The proposal replaces a real safety net with a false sense of security by promising a prescription drug benefit, but allowing women to slip through the doughnut hole, the coverage gap. Imagine a beneficiary's surprise when she discovers that Medicare will not help her cover her prescription drug costs after $2,000. She must wait until she qualifies for catastrophic coverage with a drug cost of over $4,900.

Mr. Speaker, we must work closely with colleagues to craft a bill that answers the question of a guaranteed prescription drug benefit. As I close, this issue is crucial to the American psyche, to the American needs of our elderly citizens.

Finally, I want to add just a moment about affirmative action, the decision that was rendered just a couple of days ago by the Supreme Court. Let me congratulate the interpretation which we felt would have always been the right interpretation, that is, that race can be a factor in equalizing the playing field and that the positions held by the University of Michigan were not quotas.

Mr. Speaker, let me say we need to do a better job in serving the American people with a better prescription drug plan that will deal and address the needs of women of America; and thank goodness for the Supreme Court decision on affirmative action.

□ 2145

MEDICARE MODERNIZATION LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, here it is in Washington, nearly 10 o'clock at night and the Republican leadership of this institution does not even have a prescription drug bill ready for us to read as homework tonight. They tell us that we are going to debate this tomorrow, maybe 2 hours at the most, one of the most important changes in our country's history in terms of health care for our seniors. They tell us maybe after midnight tonight we might be able to go up to the Rules Committee to offer our amendments and to have them considered. They will deny most of those amendments, but the interesting thing about going to the Rules Committee after midnight, no press is there. Nobody will know, in one of the most significant pieces of legislation that will be considered in this 21st century. So the American people will not know. The press will not know.

I am here tonight to say I intend to offer an amendment before the Rules Committee that is likely to be rejected, but it is a very important amendment. This amendment says that whatever prescription drug plan is considered here tomorrow, under their very restrictive rules, should do exactly what we do in the Department of Veterans Affairs and exactly what we do at the Department of Defense and that is have negotiated pricing for the drugs that our seniors will buy. Why? You get the best price. Everybody knows when you buy in quantity, you get a cheaper price. It is a very simple concept. But what has the Republican majority in this House, the radical right, done? They have actually put a provision in the bill and here it is. This is the bill that was before the committee and we know this provision will be retained in whatever the Rules Committee considers tonight, but it basically says that it prohibits our government, our Secretary of Health and Human Services from negotiating with the biggest drug companies in the world to get the best price for prescription drugs for our seniors. So what they are going to do, imagine they have got a provision that prohibits what we do at the Department of Veterans Affairs already and it prohibits what we do at the Department of Defense already in our financial purchasing system which gets our people the best prices. That is in the base bill. My amendment would get rid of that and it would say, hey, if you are going to do it and we have success across our government, just like Canada has success in their country by negotiating with the most powerful pharmaceutical companies in the world, why should we treat seniors any differently? Why should we make them pay higher prices? Indeed, in the Republican bill they make seniors pay any cost of drugs over $2,000 a year up to a level of perhaps $3,500 and it might be more because they are drafting the bill somewhere here in the Capitol. I do not know where they are. I went up to the Rules Committee to find the bill and the doors were all locked to the chairman's office.

But in any case here is what is currently being paid, for example, in the United States. Let us just take one of these drugs here, Norvasc, which is for high blood pressure. Normally it sells in one of our pharmacies for about $182.99, the Canadian price is $152.82, and the price at the Department of Veterans Affairs is $102. It is a definite savings. That is true with a whole series of pharmaceutical products that could be available to our seniors. So what the Republicans are basically saying in their bill to our seniors is, you have to pay the higher price because we won't permit you to negotiate price, we won't negotiate it for you, because our bill fundamentally denies it. This provision was written by the pharmaceutical companies themselves. Gee, does that surprise anybody?

I am only one Member of Congress representing 660,000 beautiful people in the northern part of Ohio. I am only one. Do you know there are six lobbyists for the pharmaceutical companies in this town for every one of me that there is? So basically many times I go home at night and I say to myself, folks back home, I am all you got and I am sticking with you. And I say to the pharmaceutical companies, I don't take your money, I don't want your money, but I'll show the public where your money goes. Is it any wonder why they put the provision in the base bill that went through the Committee on Energy and Commerce like lightning the other day?

