

debate soon after that, but I do not think it hurts any of us to indulge ourselves in what is America's favorite fall-time pastime.

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, I think the gentleman from Texas and the gentleman from Michigan share more in common with their respective teams than the gentleman from Missouri; I only wish we had as great a success as the Rams this year. But I appreciate the gentleman's comment and I will take him up on it.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY,
OCTOBER 9, 2001

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, October 9, 2001, for morning hour debates.

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

There was no objection.

DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR
WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON
WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

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

There was no objection.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the House join me in wishing my favorite nephew, Ryan, a happy 4th birthday on Saturday next.

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

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

MEDICARE DRUG DISCOUNT
SECURITY ACT

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to take a moment to talk about a very important issue for American seniors and that is a Medicare Drug Discount Security Act that myself and Senator CHUCK HAGEL introduced some time ago.

The President of the United States recently announced his own plan that mirrored many of the things we tried to accomplish. We are very proud of our approach to providing seniors with discounts on prescription drugs. The President announced it in a ceremony at the Rose Garden and we were quite pleased that he had taken the direction by Executive Order. As many of my colleagues know, there was a lawsuit filed by the chain discount drugstores opposing the measure, and it resides now in Federal court.

One of the interesting mythical dynamics that followed the President's announcement was groups saying that it was nothing more than window dressing. It was smoke screen. It was political posturing. It would not amount to much. It is insignificant. It is immaterial. It is not necessary, nor is it helpful. We heard that from a number of groups and a number of citizen and senior advocates. We were quite shocked because we thought, in a free society, a free market economy, when you are able to leverage the number of people participating, thereby getting them a discount on the prices they pay, that is a pretty simple and superb way in which to get seniors discounts now.

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Others have objected to the plan saying it was not a good scheme. I questioned at the time if it is such a bad scheme, why do millions of Americans sign up to be AARP members? Usually it is because they get a discount on motel rates and other things.

It is interesting, in the Washington Post of Tuesday, September 25, there was a headline, a new Kennedy campaign on drug cause, former House Member Joseph Kennedy, a Member of this body now in Boston, Massachusetts, has been using now and creating a drug delivery system under his Citizens Energy Corporation. This allows people to join together as members of that group in order to get a discount on prescriptions.

It is interesting, when a Democrat, Mr. Kennedy, announces the plan, AARP says, it certainly is needed, says John Rother, policy director at AARP, a senior citizens advocate group advocating a prescription drug benefit for Medicare recipients. It goes on to talk about the discounts people will be able to receive. It goes on to suggest in this plan that although Citizen Help hopes to target the needy, Kennedy says the group does not have an elaborate screening process. He assumes well-to-do people will opt to stick with private insurance plans which charge on average 5 to 25 copayment for the prescription.

That therein lies the political conundrum. When we announce it as Republicans, Senator HAGEL and myself, and the President enunciates it from the

White House, it is met with skepticism, scorn, and outright laughter. When a Democrat announces the plan, it becomes the focal point of how to save seniors money.

Last year during the campaign season I remember Democrats taking a bus and taking seniors up to Canada because they could buy prescription drugs cheaper. Yes, I applaud that. I think it is great when you find a discount, even if you have to cross the border, but they used that as a political campaign and tool in which to defeat senators, by saying our seniors have to go to Canada to get a discount.

Our plan, on the other hand, now mirrored by former Member Kennedy allows people to get discounts here in their own country. They do not have to get on a bus, they do not have to travel to Canada, and they can go to their local pharmacies. They can go to their local plans and get these kinds of discounts.

So I would hope in the spirit of this wonderful new bipartisanship that has emanated out of this Chamber, since September 11 we get down to the business of helping seniors, Democrats, Republicans, Independents, get prescription drug coverage and get it more affordable, without creating a government scheme that will oftentimes be more complicated and more difficult for average seniors to access.

I salute former Member Kennedy. I salute AARP for making the positive comments about our plan. I thank him for introducing it in the community where I was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and I just hope other Democrats now listening to this and reading the newspapers will finally suggest that President Bush was right in announcing from the Oval Office, or at least from the Rose Garden, that he intended to help seniors today, not next year after debate, not the following year after debate, not 5 years from now when the political process winds itself up into a lather trying to provide it, but instead, doing it through the free enterprise system which Mr. Kennedy has done here in this plan.

I urge my colleagues to look at our bill, Senator HAGEL's in the Senate and mine in the House. It is called the Medicare RX Drug Discount and Security Act. It is worthy of your attention. It will provide discounts up to 30 to 40 percent. It is easy. It is much like Price Club and Costco that so many Members probably use here today because they can buy in volume and buy at discounts. It is why people pay a card fee, \$25 a year, to belong to that club. It lets them shop, buy by volume, by discount, and that is what we are trying to achieve here today. It works in real life.

AARP has millions of members, using discount as an enticement. It has worked in the real world. It can work in the political world if the sides will