

I hear from constituents literally every day who have to make these tough choices on whether to pay their electric bill or their prescription drugs. In fact, I have a letter I just received today from a constituent who tells me: "I am holding off on some of my medications until my Social Security checks are deposited in the bank on the 3rd, and I am out of some of them already." Seniors are struggling literally from Social Security check to Social Security check hoping they have enough medication until the end of the month.

Another constituent of mine was hospitalized for a severe infection. When she was dismissed from the hospital she was given three new prescriptions, one which cost more than \$700. Imagine an 85-year-old woman being asked to pay \$700 for one prescription. The other two cost her an additional \$150, bringing her grand total for these new prescriptions, only new ones for this current illness, to \$850 on one trip to the pharmacy. Talk about adding insult to injury.

Unfortunately, the high costs of prescription drugs are only getting worse. The recent government study predicts that the mapping of the human genome, the aging of the baby boom generation that I am a part of, and the increase in spending on biomedical research will lead to the introduction of more and more prescription drugs. This is the good part of it, because we are living longer and healthier, but this is sometimes a mixed blessing from a policy perspective. The influx of these drugs can only mean new treatments and therapies for what are now incurable and serious diseases, but it also means that the demand for these drugs and also the cost of these drugs will rise.

Congress cannot sit idly by while our seniors, our parents and our grandparents, are forced to pay more and more of their hard-earned retirement on prescription drugs, and they cannot afford it. Unfortunately, we have seen little action during this Congress. We have actually had one or two hearings in the Subcommittee on Health of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, but we have not gone any further.

For the past 100 days, all we have heard about is a tax cut. What we need to do is start addressing prescription drugs for senior citizens, those 40 million hard-working Americans who now rely on Medicare.

The \$300 billion I understand that may be in the budget that will actually come out of the Medicare reform legislation for prescription drugs is just not adequate. The real problem for our seniors is every time I go to the grocery store at home or a town hall meeting or visit with my seniors, I am approached on what we can do about prescription drugs for seniors. They want to know why in Washington we are not

doing something about it, because they see it as an imperative that if it is not a problem today, it has been a problem for over a year and we have not addressed it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides, the majority and the minority, we need to pass a prescription drug benefit that is part of Medicare. Just like a doctor or hospital, our prescription drugs should be paid for for our seniors as part of Medicare. We may not be able to afford the 80 percent that we do now for doctors and hospitals, but we ought to be able to grow into that.

Mr. Speaker, \$300 billion is a start, but we have a long way to go. It is a crisis now for our senior citizens. It is a crisis for our parents and our grandparents, and we need to do something about it now.

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

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### LEGISLATION TO DESIGNATE THE "M. CALDWELL BUTLER POST OFFICE BUILDING" IN ROANOKE, VIRGINIA

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I introduced legislation today to name the main Roanoke United States Post Office at 419 Rutherford Avenue in Roanoke, Virginia, for my good friend, former Congressman M. Caldwell Butler.

Mr. Butler is a gentleman whom I admire greatly. He served as a United States naval officer during World War II. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Richmond in 1948 where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and Omicron Delta Kappa. In 1950 he received an LL.B. degree from the University of Virginia School of Law where he was elected to the Order of the Coif. In 1978, he received an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Washington and Lee University.

Mr. Butler served in the Virginia House of Delegates from 1962 until 1972, where he was minority leader. He practiced law in Roanoke from 1950 until his election to Congress in 1972. He served five full terms in the House of Representatives, representing the sixth district of Virginia. It was my privilege to serve as Congressman Butler's district director from 1977 until 1979.

While in Congress, Mr. Butler was a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Government Operations. Mr. Butler's

start in Congress was memorable. As a member of the House Committee on the Judiciary, he served with distinction as part of the panel that conducted impeachment hearings involving President Richard Nixon.

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Mr. Speaker, following his service to our Nation, Mr. Butler returned home to Roanoke to practice law as a partner of the firm of Woods, Rogers & Hazelgrove, which he continued to do until his retirement in 1998. In addition, he contributed his expertise on a national level by serving as a member of the National Bankruptcy Review Commission from 1995 until 1997.

Mr. Butler is a pillar of the civic community as well, serving as a member of the board of directors of the John Marshall Foundation and the board of trustees of the Virginia Historical Society, a fellow of the American Bar Foundation, a fellow of the American College of Bankruptcy, and a fellow of the Virginia Law Foundation.

#### THE ENERGY CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to talk about what is fast becoming one of the largest problems our country faces, and that is the energy crisis. It is not just a California problem. It has spread certainly to the Northwest, where I am from, but also throughout the country, as we see prices for all sorts of energy consumption, from gas at the pump to electricity in the home, go up considerably.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is very good that the President has focused a large number of resources on deciding what to do about this problem. He has put together a task force and the Vice President is taking the leadership role on that. I think this is a problem that we need to focus on.

I am not as excited about the initial reports from the Vice President and the President about the direction they need to go in, but I feel, and so does the new Democratic coalition, which I rise tonight in part to represent, that it is a good first step and we can get there on the policy.

But where should we go? The Vice President's approach and some of his initial remarks were, first of all, that we are going to need to build a power plant a week for the next 20 years, and that conservation, while a personal virtue, is not an energy policy.

The vision that is laid out from those initial statements is that we are going to be building a lot of power plants and power plants that are focused on existing fuel sources, fossil fuel, oil, natural