

Over the past decade, what we have learned is that the AWP is a fictitious number that must be changed. Rather than an accurate barometer of the price at which physicians purchase the drugs used in their practice, the AWP benchmark is more like a car's "sticker price," which is usually much higher than the actual acquisition cost. Under competitive pressure, manufacturers and wholesalers will routinely discount drug prices to physicians, lower their cost, while maintaining a higher AWP. In a competitive spiral, these discounts grow, increasing the net profits on the drugs, while the Medicare program continues to pay the higher AWP.

Unfortunately, due to the 20 percent copay that all beneficiaries pay for part B services, Medicare beneficiaries presently pay \$200 million more than they should in inflated co-pays. What's more, the Medicare program itself pays over \$1 billion more than we should.

The new system, based on competitive bidding and choice, pays appropriately for drugs and reimburses physicians appropriately for services. Under this new model, we provide physicians a choice—either continue to do business as they have or enter a new program that provides drugs to physicians for administration on a replacement basis. These reforms are fair, sound and must be enacted.

Earlier this year, Congress set aside \$400 billion for the development of a prescription drug benefit in Medicare. This is a significant and meaningful commitment by Congress for our Nation's seniors. Some may quibble about the size of the benefit. However, I am convinced that we can pass legislation so that every senior has access to the latest prescription drug products and has catastrophic coverage for very serious, very costly medical conditions. We owe it to our seniors to pass and have the President sign into law, a prescription drug benefit this year.

HONORING PASTOR G.L. JOHNSON

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor G.L. Johnson for his 40 years of ministry with Peoples Church in Fresno, California. He will be honored at a special dinner for civic and community leaders to be held Saturday, June 28th.

Pastor Johnson came to Fresno as the Associate Director of the Latin American Orphanage. In 1963, he accepted the position of Senior Pastor at Peoples Church, having had over ten years of pastoral experience. Under his leadership, People's Church has grown to become the largest Protestant Church in Central California, with an average Sunday attendance of 4,500. The Johnson Scholarship Fund has also been established in his honor to assist young people with the cost of education prior to entering full-time ministry.

Pastor Johnson has poured his life into Fresno for the sake of the Kingdom of God. He derives great joy in knowing that God has used his ministry to bring thousands to know Jesus Christ. The mission of Peoples Church seems to coincide with that of Pastor Johnson's personal mission, to "Reach . . . Win . . . Train . . . Send." It has been said that

Pastor Johnson was to Peoples Church ". . . what Babe Ruth was to baseball, George Washington to the United States, and the Apostle Paul to the Gentiles."

Pastor Johnson's respect and admiration go beyond the walls of Peoples Church. In 1997, he was listed by the Fresno Bee as one of 75 people who made a positive contribution to life in the Central Valley. He and the late Pastor Bufe Karraker gathered church and local leaders to tackle the issue of crime in Fresno, forming the NoName Fellowship, and reached beyond the church family to touch lives of the citizens in the city. Pastor Johnson has been the recipient of numerous awards such as the Distinguished Service Award of the City of Fresno, "Mayor of Fresno, For the Day" in 1973 and 1987, and listed in "Who's Who" for Fresno and American Religion. He also sits on several boards, including the Sequoia Council of Boy Scouts of America, Fresno Leadership Foundation, Police Activities League, and Northern California National Association of Evangelicals.

Pastor Johnson has spoken at numerous Christian Universities and conferences across the country. In addition to his ministry in the United States, he has ministered to large crowds in Seoul, Korea; to Russian leaders following the fall of Communism; and to Christians in Romania and China. Pastor Johnson is also the author of several booklets and articles including How to Conduct a Stewardship Campaign in the Local Church.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Pastor G.L. Johnson for his years of ministry and outstanding personal contributions to the community of Fresno. I invite my colleagues to join me in wishing Pastor Johnson many years of continued success.

HONORING DR. MICHAEL
REYNOLDS

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the contributions of Dr. Michael Reynolds, PhD, to the advancement of science education, to the creation and development of the Chabot Space and Science Center in Oakland, California, and to the science education of young students in Oakland, the East Bay and Northern California.

Dr. Reynolds was hired as Executive Director of the historic Chabot Observatory and Science Center in 1991, after being named Florida Science Educator of the Year and being a finalist in the NASA Teacher in Space Program.

Dr. Reynolds led the team, which conceived, financed and built the new Chabot Space and Science Center, with energy, enthusiasm and skill. The center is a jewel of Northern California.

