Mr. Speaker, we will be discussing this either tomorrow or the next day. We will make a decision, and it is not up to the World Trade Organization to decide what labor laws we have or what kind of environmental laws we have, or what tax laws.

□

COMMUNITY ECONOMIC ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 2000

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

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to commend the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) for working on and developing this legislation and to be able to work with him in recognizing that the economic tide of prosperity has not reached all Americans in every place in America. I would also like to commend him on the ability of working in a bipartisan fashion with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. WELDON) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KASICH) and other Members, because we recognize that we have to work together across the aisle in order to accomplish things, and anything that is worthwhile to the people that we represent.

New market initiatives that the President has proposed, working with the Speaker, recognize that everyone in every place has not been touched by economic prosperity. So while we are trying to develop markets overseas and go more towards more and more global trade and world trade, we must look in the rearview mirror and make sure that all Americans in all of America have an opportunity to live and achieve the American dream.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation, the Community Economic Adjustment Act of 2000, which I am an original cosponsor of together with my colleague, would create a single agency at the Federal level to be able to respond with the same force that FEMA does for natural disasters, that the defense relocation acts as in terms of base closures, would be able to react in terms of economic distress. There are parts of Maine that have over 9 percent unemployment. There have been plant closings which I have been a part of trying to make sure that people have training, education and one-stop centers. When we are looking into the faces and the eyes of people who have nowhere else to turn but an extended unemployment check and relocation costs, we know that we have more to do here in the United States Congress, in the capital of this United States.

That is why this legislation, along with other proposals that the President and the Speaker are pushing, working in concert together, are going to try to make sure that that tide is in all areas of the country and has an opportunity to hit all people throughout this country to give them the same opportunities, to give corporations the same opportunities to invest here; to give the same resources available to people here that we provide overseas, so that they have an opportunity to be able to achieve and strengthen their skills and educational opportunities; and this legislation does it.

The gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. LARSON) and myself and other Members are seeking cosponsors so that we can develop more sponsors and cosponsors on a bipartisan basis. At this point we are talking about over 160 cosponsors so far, to develop bipartisan widespread support in the United States Congress to recognize that we need to have a comprehensive trade policy; that we need to have a comprehensive review of global policies at the same time that we are advancing those policies; that we are trying to make sure that each part of Maine and America have an opportunity, whether it is empowerment zones, enterprise communities, new markets initiatives, or the coordination of these agencies, so that we can begin to do some collaboration here, so that we can have agencies working together and not at cross-purposes.

In this Congress, we have worked very hard to restructure the job training programs so that we did not have 66 job training programs costing over $30 billion. The fact of the matter is, we left out some of the NAFTA job training programs, some of the trade adjustment assistance programs. We did this to make sure that there is coordination and a single source so that when the people are walking into these sources of training and education, that they have this opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut, if I have time, if he would like to comment on this legislation; but I would like to commend him at this time and seek to continue to work with him.

Mr. LARSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Maine for yielding. I would only add to his eloquently stated verse with regard to the impact that this legislation will have on workers all across this great Nation of ours and in my home State of Connecticut. The fact of the matter is, as the gentleman has pointed out, that as we experience globalization, we know that the blessings of commerce are not evenly spread across this Nation. So that is why it is critically important that the Federal Government coordinate a response in a timely fashion that this legislation will provide.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Maine for his hard work on this bill; and as he indicated, we seek cosponsors as well.

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

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

REVISIONS TO ALLOCATION FOR HOUSE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

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

Mr. KASICH. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Sec. 314 of the Congressional Budget Act, I hereby submit for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD revisions to the allocations for the House Committee on Appropriations printed in House Report 106–660. In total, these revisions reduce the Committee's allocations by $201,000,000 in budget authority and $227,000,000 in outlays.

Floor action on H.R. 4577, the bill making fiscal year 2001 appropriations for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, removed the emergency designation from $501,000,000 in budget authority contained in the House-reported bill. Outlays flowing from that budget authority totaled $240,000,000. The allocations to the House Committee on Appropriations and budgetary aggregates were increased to reflect the emergency funding in the House-reported bill in a letter dated 6 June 2000. The allocations to the Appropriations Committee and the budgetary aggregates are reduced by $501,000,000 in budget authority and $240,000,000 in outlays to reflect floor action. This sets the allocations to the House Committee on Appropriations at $601,180,000,000 in budget authority and $625,735,000,000 in outlays. Budgetary aggregates become $1,529,385,000,000 in budget authority and $1,494,956,000,000 in outlays.

As reported to the House, H.R. 4635, the bill making fiscal year 2001 appropriations for the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Housing and Urban Development, and Independent Agencies, includes $300,000,000 in budget authority and $13,000,000 in outlays for emergencies. The allocations for the House Committee on Appropriations are further adjusted to reflect those amounts, establishing allocations of $601,480,000,000 in budget authority and $625,748,000,000 in outlays. Budgetary aggregates become $1,529,685,000,000 in budget authority and $1,494,969,000,000 in outlays.

These adjustments shall apply while the legislation is under consideration and shall take effect upon final enactment of the legislation. Questions may be directed to Dan Kowalski or Jim Bates at 67270.

□

LOOKING AT WAYS TO CONTROL THE RISING PRICE OF GAS IN AMERICA

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

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, on June 21, the nations of OPEC will meet once again to determine the fate of practically every family across the country, and that is whether to increase oil production in those nations.

Now, it is no secret, Mr. Speaker, to every family and business across this Nation that gas prices are through the roof. Lately, we have been hearing a lot of excuses as to why that is occurring. But let us not lose sight of why it

is occurring. It is fundamentally a law of supply and demand. As we keep down production, and the demand for that product, in this case oil, continues to grow, prices will rise. So not only must we call upon our OPEC nations to increase production, to lessen the price at the pump, but we also I think have to look inside our unnecessary rules and regulations that cause those gas prices to jump as well.

