national debt, but it is enough money to make a small step in an important debate that we all ought to be a part of.

RETURN EDUCATION DECISIONS TO LOCAL CONTROL

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, the Federal Government has spent a lot of money on education. Yet the United States continues to rank near the bottom of industrialized nations in student test scores. This simply is unacceptable.

The United States is the most prosperous Nation in the world. There is no reason why our schools cannot be second to none. However, just loading up the Federal bureaucracy with more money is not the solution. Yet this is the very approach the Big Government party of Clinton and Gore and the other liberals are attempting, and it has failed time and time again over the past 40 years.

So what is the solution? We Republicans want to return the dollars and the decisions back to the parents and teachers who know our children's names and their educational needs. Parents and teachers should set education policy, not some Washington bureaucracy or someone sitting in a fourth story of a government office building right here in Washington, D.C.

The only way to turn the test score embarrassment around is local control of local schools. But if the liberals keep following their presidential nominee down the path to the roadblock, America's future in education has no hope. For the sake of our Nation's children, let us join together and return control back to our schools and our local governments and our parents and teachers.

KENNY GAMBLE'S ONE-MAN URBAN RENEWAL IN SOUTH PHILADELPHIA

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Madam Speaker, recently I had the opportunity to go to Philadelphia, and there I met with Kenny Gamble. My colleagues may remember the Gamble and Huff song writing team who produced music for the O'Jays and Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes. Mr. Gamble is a very suc-

cessful businessman and music producer. He moved back to South Philly, his childhood home in the ghetto, and is basically starting a one-man urban renewal project.

It is a very inspirational project. One of the keystones of that is a charter school that he started. Four hundred kids are in that charter school, with a waiting list of 1,400 children.

Why is it successful? Because it is run locally with input from the teachers and the parents. It is something that all the neighborhood and the community can focus on and take a lot of pride in. It does not have Washington bureaucrats micromanaging it. It does not have people from the State capital in Pennsylvania telling them what to do.

Madam Speaker, I believe this is a key corner to our education reform effort to get people back home interested and involved in the education process, because our children and our future are at stake. We should all follow Mr. Gamble's lead.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4733, ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2001

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 598 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 598

Resolved, That upon adoption of this resolution it shall be in order to consider the conference report to accompany the bill (H.R. 4733) making appropriations for energy and water development for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2001, and for other purposes. All points of order against the conference report and against its consideration are waived. The conference report shall be considered as read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, for the purposes of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOAKLEY), the ranking minority member of the Committee on Rules, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purposes of debate only.

Madam Speaker, H. Res. 598 is a rule providing for the consideration of the conference report to accompany H.R. 4733, the Energy and Water Appropriation Act of 2001. The rule waives all points of order against the conference report and against its consideration and provides that the conference report shall be considered as read.

The conference agreement provides \$23.59 billion in new discretionary spending authority for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Reclamation, the Department of Energy, and several independent agencies.

The bill is \$2.3 billion above fiscal year 2000, and \$889 million above the President's request.

Most notably, Madam Speaker, as a Member whose district includes the most challenging nuclear cleanup project in the Nation, I am pleased that the conference report increases the funding for the defense environmental management cleanup activities by \$6.12 billion, an increase of \$406 million over last year.

Specifically, this legislation includes \$377 million for the critically important Hanford Tank Waste Treatment Facility that is located in my district.

Finally, I would like to point out to my colleagues that this conference report also includes an appropriation of \$5 million dedicated solely to reducing the national debt.

Madam Speaker, I want to commend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Energy and Water Appropriations, the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY), for their efforts to defend the House position on a long list of important items in this legislation. They have worked long and hard to bring this agreement to the House, and accordingly, I urge my colleagues to support both the rule and the conference report.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1045

Mr. MOAKLEY. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS), my colleague and my dear friend, for yielding me the customary half hour.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to thank the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. VISCLOSKY), and the gentleman from California (Mr. PACKARD) for their work on this bill. They really had to juggle a lot of requests and a lot of issues. And as a result, this conference report contains funding for some very, very good water projects and infrastructure projects.

Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, something happened last night in conference that will force me to oppose this rule and oppose it very strongly. Despite the fact that many people in the Northeast are currently facing what promises to be the worst heating crisis, winter heating crisis in two decades, some of my colleagues have decided to eliminate the funding in this conference report for Northeast home heating oil reserve.