

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Mr. Speaker, I take this time for the purpose of making an announcement.

The Committee on Rules may meet the week of February 14 to grant a rule which could limit the amendment process for floor consideration of H.R. 310, the Broadcast Decency Enforcement Act of 2005. Any Member wishing to offer an amendment should submit 55 copies of the amendment and one copy of a brief explanation of the amendment to the Committee on Rules in room H-312 of the Capitol by 12 noon on Tuesday, February 15, 2005.

Members should draft their amendments to the bill as reported by the Committee on Energy and Commerce on February 9, 2005, which is expected to be filed on Monday, February 14. Members are also advised that the text should be available for their review on the Web site of the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Rules by Friday, February 11, 2005. Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel to ensure that their amendments are drafted in the most appropriate form and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain that their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have heard the President over the last 3 or 4 days present to the American people the idea of the crisis nature of revising, reforming, or altering completely the Social Security system. I go home and look forward to holding one of the first town hall meetings with my constituents to really lay out how we can work in a bipartisan manner and save Social Security.

It is important for the American people to realize that \$1.5 trillion will be needed to take away from Social Security to establish what one would call "private accounts," private accounts that could be separate and apart from Social Security. Many Americans do not realize it is not just a retirement benefit, it is a survivor benefit. It helps children of those who are deceased.

More importantly, we forged a bipartisan response to Social Security in 1983 with Tip O'Neill and Ronald Reagan that caused this to be solvent for at least 60 years.

This proposal will not only undermine, but it will destroy Social Security as we know it. Does it need reforming and fixing? Absolutely, and we can do that with a number of suggestions, but the plan that has now been proposed by the administration is one that will undermine and eliminate Social Security.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BOUSTANY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

WHY WE NEED THE OMNIBUS NON-PROLIFERATION AND ANTI-NUCLEAR TERRORISM ACT OF 2005

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

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, this morning the North Korean Government acknowledged publicly for the first time that it has nuclear weapons. In a statement issued by the North Korean Foreign Ministry, Pyongyang also said that it will boycott the six-party talks designed to end its nuclear program.

North Korea's surprising declaration has again reminded us of the most pressing national security challenge that we face: the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the possibility that a terrorist group will acquire a nuclear bomb and use it against the United States.

Earlier this week, my colleague, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and I introduced the Omnibus Nuclear Nonproliferation and Anti-Nuclear Terrorism Act of 2005 to better enable the United States to prevent what Graham Allison of Harvard University has termed "the ultimate preventable catastrophe." I am pleased that we were joined as original cosponsors by 11 of our colleagues.

Over the past several months, the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and I have consulted with a range of experts to produce a set of policies that we believe will be effective and which can be implemented quickly. Our bill will do the following:

It creates an Office of Nonproliferation Programs in the White House to centralize budgetary and policy authority. Since nonproliferation programs are spread across the U.S. Government, it makes sense to have one office overseeing all of it, signing off on budgets and developing a coordinated strategy.

The bill enhances the Cooperative Threat Reduction, CTR, program by streamlining and accelerating Nunn-Lugar implementation and granting more flexibility to the President and the Secretary of Defense to undertake nonproliferation projects outside the former Soviet Union. Our bill does this by removing conditions on Nunn-Lugar assistance that in the past have forced the suspension of time-sensitive efforts.

In 2002, President Bush was unable for the first time to certify that Russia had met all of its program-wide conditions, resulting in a halt to all CTR

funding until he was able to obtain and use authority to waive the certification requirement in early 2003.

The conditions have also provided CTR opponents within Russia with an excuse to blame the United States for delays caused by a lack of access and transparency on the part of Moscow.

We also ask for the President, in our bill, to catalog impediments to renegotiation of the CTR umbrella agreement and other bilateral programs with Russia. The hope is that by identifying them all, the Congress and the administration can better solve them quickly.

The bill asks the President to address the issue of unresolved liability protections for U.S. firms doing nonproliferation work in Russia.

This bill will enhance the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, announced by former Secretary Abraham last May, to accelerate the global clean-out of the most vulnerable stockpiles of nuclear material. At its current pace, it will take more than a decade to clean up the most vulnerable nuclear sites around the globe.

The bill also urges the President to expand the Proliferation Security Initiative beyond its current members and to engage the U.N. Security Council to provide the specific legal authority to interdict WMD material. It also provides funding for training and exercise with our PSI partners, especially the new members.

At present there are no international standards regarding the securing of nuclear weapons. The Schiff-Shays bill urges the President to develop a set of internationally recognized standards and to work with other nations and the IAEA to get such standards adopted and implemented.

Russia's tactical nuclear arsenal is considered the most likely place from which a nuclear weapon would be stolen and sold or given to terrorists. The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and I authorize U.S. assistance to Russia to conduct an inventory of tactical and nonsecured weapons. Our bill also requires the DOD to support a report on past U.S. efforts to help Russia account for and secure its tactical and nonsecured nukes and to recommend ways to improve such efforts.

We also deal with the problem of scientists in the former Soviet Union and work to prevent them from selling their services to North Korea, Iran and al Qaeda.

We also encourage the President to deal with the problem of the NPT's loophole that allows nations like Iran to pursue nuclear weapons through the guise of a nuclear energy program. Our bill asks the President to submit a report outlining strategies to better control fuel cycle technologies and possible ways to close the loophole in Article IV without undermining the overall integrity of the treaty.