For months now, more than a year, Members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, have tried to plead with the administration to find ways to stimulate domestic production to decrease our reliance on OPEC nations. If they want to keep those production levels at what they are now, fine. That is their right. I do not agree with it, but that is their right. But why can we not, the United States of America, find ways to decrease our reliance upon OPEC nations and look right here in our 50 States to develop ways to lessen the burden to that family at the pump?

Do the math. It is very simple. If you have a 15-gallon tank in your car, and you go to the pump, say, once a week, you are paying $10 to $15 more just to fill up your family car, to take your kids to the Little League game or to school. Over a month, you are looking at another $40 or $50 out of your family wallet. Over 6 months, you are in the $200 to $300 range. If you do a lot of driving, you have to fill up twice a week, we are talking about $500 or $600 for a 6-month period that has got to come from somewhere. It does not fall from the sky; it comes from the family wallet. That means no vacation perhaps; that means maybe we are not going to buy the clothes for the kids for school; maybe we are going to put off buying that microwave oven that we wanted.

What do we hear from the administration? Let us see if there is price gouging. Fine, go, see if there is price gouging, but also be honest with the American people and tell them that there are a lot of unnecessary rules and regulations and a commitment to keep production in this country down.

□ 2145

Only when we are totally honest with the American people can we find ways to truly decrease the price at the pump.

If anybody thinks this is not affecting our everyday American out there, I think they are losing a lot of disks out in Los Alamos that they are so busy they cannot understand what is happening. Small businesses are forced to raise their fees, taxi drivers are forced to find alternative sources of income or go out of a job, small business owners who have to pay this additional freight, the additional gas costs.

This is not right, and for so many folks who claim to feel the pain of others, we are turning our cheek, turning our head away from the folks who cannot afford the costs the most.

Mr. Speaker, let me say that I think in more than the year of promises that were made and not fulfilled, the American people deserve more of a response that allows the United States companies to increase production, to decrease these onerous rules and regulations that do nothing but increase the price at the pump, and give the American family a break.

□

THE DEMOCRATIC PLAN FOR A MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG POLICY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Tonight, Mr. Speaker, once again I would like to talk about the need for a Medicare prescription drug policy, and talk a little bit about the Democratic plan, the President's plan, in contrast with what I consider the lack of plan that the Republican leadership appears to have come up with and apparently is attempting to move through the House over the next week or two.

My colleague, the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN), has been a leader on this issue and introduced legislation more than a year ago to deal most specifically with the issue of price discrimination.

As he has said many times and I will reiterate, there are really two aspects to this Medicare prescription drug proposal. One is to provide the benefit, and the other is to make sure that the price discrimination that we have witnessed so often in the last few years does not continue.

I would like to commend the gentleman for all that he has done to address this issue of price discrimination with his legislation, and also with his effort to get so many cosponsors to that bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maine (Mr. ALLEN).

Mr. ALLEN. I thank the gentleman for yielding, Mr. Speaker.

Here we are again, back in the well of the House, talking about a problem that is a matter of immediate concern to seniors and others all across the country.

A little history. I want to talk in a few minutes about the debates that are going to come up this week and next week here in the Congress over the issue of prescription drugs, but a little history is worth recalling.

It was almost 2 years ago when I released the first study done by the Democratic staff of the Committee on Government Reform which shows that, on average, seniors pay twice as much for their prescription medications as the drug companies' best customers, being big hospitals, HMOs, and the Federal government itself buying either for Medicaid or through the Veterans Administration.

That is an astonishing difference, a difference of about 100 percent of the most commonly-prescribed prescription drugs.

We released that first study on July 2, 1998. In September I introduced legislation, September of 1998, that would provide a discount to every senior who is on Medicare, to all Medicare beneficiaries. The bill would work very simply. It simply would provide that pharmacists would be able to buy drugs for Medicare beneficiaries at the best price given to the Federal government. It is called the Prescription Drug Fairness for Seniors Act, H.R. 664, in this Congress.

Then, in October of 1998, we did the first of the international comparisons. That was a study to show that Mainers pay on average 72 percent more than Canadians and 102 percent more than Mexicans for the same drug in the same quantity from the same manufacturer. Those two studies have been replicated in the first place in over 115 districts around the country, and in the second case, by dozens.

I want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who has done so much to help drive this issue, being here night after night after night and organizing the Health Care Task Force as the gentleman does.

It is very clear what Democrats are advocating for. On the one hand, we are saying we need a discount. It is very simple, it does not cost the Federal government any significant amount of money, it does not create any new bureaucracy, but it would yield about a 40 percent discount for seniors who are already on Medicare paying out-of-pocket for their own prescription drugs.

Let us remember that over half of all seniors have either no coverage at all, 37 percent, or very inadequate coverage from HMOs or through MediGap itself, so we are dealing with over half of the senior population which does not have adequate coverage for prescription drugs.

Now, 2 years after we began this effort, the Republicans are finally coming up this week and next with a plan. It is interesting what that plan is, because we have been advocating for the kind of discount I described, and also a benefit to make Medicare updated, to make it more like what the plans of Aetna, Signa, United, the Blue Cross companies provide employees, a health care plan with prescription drug coverage.

That is what we want for Medicare. Those plans negotiate lower prices for their beneficiaries. Medicare beneficiaries should get lower prices. But also, a discount is not enough. We have to have the benefit under Medicare.

It all seems very simple, but in Washington not much is very simple. What we notice are two things happening this week. On the one hand, the Republicans are coming up with a prescription drug plan that relies on HMOs and private insurance companies. On this foundation is built a plan that, the