

For Walter, and the hundreds of thousands of others who are impacted by this illness, this resolution is on the floor today as a sign that Congress knows of the battle they fight and win each day.

There is a great deal of uncertainty for someone facing the early stages of a chronic illness.

MS patients may first call their doctor because of some difficulty with their coordination.

Or perhaps they see an eye doctor because of a problem with their vision—only to learn that these are signs of a much more serious disease.

350,000 Americans have felt that uncertainty first hand, and now live every day of their life with MS.

In Rhode Island, 3,000 people fight this illness. And for each, there are friends and family who fight by their side.

As MS patients know, the nerve fibers in the body's central nervous system are coated with a fatty sheath that protects our nerves from damage. Multiple Sclerosis attacks the protective sheath around the nervous system, and this results in endless complications for MS patients.

Muscles, vital organs, and normal body functions are the primary targets of this illness. But just as harmful are the by-products of its progressive attack—pain, paralysis, blindness, an inability to walk, and even the loss of independence.

Health insurance costs, medical bills, the need for physical therapy and costly medications—all of these concerns come into play when a patient is faced with a disease that has an annual cost per patient of some \$34,000.

But there is hope. Our federal commitment to finding treatments for such illnesses should remain paramount as we finalize legislation in these final days of this session of Congress.

The good news is that with each day that passes, MS is brought closer to extinction.

This illness, once treated with herbs and X-rays, is now able to be stabilized by modern medications.

Because of modern medical treatments and therapies, patients with MS are able to live full and productive lives, and have seen their life expectancy increase with each new technology.

And while there isn't a cure today, I believe that day is coming quickly.

To reach this goal, I have joined with many others in Congress to double the budget of the National Institutes of Health.

Many members and I, in both the House and in the other body, see this increase as an investment against human suffering.

NIH researchers, working primarily in hospitals, research laboratories and teaching facilities across the nation, are looking for cures to thousands upon thousands of illnesses.

While research on MS at the NIH is ongoing, I want to commend the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and its members for realizing that NIH research on any number of neurological illnesses might find the cure for MS.

Our federal commitment to all medical research at the NIH must be supported. We have seen time and again that it is far less costly, in terms of dollars and suffering, to research and prevent an illness than to treat the symptoms.

And finally, as the House sponsor of this legislation, I encourage medical professionals in our communities to learn more about this illness, and to support efforts that will bring an end to this disease.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution which draws attention to the chronic and often crippling disease of multiple sclerosis.

This issue is very personal to me, as I have known two people who suffered from this illness. The sister of one of my staffers, Mary Uram, ailed with MS for over a decade before she passed away. Another friend of mine died at an early age due to this debilitating disease.

Generally, people are diagnosed with MS between the ages of 20 and 40, but the physical and emotional effects can be lifelong. MS is devastating—not only to their medical well-being but also to the personal and financial stability of the individual and those caring for them. Often, this ailment can result in loss of employment and isolation from a community.

It is fortunate that advances in research and treatment are giving hope to those affected by the disease. This resolution will help to increase awareness and demonstrate Congressional support for research into the causes and possible treatments for MS. It will also recognize the significant contributions of national and community organizations in this effort.

I would like to end by commending Representative BOB WEYGAND and his staffer, Karl, on their hard work in brining this bipartisan bill to the floor.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 271: "Expressing the Sense of the Congress for Activities to Increase Public Awareness of Multiple Sclerosis." This resolution, introduced by Mr. WEYGAND, addresses a disease that can strike any American.

Multiple sclerosis is an often debilitating, chronic disease of the central nervous system, which strikes individuals in their third, fourth and fifth decades of life. Its onset can be elusive, and the course of the disease unpredictable; symptoms come and go, and can range in severity from mild numbness in the limbs to paralysis. However, the toll of multiple sclerosis on America's public health is real.

H. Con. Res. 271 identifies the need for varied approaches to fighting this still somewhat mysterious disease. It highlights the need for an increase in Federally-funded research into causes and treatments of multiple sclerosis, including identification of genetic factors and development of more effective therapies. The bill also recognizes the importance of getting the most up-to-date medical information to health professionals and the American public. These initiatives may enhance the quality of patient care, which is the third part of the equation. H. Con. Res. 271 promotes increased and equal access to quality health care for all individuals diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. This is something I endorse for our entire nation, and setting up model programs around diseases as ravaging as multiple sclerosis is an excellent place to start.

I support this resolution, and hope my colleagues will do so as well.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GIBBONS). The question is on the motion

offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 271.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDING CONSUMER PRODUCTS SAFETY ACT TO INCLUDE REGULATION OF LOW-SPEED ELECTRIC BICYCLES

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2592) to amend the Consumer Products Safety Act to provide that low-speed electric bicycles are consumer products subject to such Act, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2593

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY ACT.

The Consumer Product Safety Act (15 U.S.C. 2051 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"LOW-SPEED ELECTRIC BICYCLES

"SEC. 38. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, low-speed electric bicycles are consumer products within the meaning of section 3(a)(1) and shall be subject to the Commission regulations published at section 1500.18(a)(12) and part 1512 of 16 C.F.R.

