

no matter what race, creed or color, is valuable.

Mr. Speaker, the Justice Department is the only doctor available today that can help us heal the wound in the City of New York. To the City of New York, I say, we are the second chapter to that. We must arm ourselves with the ballot and make sure that we send our message loudly and clearly in November.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES BEYOND MEANS OF MILLIONS OF AMERICANS

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, Americans already pay more for pharmaceuticals; yet prescription drug prices continue to rise that are well beyond the means of millions of Americans.

Seniors are often forced to choose between medication, food, and daily living. Should seniors have to suffer because they cannot afford overly priced drugs?

I have held four prescription drug surveys in my district which compared prices at different stores of the 12 most commonly used drugs by seniors. The surveys revealed that independent mom-and-pop pharmacies, such as Oliger's, offer lower prices than the same medicines that are charged by drugstore chains.

Many changes are needed to bring prices down. One factor should not be discussed. Large retail chains add to the problem of high drug prices because they routinely charge more than the mom-and-pop pharmacies. Meanwhile, it is time for Medicare prescription drug benefits to take the economic pressure off senior citizens.

SENIOR CITIZENS FREEDOM TO WORK ACT

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

Mr. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, we should reward work, not punish work. We should honor citizens who work, not tax them. That is why I urge the House today to pass a bill to let seniors work without losing any Social Security benefits.

It is unfair under present law that 800,000 of our seniors in America lose \$1 in Social Security benefits for every \$3 they earn. The Seniors Citizens Freedom to Work Act deserves our support today. Then, in the days ahead, this Congress should move forward to use our surplus to protect Social Security and Medicare and we should fight to bring down the high cost of prescription drugs for our seniors.

Our seniors have made this a better country. They have earned our support. They deserve our respect and our vote.

MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE IN NEW YORK CITY

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

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the polls are showing in New York State that the overwhelming majority of the citizens of New York think that there was a miscarriage of justice in the verdict on the Amadou Diallo killing trial.

Black and white together are demonstrating in the streets of New York against this outrage. Criminally negligent homicide was obvious. Forty-one bullets were fired; 19 in the body after the body was on the ground. This problem of miscarriage of justice in the criminal justice system, unfortunately, is a nationwide problem. It is not only a New York problem.

In Los Angeles, the police are continuing to confess to 20 years of planting evidence on suspects and convicting people wrongly. In New Jersey, they have admitted to systemic racial profiling. Illinois has just stopped the death penalty from moving forward because 13 of 25 inmates on Death Row were found to be innocent.

Two million people are in prison in this Nation. Most of them are minorities. Justice for minorities is a national issue. Justice for minorities is also an international human rights issue.

We are violating human rights on a massive scale. This situation deserves the attention of the Congress of the United States.

ENDING THE EARNINGS LIMIT

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

Mr. KUYKENDALL. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 5, which is coming up later, the Senior Citizens Freedom to Work Act. It is important legislation for our seniors.

Seniors between the ages of 65 and 69 currently will lose a dollar's worth of their Social Security benefits for every \$3 they earned over \$17,000. Senior citizens should not be penalized for working. It is unconscionable for this Government to take away these hard-earned benefits.

During the Great Depression, unemployment exceeded 25 percent and wages were plummeting. In 1935, it made sense to create a disincentive for older workers in order to create jobs for new workers, but this policy is no longer needed.

More than 800,000 working senior citizens lose part or all of their Social Security benefits due to this obsolete provision. Today, we will have an opportunity to remove the earnings limit.

I am glad that the President is on board and that he will be able to sign this legislation after we pass it. Ending the earnings limit is good policy for

America. It is good for our seniors; it is the right thing to do.

TIME TO RESTORE LOST FAITH IN LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS

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

Mr. RUSH. Mr. Speaker, 1 year ago Amadou Diallo was shot to death in the vestibule of his Bronx apartment.

Last week, the four New York City police officers who shot and killed unarmed Amadou Diallo were found not guilty of any crime related to his death and walked out of the Albany courthouse as free men.

Sadly, Diallo's death is the final consequence of a city police system where law enforcement officers are allowed to run amuck.

This dismal loss of life just highlights the need to rein in unchecked police officers and curb reckless, aggressive law enforcement activities. We need better police training, training that addresses diversity and sensitivity issues, training that includes conflict management, how to diffuse a situation without using a gun.

Maybe then we can restore some of the lost faith and trust in law enforcement officers and in the criminal justice system. We have to hold law enforcement officers accountable for their actions. There can be no more Amadou Diallo-like deaths in this Nation.

□ 1030

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5, SENIOR CITIZENS' FREEDOM TO WORK ACT OF 1999

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider in the House without intervention of any point of order the bill (H.R. 5) to amend title II of the Social Security Act to eliminate the earnings test for individuals who have attained retirement age; the bill be considered as read for amendment; the amendment recommended by the Committee on Ways and Means now printed in the bill be considered as adopted; the bill, as amended, be debatable for 2 hours, equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on Ways and Means; and the previous question be considered as ordered on the bill, as amended, to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LAHOOD). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, I will not object. I strongly support repeal of the Social Security earnings limit and do