

of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

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

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. Speaker, on April 12, I led an hour of debate on the topic of prescription drug coverage for senior citizens. I read three letters from around the state from seniors who shared their personal stories. On the 12th, I made a commitment to continue to read a different letter every week until the House enacts reform. This is the seventh week in a row that Congress has been in session in which I have returned to the House floor to read another letter from a Michigan senior citizen. This week, I will read a letter from Edith DeYoung of Spring Lake, Michigan.

Before I read Ms. DeYoung's letter, I would like to share some troubling statistics released just yesterday in President Clinton's report entitled, "Prescription Drug Coverage and the Rural Medicare Beneficiaries: A Critical Unmet Need."

Although Ms. DeYoung is fortunate to live next to a larger city in Michigan, Muskegon, there are many rural communities in our state, particularly in the Upper Peninsula that have unique health care needs. As a member of the Rural Health Care Caucus in the House of Representatives, I have been working to ensure that those needs are understood and met.

The President's report documents that seniors living in rural America face real challenges in accessing health services, especially prescription drugs.

Senior citizens who live in rural communities represent almost 25 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries, tend to have a greater need for prescription drug coverage, but have fewer coverage options. Their incomes are lower, access to pharmacies more limited, and out-of-pocket spending higher.

According to the President's report, rural beneficiaries are over 60 percent more likely to fail to get needed prescription drugs due to cost. A greater proportion of rural elderly spend a large percent of their income on prescription drugs. In fact, rural senior citizens pay over 25 percent more in out-of-pocket expenses for prescription drugs than urban senior citizens. Finally, rural senior citizens on Medicare are 50 percent less likely to have any prescription drug coverage.

I would like to take this opportunity to highlight an important provision in the Democratic prescription drug proposal that does not get as much attention as some of the other important provisions that offer coverage for Medicare seniors. The Democratic plan includes assurance that resident in rural communities will have full access to all prescription drug benefits.

Now, I will read the letter from Edith DeYoung. "I'm writing this letter to you concerning medical prescriptions for people who have reached 65 years of age. I was getting Medicaid but now that I've reached the Golden Years, age 65, I can't get help from Medicaid and Medicare does not cover prescriptions. I

get \$915 a month on Social Security. I would like to know how you can pay rent, lights, and, oh yes, groceries, and still have to pay \$437 on a spend-down for medicine that leaves me \$478 a month to pay all the above and live on. I am sending you a copy of the prescriptions I get every year. I sure can't afford any other insurance. So please, help the bill pass and help us that are 65 and need it really bad. As a senior citizen, I would like to hear back from your office. Sincerely, Edith DeYoung."

The time is now to enact real prescription drug legislation that includes a prescription drug benefit in Medicare.

Proposals have been offered by the other party that would essentially offer a subsidy for a private insurance plan—that may or may not be available to all senior citizens. I am especially worried about seniors living in rural communities. And, as Edith DeYoung said, herself, she can't afford additional insurance. The Democratic plan, on the other hand, would provide her with the real help she needs. The Democratic plan would create a Medicare benefit that, because of Ms. DeYoung's income level, would cover all of her prescription drug costs.

INTELLIGENT DESIGN IS A SCIENCE

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

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, on June 1, I received a letter that was written by seven members of the biology department and one professor of psychology from Baylor University in response to my co-hosting a recent conference on intelligent design, the theory that an intelligent agency can be detected in nature, sponsored by the Discovery Institute.

The professors denounced intelligent design as pseudo science and advocated what is bluntly called the materialistic approach to science.

Mr. Speaker, I am appalled that any university seeking to discover truth, yet alone a university that is a Baptist Christian school, could make the kinds of statements that are contained in this letter. Is the position on teaching about materialistic science so weak that it cannot withstand scrutiny and debate?

Intelligent design theory is upheld by the same kind of data and analysis as any other theory to determine whether an event is caused by natural or intelligent causes; just as a detective relies on evidence to decide whether a death was natural or murder, and an insurance company relies on evidence to decide whether a fire is an accident or arson. A scientist looking at, say, the structure of a DNA molecule goes through exactly the same reasoning to decide whether the DNA code is the result of natural causes or an intelligent agent.

Today, qualified scientists are reaching the conclusion that design theory

makes better sense of the data. Influential new books are coming out by scientists like molecular biologist Michael Behe, Darwin's Black Box, the Free Press, and mathematician William Dembski, the Design Inference, Cambridge University Press, which point out the problems with Darwinian evolution and highlight evidence for intelligent design in the universe.

The tone of the letter I received seems to suggest that my congressional colleagues and I were unsuspecting honorary co-hosts in a conference on intelligent design. That is not the case. My good friend, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CANADY), chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution has considered holding a congressional hearing on the bias and viewpoint discrimination in science and science education. Ideological bias has no place in science and many of us in Congress do not want the government to be party to it.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. CANADY) approached several people, including the Discovery Institute, about plans for such a hearing. The people at Discovery suggested that instead we allow them merely to put on a modest informational briefing on intelligent design. That is exactly what happened, and we regarded the result as very valuable.

Nevertheless, many of us continue to be concerned about the unreasoning viewpoint discrimination in science. This letter dismisses those who do not share the philosophy of science favored by the authors as frauds. It is ironic, however, that the authors do not even actually get around to answering the substantive arguments put forward by people at the Discovery Institute. The authors support a philosophy of science they call materialistic science. The key phrase in the letter is that we cannot consider God's role in the natural phenomenon we observe. Yet this assumption is merely asserted without any argument.

How can the authors of this letter be so confident that God plays no role in the observable world? Once we acknowledge that God exists, as these professors presumably do since they teach at a Christian university, there is no logical way to rule out the possibility that God may actually do something within the universe He created.

In addition, the philosophy of science the authors talk about is just that, a philosophy. It is not itself science, even according to the definition of science put forward by the authors themselves. They state, for example, that all observations must be explained through empirical observations. I am not sure what that means but I do know this: This statement itself is not verifiable by observation or by methods of scientific inquiry. It is rather a philosophical statement.