Let us take a look at PhRMA. This group is so powerful that just in the last election cycle, just in one year, 2002, they contributed over $3 million. Ninety-five percent of it went to, guess, which party? The Republican Party. I happen to be a Democrat. Too bad for the Democrats. They only get 5 percent of the $3,100,000 that was donated just in the fiscal year 2002. Why do you think they gave all that money to the leadership of this institution? Take a look at Pfizer. They gave 80 percent of the $1.8 million they just contributed in 2002 to one party, the Republican Party. You can go down the list. Almost all the money goes to one party. So is it any surprise to us why the bill that we cannot find here in the Capitol and we will not even be allowed to talk about until after midnight and we are all staying up late to do that for our constituents, do you really wonder whether this government is on the level?

I urge my colleagues tomorrow to vote ''no'' on this bill and to vote ''no'' on these pharmaceutical companies until we can get negotiated pricing in this bill.

TITLE VIII—SECTION 1809(C)(1)(D)

Noninterference—In carrying out its duties with respect to the provision of qualified prescription drug coverage to beneficiaries under this title. The Administrator may not:

(i) require a particular formulary or institute a price structure for the reimbursement of covered outpatient drugs;

(ii) interfere in any way with negotiations between PDP sponsors and Medicare Advantage organizations and drug manufacturers, wholesalers, or other suppliers of covered outpatients drugs; and

(iii) other wise interfere with the competitive nature of providing such coverage through such sponsors and organizations.

U.S., CANADIAN, NEGOTIATED VA/DOD PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES

Drug name/prescribed for	U.S. retail price	Canadian retail price	FSS negotiated price (VA & DoD)
Glucophage/Diabetes Millitus	$69.99	$30.16	$60.95
K-Dur 20/Low potassium levels	55.99	29.01	25.58
Norvasc/High blood pressure	182.99	152.82	102.11
Prilosec/Heartburn	134.99	67.71	63.32
Prozac/Depression	302.97	140.69	186.98
Synthroid/Hypothyroidism	39.09	17.82	29.73

Comparison is drawn between drugs of equal dosage and quantity.

Sources: Data Compiled from Veterans' Affairs Commission and Alliance for Retired Americans.

2002 PHARMACEUTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS, BY PARTY

Rank	Organization	Amount	Democrats (percent)	Republicans (percent)
1	Pharmaceutical Research & Manufacturers of America	$3,180,552	5	95
2	Pfizer Inc	1,804,522	20	80
3	Bristol-Myers Squibb	1,590,813	16	83
4	Eli Lilly & Co	1,581,531	25	75

2002 PHARMACEUTICAL CONTRIBUTIONS, BY PARTY—Continued

Rank	Organization	Amount	Democrats (percent)	Republicans (percent)
5	Pharmacia Corp	1,480,241	22	78
6	GlaxoSmithKline	1,301,438	22	78
7	Wyeth	1,188,919	17	83
8	Johnson & Johnson	1,075,371	39	61
9	Schering-Plough Corp	1,057,978	21	79
10	Aventis	954,349	22	78

Source: Center for Responsive Politics.

REGARDING REDISTRICTING HEARING IN HOUSTON THIS SATURDAY

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening to call attention to the House to a racist piece of literature currently being circulated by the Harris County Republican Party to its e-mail subscribers. There is going to be a redistricting hearing in Harris County, Houston, on Saturday and so the Harris County Republican Party is right now e-mailing this information to all its regular subscribers. It says:

''She will be there to express her views. Will you be there to express yours?''

Who is ''she''? She is the gentlewoman who is here with us right now, SHEILA JACKSON-LEE. There is a very nice colored picture of SHEILA, whom everyone can see is African American. SHEILA is one of four Democratic Congress Members from Harris County. The other three are white. One African American, three whites. Of course, the gentlewoman appears in this e-mail and there is no picture of GENE GREEN, who is white, there is no picture of CHRIS BELL, who is white, and there is no picture of NICK LAMPSON, who is white, there is only a picture of the one African-American Member.

And so what does it say? ''She will be there to express her views. Will you be there to express yours? Reminder: Redistricting Hearing in Houston this Saturday.'' Then it gives the time and the place and the details. I would ask the gentlewoman from Houston, what does she think about this e-mail posted by the Harris County Republican Party on their Web site?

