

her \$416 Social Security check. Because of the high costs. Ms. Carson has had to skip or cut back on medications. She is only taking half of her prescribed blood thinner, and has had to skip her arthritis medicine because she was not able to fill the prescription.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, Ms. Carson's problem is a common one for seniors across my District and across the country. Because of the high cost of prescription drugs, seniors often have to take half of what the doctor has told them to. Because of the high cost of prescription drugs, seniors often have to choose between taking their medicine and paying for food or their electricity. And because of the high cost of prescription drugs, our seniors are dying because they are too proud to ask their children to help them buy their medication.

Studies that have been done for several Members of Congress, including myself, over the last several months have shown, the prices seniors and other consumers are charged are on the average 106 percent more than what pharmaceutical companies charge their favored customers such as HMOs, insurance companies and the Federal Government. This just doesn't seem fair to me when you think about the fact that according to Industry ratings of Fortune 500 companies—pharmaceutical companies are the most profitable businesses in existence. They made \$24.5 billion in profits last year. Pharmaceutical companies had a 17.2 percent return on revenues. Telecommunication companies, 8.1 percent; computers and office equipment manufacturers, 7.3 percent; food and drug stores made a whopping 1.7 percent.

One might think the success of pharmaceutical companies would be of tremendous benefit to American consumers. The reward: This year consumers have faced the highest two, monthly increases in prescription drug prices on record.

Earlier this week, I chaired the first meeting of the Prescription Drug Task Force because of the increasing importance of the issue. Also, last week I introduced legislation with Congressman TOM ALLEN that would allow senior citizens who are Medicare beneficiaries to purchase prescription drugs at the low prices available to Federal agencies under the Federal Supply Schedule.

For the remainder of this session of Congress and continuing into the 106th Congress, the task force will work to bring attention to issues involving the costs and availability of prescription drugs. The task force will serve the purpose of complementing our legislation and is open to finding new policy recommendations. It will be an advocate for consumers and ensuring competition within the industry.

All Members of Congress should stop and think about the blatant unfairness seniors face every day when they go to purchase their prescription drugs—medication they need to stay well and to stay alive. This is not an issue that will just go away. We should stand up for our seniors who are getting ripped off by pharmaceutical companies and ensure that they are not charged more than they should be for their medication.

CHRIST CHURCH OF ACCOKEEK
300TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY

HON. STENY H. HOYER

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 300th Anniversary of Christ Church of Accokeek, Maryland, built by the Church of England, and one of six pre-Revolutionary War churches. It is believed this church congregation held their first prayer meetings sometime in 1698 in private homes with their first formal church structure being built a few years later.

Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you can imagine, Christ Church has weathered countless trials and tribulations through its 300 years of existence. Early settlers triumphed over the harshness of the 1700's, the separation from the Church of England, and the invasion of troops during the War of 1812. Christ Church's survival over the decades shows the uniqueness of the community of Accokeek.

In 300 years of existence there have been vast changes in liturgical theologies. In the early days the dictates of theology permitted no music, no stained glass or colored windows and only box type pews. Today, Christ Church radiates this same simplicity and symmetry with the addition of beautiful stained glass, music, conventional pews, and a bell tower. The ornate Holy Services offered now at Christ Church are a reflection of strong roots and faith of its members. A quality that has been strong enough to trickle down and bless the numerous generations of this Maryland community.

Christ Church makes a rich contribution to the history of Maryland and our great Nation. It sits as a symbol of the great sacrifices made by the early settlers to exercise their religious beliefs and through the years the clergy has worked tirelessly to minister to the people of the region during good times and bad.

Christ Church has seen years and years of families and neighbors coming together for convocations and picnics, weddings and funerals, for comfort and direction. In the words of an early Accokeek resident, Mr. Henry Williams (1862-1936) on speaking of the importance of this church to the community, "I think it has quite a bright future before it—good roads, good schools, and a dear old church."

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join with me in wishing this "dear old church", the Christ Church of Accokeek, congratulations on their 300th Year Anniversary.

TRIBUTE TO BOBBY RUSH

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. THOMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and congratulate a dear and close friend of mine, the national and international known Mr. Bobby Rush. On November 9 at the House of Blues in Los Angeles, California, Bobby Rush will receive the Blue Foundation's second annual "B.B. King Blues Hero" Award during the Lifetime Achievement Ceremony.

The B.B. King Blues Hero Award was established in 1997 by the Blues Foundation to recognize a Blues artist whose career has been characterized by community service and charitable activity. As the recipient of the award, Bobby will receive an honorarium, as is characteristic of his goodness and concern for young people, is donating his honorarium to a program to provide computers for Mississippi classrooms.

While Bobby Rush is known for his amazing stage show and outstanding performances on the 21 releases that span his career, few people know of Rush's dedication to his community in Jackson, Mississippi. For years Bobby has taken time off the road to use his tour bus to transport people to the polls on Election Day, participates in voter registration drives, and encourages young people to be civic minded and help in their communities, which I truly appreciate. He also has played functions to raise money for sickle cell anemia research, child care, school band uniforms, and musical equipment for local students.

Bobby Rush promotes the Blues by participating in the Blues in the Schools programs nationwide. During Black History Month, Bobby visits schools throughout Mississippi and Alabama. He also volunteers his own home as an emergency shelter for children leaving the Hinds County Youth Correctional Facility in Raymond, Mississippi.

With professional accomplishments and personal acts of humanitarianism such as these, I am truly proud and honored to stand here and extend congratulations to my friend Mr. Bobby Rush. He is truly a credit to America, his community, and his art.

HONORING MR. BENJAMIN S.
PURSER, JR. FOR HIS SERVICE
TO THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF
INVESTIGATION AND THE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF JUSTICE

HON. BOB CLEMENT

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 1, 1998

Mr. CLEMENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mr. Benjamin S. Purser, Jr. and his service to the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Department of Justice.

Mr. Purser will retire from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), after twenty-eight years of faithful service, on October 3, 1998. He will be greatly missed.

Mr. Purser, a native Tennessean, now serves as a Senior Supervisory Resident Agent for the agency in Nashville, with oversight responsibility for all operations and investigations in Middle Tennessee. He began his career with the FBI in 1970, and following training, was assigned to offices in Baltimore, Maryland, and New York City. During his ten years in New York, Mr. Purser was assigned to the Organized Crime Division where he earned significant investigation expertise relating to white-collar and violent crime, and health care fraud.

Mr. Purser gained notoriety throughout the South in the late 1980's and early 1990's, when he supervised "Rocky Top," a sensitive and complicated undercover investigation of public corruption, which focused on abuse of