June 28, 2001

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD—HOUSE

that is exactly one of the principles that President Bush said was essential on HMO reform during the campaign.

Number two, the Ganske-Dingell bill allows cases regarding medical decisions to be heard in State courts. The Fletcher bill allows patients to go to State court when a plan does not follow external review and erroneously causes a medical decision. We call that breaking the law.

Further, the Fletcher bill allows the patient to forum shop, the Fletcher bill allows the patient to forum shop between Federal and State court, not the Ganske-Dingell bill.

These are some of the important differences that we are talking about between the Ganske-Dingell bill and the Fletcher bill.

That is why over 500 health groups, consumer groups, professional groups have endorsed the Ganske-Dingell bill and very few have said much about the Fletcher bill, other than that in some cases, in some parts of the language, maybe it is okay. But if you look at the original real patient protection bill is the Ganske-Dingell bill.

Mr. Speaker, I believe, we will see this in large part passed with the McCain-Edwards-Kennedy bill, which is the companion bill to our bill. I think in large part, it will pass in the Senate. I think with a pretty big vote.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the hard work of the Senators who have worked on that and have shown a real concern for patient protections. I believe that will give us a big boost as we move into debate here on the House floor.

I am appreciative of the work that Senators like Mike DeWine and Olympia Snowe, Lincoln Chafee, and others, who have put into this bipartisan bill, the debate has moved forward. Those changes, as far as I have seen so far, look very acceptable to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Norwood) and myself and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Dingell).

In the Senate, it would have been nice if they had added the expansion of medical savings accounts and the 100 percent deductibility for the self-insured. That is in our House bill, but under the rules in the Constitution, those types of provisions have to originate in the House so they did not debate those or pass those; but I believe they have wide bipartisan support.

Mr. Speaker, I think it showed that the Democrats were willing to move to a compromise on this bill. It is no secret, a lot of Democratic Members are not real keen on medical savings accounts, but under the Ganske-Dingell bill we expand those medical savings accounts. That is part of the compromised process. That is how you get things done in Washington.

I will tell you what, a purely partisan vote in this House will not pass. The Fletcher bill is a partisan bill. There is one Democrat that supports it, maybe two, but what we have is a real core of Republicans who have been stalwarts for patient protection, who have withstood the blows of the $150 million campaign by the HMOs in this country trying to beat them down.

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They have shown independence and courage, and I salute them. I look forward to this debate when it comes to the House floor after the July 4th recess.

I know that the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. Norwood) is going to go off his diet and will eat a little bit of red meat steak before we hit the floor. I am looking forward to working with the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. Dingell) as we work on this bill here on the floor.

I am convinced that, if the Members will truly look at the bills, look at the bones and the sinews and the muscles, not just the clothing and the nice words, they will see that there is a significant difference. They should listen to the real patient protection association, and they should look at all the other groups that have looked at these bills and have said in very strong words the real patient protection bill, the bill that will help prevent situations like happened to this poor little boy is the Ganske-Dingell bill.

I ask my colleagues over the July 4th recess to examine their consciences, to talk to some of the patients and the health care advocates and the health care professionals that have to deal with HMOs that make those types of arbitrary decisions that result in problems for patients.

Talk to them over the July 4th recess. Listen to them. They represent an awful lot of people in my colleagues' districts. I believe that if my colleagues do, they will come to the conclusion that it is time to get this off the congressional calendar. It is time to join the Senate, to pass a bipartisan and a bicameral bill.

Do not let it get hung up in committee, in a conference committee. Send it to the President's desk. I would love nothing better than for the President to look at the changes that we have done in the Senate debate and come to the conclusion that this bill, as I truly think it does, meets his principles and that he will sign it. That would be a very bright day for millions and millions of Americans.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to extend their remarks and include extraneous material:

Mr. DeFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FALZONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTKNECHT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. NUSSELE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MORELLA, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY, JULY 10, 2001

Mr. Ganske, Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 176, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 176 of the 107th Congress, the House stands adjourned until 2 p.m. on Tuesday, July 10, 2001.

Thereupon (at 8 o'clock and 19 minutes p.m.), pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 176, the House adjourned until Tuesday, July 10, 2001, at 2 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

2719. A communication from the President of the United States, transmitting requests for Fiscal Year 2002 budget amendments for the Department of Defense; (H. Doc. No. 107–92); to the Committee on Appropriations and ordered to be printed.


2722. A letter from the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Planning and Innovation, Department of Education, transmitting Final Regulations—Federal Work Study Programs, Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program, and Special Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership Program, pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232(f); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.


2724. A letter from the Principal Deputy Associate Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Approval of section 112d Authority for Hazardous Air Pollutants; Chemical Accident Prevention Provisions; Risk