These are common-sense approaches to combating the nuclear threat. The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) and I are committed to working together on a bipartisan basis to do whatever we can to reduce the danger of a nuclear attack on the United States, and we hope that all of our colleagues will join us in that effort.

EXPLORATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES TO DECREASE HEALTH CARE COSTS

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. Speaker, we need to explore new technologies that will decrease health care costs and improve patient safety. Electronic medical records, also known as EMRs, are a technological solution to an antiquated paper system.

Often, patient records are scattered between multiple hospitals and doctors' offices, resulting in the likelihood that important medical records could be lost and that valuable data is unavailable to the physician when he needs it. Time is wasted trying to obtain paper medical records, especially in cases of emergency care, and patients sometimes provide incomplete medical histories which often omit or distort important data.

Tens of thousands of lives and hundreds of billions of dollars are lost every year due to medical error, and EMRs would go a long way to reducing these costs. The electronic medical record centralizes all records on a patient and can instantly communicate this information to any health care provider in a secure and confidential manner.

EMRs also have a number of other advantages. They eliminate the need for duplicate tests. They reduce the search time for medical histories and limit instances of lost files, patient recall or unaccessible files. They can instantly search for symptoms, findings, treatments, diagnoses and health care providers involved with patient care. They can reduce the need for additional staff and the expansive storage space needed to maintain paper files.

When complications occur, medical records of an electronic type can allow providers to retrace the exact steps through the process to see if a different approach was needed. They can prompt providers to pursue certain avenues of treatment based upon their diagnosis, and they can automatically generate bills and reimbursements that reduce billing errors.

Some concerns regarding electronic medical records have been raised about the cost. However, the key to implementing an electronic medical record is not to have the Federal Government pick up the whole tab.

Health information technology companies, hospitals and medical practices must share information to improve the process and recommend standards for the industry. Let me give my colleagues an example of how this is done.

This process can be expensive to implement at this stage, and the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center accomplished their EMR system via private investments that will total some \$500 million. By implementing electronic medical records, the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center has already decreased the need for repeat laboratory, radiology or other invasive and expensive tests because the data and X-rays are easily shared by authorized users.

□ 1500

UPMC is ranked number one in the United States and health care industry, and number five among all industries in the use of information technology, according to Information Week 500.

We need positive examples from the business community to make the case for health information technology today and tomorrow. Examples of successful electronic medical records such as these provide the leadership necessary to ensure that health information technology becomes a reality.

The President has already shown his commitment to health information technology by committing \$125 million to the Office of the National Health Information Technology Coordinator. Now we need to work with private industry to continue to make the case for successful implementation of health information technologies.

Mr. Speaker, if Congress accomplishes one thing this year to improve health care, we should work to develop incentives for hospitals and providers to successfully implement a secure and interoperable electronic health record. This will save money; it will save lives.

As the cochairman of the 21st Century Health Care Caucus, which I co-chair with the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY), we will continue to work on a bipartisan basis to fully implement electronic medical record systems and to reach this important goal of using this as a mechanism to improve health care in America.

SMART SECURITY AND \$80 BILLION IRAQ SUPPLEMENTAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, President Bush has recently indicated that he will ask Congress to approve another supplemental appropriations bill to fund the ongoing military operations in Iraq. The number is rumored to be somewhere in the \$80 billion range; \$80 billion.

If this request for emergency funds is anything like the last three passed in the Congress, we can expect two things: one, the President will once again refuse to explain precisely where this money will be spent; and, two, congressional Republicans will meekly accede to the President's demands without asking for even the slightest degree of accountability from the White House in return.

We in Congress must do more than just rubber stamp the President's every last wish. We hold the power of the purse; and, accordingly, we must exercise our constitutional authority to hold the executive branch accountable. Up to now, the Congress has failed to hold the Bush administration accountable for the many mishaps and mistakes in Iraq; and, as a result, the Members of Congress, all 535 of us, are responsible for the nearly 1,500 American troops who have been needlessly killed in Iraq, not to mention the 11,000 Americans who have been forever wounded and the untold thousands of Iraqi civilians who have died in this war.

Before appropriating a single dollar for the Iraq war, more than we have already appropriated, Congress must demand that President Bush and Secretary Rumsfeld tell Congress exactly what they plan to do to address the growing crisis in Iraq. Demanding accountability from the Bush administration crosses over political lines because it is about more than just politics. It is about taking care of our men and women who are serving in Iraq, and it is about advancing policies that will secure America for the future.

Together, with 27 of my House colleagues, I have introduced House Concurrent Resolution 35, an Iraq withdrawal plan, that has four components. President Bush needs to address, at the very least, each of these important components before Congress provides him any further funds for Iraq.

First, the President needs to begin the process of bringing our troops home. How can we possibly ask these brave men and women, who have selflessly answered the call of duty for their country, to continue to die for an unjust, unfair, and poorly planned military failure halfway across the world? These are the troops the administration assured us would be embraced as liberators, but who continue to be the focal point of anti-American extremism, leaving them like sitting ducks.

In fact, I believe the insurgency in Iraq is fueled primarily by our military presence. Ceasing the military operations will not be sufficient to defeat the insurgency, no way, but staying will continue to intensify it, and that is for certain.

Second, President Bush needs to develop and implement a plan for Iraq's civil and economic infrastructure. The U.S. has a moral responsibility to clean