

Madam Speaker, we need to make patient safety our national goal and make zero errors with medications a priority in health systems throughout the country. E-prescribing is one tool we can use to make this a reality in saving lives and saving money.

NO FURTHER SUPPLEMENTAL
WITHOUT GUARANTEES FOR
MEETING THE NEEDS OF OUR
SOLDIERS

(Mr. BLUMENAUER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, I, like most of my colleagues on the floor, was horrified that our soldiers in Iraq had to scavenge junk yards of former Iraqi military equipment for metal and sheet armor to improve their own vehicles. My constituents in the Oregon National Guard were doing this and supplementing it with plywood and sandbags.

We were promised "up-armor" by the administration, but this is still woefully inadequate. The additional weight puts increased stress on the suspension and drive-train of the vehicles, hampering their operational efficiency and making them slower. But, even worse, the fact that the floor is not protected means that the insurgents are now targeting these up-armored vehicles. Just a couple of weeks ago, I had one of my constituents lose a foot because of such an attack.

Two years later, and after over \$200 billion that Congress has given the administration for the war in Iraq, we should not approve another supplemental budget request without adequate guarantees that, finally, the needs of our soldiers will be met.

SUPPORT THE CLASS ACTION
FAIRNESS ACT

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, in the past few years, we have witnessed an explosion of interstate class-action lawsuits being filed in our State courts, particularly in certain "magnet" jurisdictions. These "magnet" courts routinely approve settlements in which lawyers receive large fee awards and the class members receive virtually nothing. The result is a growing number of class-action lawsuits that are losing propositions for everyone involved, except the lawyers that bring them.

Madam Speaker, later this morning, we will be debating the Class Action Fairness Act. This legislation closes a loophole in the system by creating Federal jurisdictions over large, multi-State class-action cases. It puts an end to various tricks currently used by

some lawyers to stay out of Federal court. And, in addition, this legislation creates several provisions specifically designed to ensure that class members, not their attorneys, are the primary beneficiaries of the class-action process.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this common sense, bipartisan plan.

HELPING AMERICA STAY STRONG
WITH STRONG FUNDING

(Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Madam Speaker, I rise to talk about the budget that the President has delivered to the Committee on Appropriations. We began yesterday having hearings on that budget.

We have got to invest in America's families and in America's children.

This budget cuts \$60 billion from Medicaid, an insurance program for children, the disabled, our States. Our States can ill-afford nursing home care for our residents. I am from the State of Michigan, with the highest unemployment rate in the country. We have to invest in our States and our cities. This budget does not do that. Community development block grants, grants to States and cities that would help cities build their infrastructure and fund various programs throughout the cities. Cuts to first responders and firefighters. Funding drug-free schools. The programs go on. We must find the money to fund these programs. COPS programs, \$40 million.

Madam Speaker, our cities need our help. We have got to do better as appropriators. We have to do better as this Congress. Fund American families, fund the cities and States so that America can stay strong, as God intends.

TWELVE POINT COMMONSENSE
PLAN TO RESTORE FISCAL DIS-
CIPLINE

(Mr. ROSS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, our Nation finds itself today in a financial crisis. This year, our deficit is projected to exceed \$589 billion. Last year's deficit was \$412 billion. Seventy percent of that money was borrowed from foreigners, including China and Japan.

We are spending nearly \$1 million more every 60 seconds than we are taking in in this country. On top of that, we are spending nearly \$1 billion a day simply paying interest on the national debt, a debt that today is \$7.6 trillion and rising.

Yesterday, I joined my colleagues of the fiscally conservative Democratic

Blue Dog Coalition to announce a new 12-point budget plan that promotes commonsense budget reforms. One of those reforms includes the support of a constitutional amendment that would require the Federal Government to balance its budget every year. American families strive every month to live within a balanced budget at home. I do not think it is asking too much to hold our government to the same standard.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in support of this 12-point, commonsense budget plan that will place our Nation on a path to restore fiscal discipline to our Nation's government.

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WRONG ANSWERS FOR SCHOOLS

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, as I had the privilege to write this morning on the editorial page of USA Today, nobody doubts this President's heart for our kids. As a Governor, George W. Bush championed education reform, and, upon being elected President, brought his vision for standards and school choice to Capitol Hill.

Unfortunately, the defenders of the status quo in education succeeded in turning the President's original vision for education reform into a huge increase in the Federal Government's role in our local schools and, regrettably, they are at it again, as No Child Left Behind II, with national testing for high school students, comes to Congress.

The American people have always known the government that governs least governs best in those functions of government closest to the family. However well-intentioned, one more unfunded mandate from Washington, D.C. will not cure what ails our local schools. Resources that promote reform through competition and school choice will.

There is nothing that ails our local schools that parents and teachers of America cannot solve with the resources and the freedom to choose. Let us say no to more national testing. Let us say no to No Child Left Behind II.

CLASS ACTION FAIRNESS ACT OF
2005

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 96, I call up the Senate bill (S. 5) to amend the procedures that apply to consideration of interstate class actions to assure fairer outcomes for class members and defendants, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.