Unfortunately, some of our friends on the other side of the aisle have mounted a misinformation campaign to scare and confuse America's seniors for their own political agenda. They say that prescription drug cards are too confusing and that they will not work.

Well, seniors have already decided that discount cards will work. The verdict is in, and these new discount cards will save seniors hundreds, if not thousands, of dollars.

For example, at current discount drug prices, my mother in Louisville, Colorado, will save just under $400 on her prescription drugs and my father over $900. That is about $1,300 a year for my own parents. Those are real savings, money they can take to the bank, give to the grandkids or pay their own rent.

I encourage seniors to take advantage of this program to begin realizing these savings. Call 1–800–MEDICARE or visit www.medicare.gov.

PASS A REAL MEANINGFUL MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG PLAN

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, today the new prescription drug discount cards went into effect as part of the Republicans so-called Medicare bill that passed in December. Few seniors have signed up for these so-called discount cards because they provide little, if any, significant savings.

Under the new law, beneficiaries can only sign up for one card a year, but the drug companies who offer these cards can switch the drugs they cover every week. So a senior who signs up for one particular card just to save money on a specific drug may find that a week later that card no longer helps them, and many drug companies are starting to jack up their prices just so they can offer discounts without losing a dime in profits.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better than this by our seniors. We should and must allow the government to use the purchasing power of 41 million seniors to lower the cost of prescription drugs, but the current Medicare law prohibits this from happening.

I urge my colleagues to pass a real meaningful Medicare prescription drug plan this year.

AMERICA'S ENERGY NEEDS ARE CHANGING

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, America's energy needs are changing, and our current situation is certainly different than the oil shocks that we all saw in the 1970s, because there has not been a disruption in supply but an increase in demand from emerging economies such as China.

And what kind of leadership on energy issues do we get from the Democrats and their Presidential nominee, Senator JOHN KERRY? Nothing but finger-pointing and continued bowing to the radical environmentalists that will not allow America to retrieve our own energy reserves.

The result of this lack of leadership is higher prices at the gasoline pumps, higher prices for families to heat their homes, and greater dependence on foreign sources of energy.

In ANWR, we have huge supplies of oil and natural gas that if we were to retrieve would have great benefit for America: greater energy independence, lower prices at the pump, lower prices to heat our homes, and hundreds of thousands of new jobs.

These policies from the Democrats do nothing more than to lead us permanently into high prices and greater reliance on Middle Eastern oil. These are policies that our Nation simply cannot afford.

REMEMBERING AUXILIARY BISHOP BENNIE ALLISON

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, Auxiliary Bishop Bennie Allison, pastor of Corinthian Temple Church of God in Christ in Chicago, passed away last week.

Bishop Allison had a long and distinguished career as both a religious leader and a civic leader. In addition to his religious duties, he was chairman of the Garfield Organization and founder of the Allison Foundation for Better Living, which provided social services and job development opportunities for residents of the West Garfield community.

I extend condolences to his wife and family and urge them to continue his great work.

FIGHTING THE WAR ON TERROR

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, during this past week, I saw firsthand our courageous service members in action successfully fighting the global war on terror in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, the Persian Gulf, Qatar, and Germany.

Led by Committee on House Administration chairman, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. NEY), our delegation met with American military and coalition government officials. In every instance, my effort as a Congressman, Guard member, and parent of three service members, which was meant to encourage others, actually encouraged me.

I was particularly impressed by the courage of those wounded in the war on terror that we met at Landstuhl, Germany. I was so touched by a female soldier who had just undergone extreme surgery. We immediately bonded as fellow National Guard members, and later I found out she was a star of the Notre Dame's women's basketball team. She lives Army values.

The war on terror is not just Afghanistan and Iraq. President Bush has been courageous in protecting American families by taking the war to the terrorists overseas and not waiting for a new September 11 on the streets of our communities. I know firsthand the new greatest generation of American servicemembers has the fortitude to win the war on terror.

In conclusion, May God bless our troops; and we will never forget September 11.

DISCOUNT DRUG CARDS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, today, the discount prescription drug cards Republicans have been touting take effect.

Over the last month, seniors faced the confusing task of shopping online between 73 discount cards for more than 60,000 prescription drugs.

The New York Times reported today that less than 1 million seniors have signed up, well off the Bush administration's prediction of 7.3 million.

Seniors should be skeptical. While the Bush administration says that these cards will cut bills by 10 to 25 percent, a new report out from Families U.S.A. shows prices on the top-selling five drugs for seniors increased 9.9 percent over the last year, wiping out any savings from the discount cards.

We cannot do anything to help seniors out with their prescription drug bills until we actually do something about the skyrocketing drug prices. Until then, these cards will not provide any meaningful relief, and the program will continue to be a failure.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

CONGRATULATING AND SALUTING FOCUS: HOPE ON ITS 35TH ANNIVERSARY

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 295) congratulating and