

We know in health care that happens many times.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, security is what all seniors want. It is what we will want when we are seniors, and that is the security, the peace of mind to know that I do not have to worry about whether I can afford the drugs that my doctor says I need. It is as simple as that. I do not have to worry about whether I can afford the drugs, the medicines that my doctor says I need. That is what we ought to be about providing for Americans.

I have what I call my Medicare prescription drug advisory group at home. I have seniors, I have disabled folks, I have the local pharmacists. We sit around and meet regularly and talk about this issue and talk about where the hardships are and talk about the people. Particularly, the druggist is an interesting participant because he talks about the people who come into his little store, his corner store, and try to buy a prescription drug, and he has to turn them away if they do not have a plan or they are shocked by the cost of this. For those people, there is no peace of mind; there is no security that the American dream afforded by these miracle products is for them.

But the bottom line is that we can do it. We can do it as Republicans. We can do it as Democrats. We can get the job done, and we can get the job done this year.

Mr. BURR of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Pennsylvania is exactly right. Let me take this opportunity in closing my part of this out to say, for the first 5 months, there has been a tremendous amount of work, not only work by Republicans, but by Democrats, a tremendous amount of work by the administration and by Congress to try to figure out what the right plan is, to try to figure out exactly what the benefit should look like and what value we can extend to seniors under a drug benefit.

Will it be perfect? No. But there is no substitute for the commitment of this institution to say we need it and not do it today. This is not a time where we can delay another year, another generation, another Congress, another administration. We do not get a better opportunity than this where we have shown fiscal restraint, we have accumulated some additional money over and above Social Security surplus, over and above every other trust fund that we have got. These are real dollars.

As I said to my constituents, when we get to real dollars, when we know that we are paying down debt in a responsible way, and we have got real dollars, we will look at real problems that we think we can solve. This is a real problem today. This is a real problem today that we can solve.

All it takes is the will of Republicans, Democrats, the administration and Congress. It takes every American

out there that is listening to us tonight that can benefit from these, calling their Members and saying, do it now. Do not wait.

Mr. GREENWOOD. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from North Carolina and I happen to be Republicans; and we can say, because we work more closely and more frequently with our Republican Members on our side of the aisle, from the Speaker of the House to the majority leader to the Whip to all of the officers and leaders in our party down to every Member, freshman on up, there is a complete commitment and a desire to get this job done. I think that is true on the Democratic side of the aisle, and I think it is true in the White House.

But we know we cannot get it done by ourselves. We can bring a Republican bill out here, a purely Republican bill, and if the Democrats in the House and the Senate tell the President it is a bad bill, he will veto it. That has not helped a single senior.

So we have to try to get a bill through the Congress that Republicans and Democrats like. We have to be able to do what most Americans want us to do, compromise, find the middle, accept each other's positive suggestions, get that job done, put the bill on the President's desk. I believe that this President, as he leaves town, can say that is one thing I got done; and I think this Congress can say, come the election, come what may, we got that job done.

Because the odds are, even if we did not get this done this election, this year, wait till the next election, we will be back in the same position. There will still be Republicans and Democrats in town. The Congress may be divided. The difference between the White House and the Congress will still be there.

So there is no point in waiting. The time to do it, as the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BURR) said, is now. The will is here. The financial situation is here to do it and certainly the need to do it is.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from North Carolina for his participation in the Special Order this evening.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SHIMKUS). The Chair reminds all Members that debate should be addressed to the Chair and not to the viewing audience.

#### STOP RISING PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION COSTS FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. BAIRD. Mr. Speaker, I came before this body about a month ago to ad-

dress the problem of prescription medications, which my colleagues were addressing. I pledged at that time to go back to my district and carry the voices of the people of my district back to this body.

What we did was we visited senior citizen centers; and we asked the people there, please share with us your personal stories, your stories of what you are paying for prescription medications. We asked them to bring in their prescriptions, bring in their receipts. I can tell my colleagues the stories they told were tremendously moving.

This pill bottle symbolizes the rising costs of prescription medication. Let me share with my colleagues a couple stories. A woman from Cinebar, Washington, who told me that they make just barely under \$1,000 they receive in their Social Security and other benefits, but they pay well over \$500, \$500 in prescription medication costs.

Another woman who had been monitoring the bimonthly bill she is paying for her medications for the last year, in one year, she saw a 20 percent increase, a 20 percent increase in one year in the drug costs.

My own father who shared with me that a pill he took 8 years ago had cost \$1 a pill at that time now costs \$4 a pill. That is 400 percent inflation in 8 years.

Mr. Speaker, this body has been in session now about 16, 17 months. We have named post offices. We have done some worthy things for sure. But we have not addressed this absolutely critical issue.

While American citizens are doing without the medications that their physicians have prescribed, this body has not acted. It is time to act. We are capable of acting.

We need to do two things. We need to cap the rising costs of prescription medications. It is just not right for our senior citizens to travel to Mexico or to Canada to buy medications that they cannot afford within their own country, even though those very medications were funded by their taxpayer dollars.

It is even worse when seniors who cannot make that journey do without the medications they need, medications to improve the quality of their lives, medications to save their lives. But they are faced with that terrible choice between paying the rent or paying for their medication.

The current policy is not acceptable. It is not acceptable to put American citizens in that condition. It is not effective because, when seniors do without their medication today, we will pay higher costs tomorrow.

So the first thing we must do is cap the rising costs of prescription medication, and there are various ways to do it. But I call on this body today. Let us work together. This is not a partisan issue. It does not matter whether a