

Should any contractor be worried about this measure?

Not the reputable ones who follow the law.

Today we can send a powerful message. The message is that, from here on in, when it comes to spending tax dollars, the United States government is going to be one tough customer.

LET'S REQUEST THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE COMMISSION TO STUDY HOW HIGH DRUG PRICES HURT THE U.S. ECONOMY

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee recently wrote to the U.S. International Trade Commission requesting a section 332 study relating to the pricing of prescription drugs by certain U.S. trading partners. The questions asked— if one reads between the lines—seem to be designed by the pharmaceutical lobby to study whether countries that control drug prices are being unfair to the drug companies; whether such price controls have caused U.S. prescription medication prices to be higher than they would otherwise have been. Implicit in the phrasing of the questions, is the assumption that other countries should be paying more.

Other sources of information suggest another approach. Perhaps Americans should be paying less.

The pharmaceutical industry is in an enviable financial position. Drug firms enjoy, on average, three times the profitability (28 percent) of the other 36 industry groups in the Fortune 500. While maintaining the present level of research and development, they were able to invest, last year, about \$14 billion in direct-to-consumer advertising, public relations, lobbying and promotion to doctors. Taxpayers paid more than 30 percent of the costs of R&D through government grants, in addition to the millions in benefits from the government from R&D tax credits. The industry reaps huge benefits, while poor Americans choose between needed medications and paying the rent or for food; or they cut prescriptions in half to try and prolong their pharmaceutical supplies.

The U.S. spends far more than any other country on health care (14 percent of GDP) yet it ranks 37th in the world in the quality of health systems; we rank in the lowest 25 percent of industrialized nation's in life-expectancy and infant mortality. Our system is inefficient and wasteful. American health care has an over-emphasis on state-of-the-art cure instead of preventive care; relatively, we are overwhelmed by MRIs, CAT scanners and high priced drugs. Why have drug costs increased at more than twice the general inflation rate, leading to prescription drug spending growing at twice the rate of all other health expenditures, accounting for 10 percent of total health expenditures?

Perhaps, the chairman's requested study could be extended to include the increased productivity our economy might enjoy if drug prices were lower and the resources used instead on repairing the country's infrastructure, on education or even to lower taxes. How

does the high cost of health care impact our trade balance? How much of the "extra" cost of an American car is attributable to the inflated cost of providing health care to workers, driven by such factors as rapidly rising pharmaceutical prices?

We may be able to coerce our trading partners into allowing prices to be raised for their citizens. However, I doubt that Americans will be overjoyed to discover that the efforts of the International Trade Commission resulted in poor Mexicans being deprived of their life-saving medications, to further enrich the pharmaceutical industry (which will not be passed on to American consumers, in any case). The answer is obvious, we should be concentrating not on forcing others to pay more, but on convincing the prescription drug manufacturers to be a little less aggressive in maximizing profits here at home.

CENTRAL NEW JERSEY CELEBRATES THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE FLEMINGTON AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY #159

HON. RUSH D. HOLT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the accomplishments of the Flemington American Legion auxiliary #159. This organization has continually made lasting contributions to its local communities through hard work and dedication to those in need.

For nearly fifteen years, its members have canvassed the Flemington Area for needy families during the holiday season. Last December, they raised enough money to shop for sixty families with over one hundred children. Four "Santas" personally presented each family with two large boxes of food, toys, games and clothing for the children.

This past January, the organization made another demonstration of its commitment to the community during times of crisis. On January 22, a gas explosion badly injured and burned a fire chief and police patrolman after they responded to a 911 call, resulting in their lengthy hospitalization. In response, the organization hosted a benefit spaghetti dinner. With a massive volunteer effort, members worked as cooks, dishwashers, and parking attendants. Contributing both time and money, the group served over 800 dinners, raising enough funds to present the two men checks of \$5,000 each when they were finally discharged from the hospital.

As extraordinary as this effort was, it was just one of many times that the American Legion Auxiliary #159 has worked on behalf of those in need. Throughout the years, the American Legion Auxiliary #159 has donated money to Special Olympics, Childrens Miracle Network, Cancer Research, March of Dimes, Red Cross, Salvation Army and numerous other local charities. Working with its "Legion Family" that includes the American Legion and Sons of the American Legion Post #159, it has continually demonstrated its dedication to the community.

The American Legion Auxiliary #159 is a great asset to both Central New Jersey and our nation. I urge all my colleagues to join me today in recognizing its dedication to community service and Central New Jersey.

TRIBUTE TO MR. GEORGE DONALD O'QUINN

HON. BOB ETHERIDGE

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to the life and career of Mr. George Donald O'Quinn. Two weeks ago, Mr. O'Quinn retired as Principal of Boone Trail Elementary School after 38 years of committed and dedicated service. Mr. O'Quinn has never asked for a medal or a monument; he has only hoped for the success of his students, his school, and his community. It is fitting then that today we honor the accomplishments of this humble public servant.

Mr. O'Quinn was born in 1937 and raised in the community he so proudly served. In fact, he attended the same school that he would later capably lead for so many years. After earning his Bachelors of Science degree in Agriculture from North Carolina State University in 1961, Mr. O'Quinn began teaching at Coats High School, in Dunn, NC. Over the next five years, he taught at Lillington High School and worked at Southern National Bank as that institution's vice president. Fortunately for the people of Lillington, Mr. O'Quinn returned to the classroom in 1972. After four years of teaching Vocational Education at Boone Trail, he was named Principal, a position he would hold for the next 27 years.

It is also important to note that Mr. O'Quinn was engaged in the affairs of his community. He served and held leadership positions in numerous organizations, including the Harnett County Community Development Association, the North Carolina Farm Bureau, the Boone Trail and National Ruritan Club, and the Lillington Jaycees. Mr. O'Quinn also served as a Deacon and Sunday School Teacher at Anitoch Baptist Church. On top of his community activities, he was also able to raise a beautiful family with the able assistance of his wife Elaine.

Mr. Speaker, Donald O'Quinn's love for his community, his school, the children he mentored, and his family is truly remarkable. Tonight I praise him for nurturing so many children, embodying the spirit of his community, and sharing his gifts with us all.

TRIBUTE TO DOUGLAS "JOCKO" HENDERSON

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 20, 2000

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Douglas "Jocko" Henderson, who passed away July 15, 2000. Douglas "Jocko" Henderson was an innovative radio pioneer whose contribution to the industry is legendary. One of the first African American disc jockeys in Philadelphia, "Jocko" was known for his smooth rhyming rap before rap had a name.

From 1952 to 1974, Jocko hosted his "Rocketship" music program on radio stations WHAT and WDAS. He played the popular records of the day but introduced them with his silver-voiced rhyming style that other disc