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FROST. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Obviously I think it is important that we all establish the fact that redistricting is a political process. That, in fact, our lines have been drawn by a duly organized and sanctioned Federal court, that we are in lines that have been reapproved by the voters of our respective districts and that this has not been done in the last 50 years, the redrawing of district lines. I am delighted to be one of four colleagues in the Harris County area, but I am offended by the fact that my picture is used to provoke members of the Republican Party to attend a hearing that happens to be in my congressional district. It is true that my district by the Republican plan offered by the Republicans of Washington will be a plan that literally destroys the 18th Congressional District, cuts it in half, takes out the heart of that district, the very birthplace of the Honorable Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leland, will be taken out of the 18th District. In fact, one of my good constituents says that the 18th does not need a bypass nor does it need heart surgery.

And so I do not mind in an open hearing anyone coming. It is an open hearing. But I am certainly concerned. What is the message of my face being utilized over my colleagues' faces? What is the intent of even putting up a picture? They might say, ''SHEILA JACKSON-LEE, GENE GREEN, CHRIS BELL and NICK LAMPSON will be present. Will you be there?'' That is a fair enough statement. That is a political statement. ''The Democrats will be there. Will you be there?'' But, no, in subtlety, not even the dignity of the name. I should sound a little bit modest. I would imagine there would be a lot of people who would not know who this is, but they know it is a black face. So maybe they are suggesting that a black person will be there to offer their views. Would you not want to run to the hearing so that you can offer yours?

I think this is a sad commentary. I believe and I hope that as I look at the Web page of Democrats and others who are working to get their constituents to this hearing that we will not stoop to this level. I want to simply say to my constituents in the 18th Congressional District in Texas, come out and have your voices heard. Come out and speak your views. You may agree or disagree with me. But I realize that those who want to be empowered will agree that this plan that they are putting forward does not help the people of the 18th Congressional District or the minorities who are represented in that district or the people that are represented in that district.

By the way, as the gentleman well knows, I represent a very diverse district and proudly so. People from all walks of life. But shame on the Harris County Republican Party. Shame on them for stooping to this level. Frankly, I am going to be reaching out and I am going to ask my constituents to call the Harris County Republican Party and ask them, do they not have a better way of communicating to the people a reasonable expression of soliciting their coming to this particular meeting.

Mr. FROST. I thank the gentlewoman for her eloquent statement. I would only observe that this type of racist appeal is something that we saw in our State 20 or 30 years ago. I thought we had moved beyond that. I am ashamed for the State of Texas and I am particularly ashamed for the Harris County Republican Party that they would stoop to racism in the year 2003.

FEDERAL SPENDING

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, it seems that the Federal Government is so big and bureaucratic that it cannot do anything in an economical or efficient way. In fact, we read and hear about so many examples of waste of Federal money that we too often take it for granted or shrug our shoulders about it.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported recently that the Defense Department ''couldn't account for more than a trillion dollars in financial transactions, not to mention dozens of tanks, missiles and planes.'' Listen to what this story said:

''Though defense has long been notorious for waste, recent government reports suggest the Pentagon's money management woes have reached astronomical proportions. A study by the Defense Department's Inspector General found that the Pentagon couldn't properly account for more than a trillion dollars in monies spent. A GAO report found defense inventory systems so lax that the U.S. Army lost track of 56 airplanes, 32 tanks and 36 Javelin missile command launch units.''

This story, Mr. Speaker, was not based on reports from some antidefense group. It came from studies done by the Defense Department's own Inspector General and the General Accounting Office of the Congress. This comes on the heels of the Congress overwhelmingly voting for the biggest increase in defense spending ever. And now the Defense Department wants another mega-billion increase and a mega-billion supplemental appropriation, all taking place after we downsized the military by about 1 million troops and closed several bases. All of us want to support the military, but surely we cannot just sit around and allow such horrendous waste to continue.

Then there is the case, Mr. Speaker, of Eric Rudolph. The FBI spent untold millions and had hundreds of agents involved over several years in this manhunt. The FBI should be embarrassed that Rudolph was finally found by a rookie local small-town police officer who had only been on the force for about 9 months. And he found him in Rudolph's home area. We give far too much of our law enforcement dollar to Federal agencies which make only a very tiny fraction of the arrests, probably less than 1 percent. What we need to do is give far more of our law enforcement money to local police and sheriff's departments. They are the officers who are fighting the real crime, the street crime that people want fought.