

in the area. None of their medical records were available, and many of these patients had very complex medical conditions and were on multiple medications at the time. And if it had not been for the good graces for some of the pharmacies that actually had patient records electronically that were able to set up outside some of the triage centers to provide that data to physicians who agreed to see these patients as they came off of the transportation from New Orleans and arrived in Dallas, you can construct a pretty good medical history just going to the pharmaceutical history, and those pharmacy records were invaluable in providing good care and immediate care to those patients.

But it certainly made a believer out of me in January, or when this picture was made after the flooding in New Orleans that paper records have inherently within them a fundamental flaw, and that is, in time of great natural disaster they are not going to be there to provide useful information for those patients if they are suddenly displaced, as these patients were, the medical records themselves. They could have been destroyed in a fire, they could have been damaged in an earthquake in some other parts of the country. And, unfortunately, these types of tragedies do happen, and electronic medical records does take some aspect of that tragedy away because it does provide a way for that record to be accessed in a different location, and all of that data can be pulled off the Internet and be made available to the now receiving physician who is treating that patient.

Mr. Speaker, a little preventive medicine would go a long way in this entire Medicare policy debate. I just can't help but note the irony: November 1, when the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services came out and said, Doctor, 10.1 percent cut, unless Congress does something before the end of the year. About that same time, the conference Chair on the majority side had an op-ed in The Washington Post that said, you know what, we have done such a good job with providing government health care and Medicare and we are doing a great job now with what we are doing in SCHIP. We know how that has turned out so far. We want to extend Medicare benefits to people who are down to the age of 55. We want to drag and drop this population into what is happening in the Medicare policies right now.

I would just argue, before we expand the program to that degree, shouldn't we ask ourselves are we doing a good job with what we have right now.

I think the mere fact that we are here at the 11th hour of this Congress and we have not dealt with the problem of physician compensation, doctors' offices across the country are looking at Congress and saying, what gives, guys? How am I going to prepare for next year? Do I hire that new doctor or not? Do I buy that piece of medical equipment or not? Do I take out a loan to

improve my office or not? Because they don't have any certitude about what the activity of this body is going to be. And even at the best, the best we can do at this point is say we are going to punt for 6 months, and we will see you in June.

Mr. Speaker, that is not acceptable. This Congress has an obligation to this country's physicians to behave in a responsible way. And certainly, certainly let's quell the talk of expanding the reach and grasp of the Federal Government until we take care of what we already have.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today until 2 p.m.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for December 17 and the balance of the week on account of official business.

Mr. PASTOR (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week on account of a death in the family.

Mr. GARY G. MILLER of California (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and December 12 on account of personal reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. KENNEDY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WATERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUELLAR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ALLEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CARDOZA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SPRATT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. KENNEDY, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. JONES of North Carolina) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today and December 19.

Mr. KING of Iowa, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RUSH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HILL, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CAPPS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ELLISON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SHAYS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GOHMERT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

Ms. Lorraine C. Miller, Clerk of the House, reported and found truly enrolled bills of the House of the following titles, which were thereupon signed by the Speaker:

H.R. 6. An act to move the United States toward greater energy independence and security, to increase the production of clean renewable fuels, to protect consumers, to increase the efficiency of products, buildings, and vehicles, to promote research on and deploy greenhouse gas capture and storage options, and to improve the energy performance of the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

H.R. 797. An act to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve low-vision benefits matters, matters relating to burial and memorial affairs, and other matters under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

H.R. 2408. An act to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs outpatient clinic in Green Bay, Wisconsin, as the "Milo C. Huempfer Department of Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic".

H.R. 2671. An act to designate the United States courthouse located at 301 North Miami Avenue, Miami, Florida, as the "Clyde Atkins United States Courthouse".

H.R. 3703. An act to amend section 5112(p)(1)(A) of title 31, United States Code, to allow an exception from the \$1 coin dispensing capability requirement for certain vending machines.

H.R. 3739. An act to amend the Arizona Water Settlements Act to modify the requirements for the statement of findings.

SENATE ENROLLED BILLS SIGNED

The SPEAKER announced her signature to enrolled bills of the Senate of the following titles:

S. 597. An act to amend title 39, United States code, to extend the authority of the United States Postal Service to issue a semipostal to raise funds for breast cancer research.

S. 2174. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 175 South Monroe Street in Tiffin, Ohio, as the "Paul E. Gillmor Post Office Building".

S. 2484. An act to rename the National institute of Child Health and Human Development as the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

S.J. Res. 13. Granting the consent of Congress to the International Emergency Management Assistance Memorandum of Understanding.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 50 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, December 19, 2007, at 10 a.m.