"(b) For the purpose of this section, the term 'low-speed electric bicycle' means a two- or three-wheeled vehicle with fully operable pedals and an electric motor of less than 750 watts (1 h.p.), whose maximum speed on a paved level surface, when powered solely by such a motor while ridden by an operator who weighs 170 pounds, is less than 20 mph.

"(c) To further protect the safety of consumers who ride low-speed electric bicycles, the Commission may promulgate new or amended requirements applicable to such vehicles as necessary and appropriate.

"(d) This section shall supersede any State law or requirement with respect to low-speed electric bicycles to the extent that such State law or requirement is more stringent than the Federal law or requirements referred to in subsection (a)."

SEC. 2. MOTOR VEHICLE SAFETY STANDARDS.

For purposes of motor vehicle safety standards issued and enforced pursuant to chapter 301 of title 49, United States Code, a low-speed electric bicycle (as defined in section 38(b) of the Consumer Product Safety Act) shall not be considered a motor vehicle as defined by section 30102(6) of title 49, United States Code.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 2592, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2592, a bill introduced by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN), to remove unnecessary regulation of electric bicycles. The bill has benefitted from a full dose of regular order and enjoys a support of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle.

Electric bicycles are a great means of transportation and recreation. In particular, older and disabled riders who do not have the physical strength to ride a bicycle uphill without motorized assistance will benefit from these low-speed electric bicycles. These bikes are also used by law enforcement agencies to increase their patrol range while doing community policing.

Electric bikes help commuters who cannot afford automobile transportation or who work in traffic congested areas. Electric bikes are good for the environment. They are good for reducing traffic and they are good for recreation.

Unfortunately, low-speed electric-powered bicycles are currently regulated by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as motor vehicles instead of as bicycles. NHTSA does not want to focus on this. In fact, NHTSA does agree it does not make any sense to regulate these bicycles as motor vehicles, but it is required to by current law.

If NHTSA were to strictly enforce its regulations for electric bicycles, the bikes would be required to meet all sorts of standards that are designed for cars, but do not make sense for bicycles.

Since low-powered electric bicycles are used in the same manner as human-powered bicycles and travel at the same maximum speed, it is just plain common sense they should be regulated like human-powered bicycles.

In our committee hearings, there was bipartisan consensus that regulation of electric bikes should be transferred from NHTSA to the Consumer Products Safety Commission. The CPSC can then regulate them in the same way it regulates regular bicycles, or they can develop any regulations in addition that they might find necessary.

Mr. Speaker, it is a short bill. It is simple, but it is effective. It will make it easier for people to own and to use these electric bicycles.

Mr. Speaker, I want to add that I tried one of these out. Now, I am not, thankfully, yet so old or so out of shape that I think I should have one like this, but let me tell my colleagues, it is an excellent piece of equipment. With just a switch, a little switch that bicycle will add a little extra power to the peddles going up a hill. It feels like you are on a regular flat surface.

It will literally help a great many people in our society who need that little extra help in using a bicycle as recreation or use them to get around town or to work or, indeed, in some cases for the kinds of exercise they need to keep themselves healthy.

I am telling my colleagues when I am ready for it, I am going to get one. It is a really neat little device.

The gentleman from California (Mr. ROGAN) has done a good job in bringing this bill forward so that we can properly put this bicycle under the Consumer Products Safety Commission where it belongs, where it can be regulated as a human-powered bicycle. We urge support for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise as the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), my friend, did in support of H.R. 2592. This legislation transfers responsibility for regulating low-speed electric bicycles to the Consumer Products Safety Commission. Currently, the National Highway Safety Administration, NHTSA, has jurisdiction over these bicycles, which are designed to operate at speeds of less than 20 miles per hour, approximately the same speed as human-powered bicycles.

The CPSC, the Consumer Products Safety Commission, and NHTSA support this common sense proposal. NHTSA has never attempted to issue a safety standard for these bikes and, I would say, for good reason. If NHTSA were to establish an electric bicycle standard, they would be subject to motor vehicle requirements that would significantly drive up the costs of these bicycles.

Mr. Speaker, the CPSC, which currently regulates human-powered bicycles, is the appropriate agency to regulate electric bikes that operate at comparable speeds. These are bicycles not motor vehicles and, therefore, they should be regulated by the agency with responsibility for bicycles.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation has bipartisan support. Our colleague, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) who is on the Committee on Commerce, has worked hard for this bill. It is also cosponsored by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. DINGELL); the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HALL), also on our committee; the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY); the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. MALONEY); the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR); and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN).

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 2592.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just briefly want to say this is not obviously the most important bill that will come before Congress, but it is a good example of how the law is just wrong and common sense requires the law to be changed. So we change it tonight, and hopefully with the small change, we will make a consumer product that is going to be extremely helpful to many citizens of this country available to them and affordable for them. And just this small act by Congress, I think, is going to mean an awful lot to a lot of people, and I urge adoption of the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2592, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on S. 3062.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Government Reform be discharged from further consideration of Senate bill (S. 3062) to modify the date on which the Mayor of the District of Columbia submits a performance accountability plan to Congress, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, but I do not plan to object. I take this time to engage the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) in a colloquy for a brief explanation of his unanimous consent request.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, will the gentlewoman yield?

Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of S. 3062, the District of Columbia Performance Accountability Plan