Dr. Reynolds has built programs with the United States Air Force, NASA, the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the Department of Education to further Science Education and the public understanding of the frontiers of space science.

Under Dr. Reynolds leadership, the new Chabot Space and Science Center has become internationally renown for its science education programs.

Dr. Reynolds has secured, with NSF funding, a major new traveling exhibit from the People's Republic of China, consisting of artifacts and instruments used in ancient Chinese astronomy, that will tour the United States under the title of "Dragon Skies".

On behalf of the children, parents, educators of Oakland, of California and of the nation, I want to gratefully acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Michael Reynolds, PhD, to the advancement of science education and understanding, and for the building of the new Chabot Space and Science Center, which will serve as a place of inspiration and learning for generations to come.

On behalf of my constituents and myself I wish to recognize the accomplishments of an educator, scientist, astronomer, dreamer, and an eternal optimist whose watchword is "Keep Looking Up."

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG
AND MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2003

SPEECH OF

HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 26, 2003

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I was disappointed that the Rules Committee did not make in order an opportunity for an alternative proposal from my colleagues Ellen Tauscher and Cal Dooley, in the form of H.R. 1568. Looking carefully at the arguments from both sides of the aisle on the proposals before us today, I am inclined to think that they are both right. There are egregious problems in the proposal by the Republicans. It is going to have serious dislocative effects; it doesn't adequately meet the needs of low-income people; it could actually deteriorate prescription drug coverage for others; and, it extends services to many who do not need it.

The Democratic alternative is well-intentioned and more generous, but there are questions about whether this will be affordable over time. We may be biting off more than we can sustain as Medicare goes into a time of severe strain with regard to cost and the capacity to meet the needs of an exploding retirement population.

I continue to be troubled that low income senior citizens without drug coverage pay the highest prices in the world for their medicines. This is intolerable. There is real potential to harness the vast purchasing power of the United States to negotiate better prices, the same way private employers, local governments and hospitals do. The power of the free market and negotiation should not be denied to the sector that would benefit from it the most. There is no reason that the nation's Medicare recipients should pay a higher price for the same drugs that recipients who are part of our veterans program receive. We can craft a program that is not unduly coercive, and does not lead to a disruption of the drug industry. The pharmaceutical industry needs to be more accommodating of this approach, or I feel that they will inevitably end up with far more draconian solutions. They cannot continue to mine gold from low income senior citizens.

The alternative that I would rather have had on the floor today would expend the same

amount of money that we have determined is affordable, and target it to low-income seniors without coverage, and people with extraordinarily high prescription drug needs. That is where we should target our Medicare resources. It would permit us to keep promises made to help remedy this serious situation. It does not over commit, and leaves the way open for subsequent Medicare reform. It would appear that if either of the other two bills were adopted, it would make long term reform more difficult and would pose significant budget pressures at a time when our fiscal policies are in disarray.

I truly think this is one of those times when less actually is more, and being careful will pay long-term dividends. I am voting accordingly, against the two alternatives, and hope that Congress will reach the point where we can have a more targeted, sustainable, and effective approach that can provide a foundation for future reform.

HONORING MRS. ODELL KINNEY

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a citizen who exemplified the spirit of self-reliance and a concern for others that we can all learn from. Mrs. Odell Kinney was a pillar of society, particularly among her community in Cleveland, OH.

Mrs. Kinney gained a well-founded reputation for taking in children of the neighborhood and dedicating her time to the development of her community for over 30 years. She made a lifelong commitment to raising 18 children who loved and admired her dearly. She was also a daycare provider for over 20 years.

Her dedication to children has inspired the Odell Kinney Scholarship Fund. The goal of the Odell Kinney Scholarship Fund is to award an annual scholarship in the amount of \$1000 to a deserving student.

Among her abundant contributions to society, Mrs. Kinney was a member of the PTA, a persistent entrepreneur, an active member of the Lee/Harvard Ward Club and served as President of her street club for 10 years. She provided food baskets to the needy on an ongoing basis, served as a church missionary and a Bible school teacher.

There are hundreds of individuals, if not thousands whose lives Mrs. Kinney touched in a beautiful way. They will never be the same again:

"They don't make 'em like Odell anymore," said Mr. Simmons, a childhood friend.

"She had a beautiful spirit," said business partner, Brenda McCants.

"She was at the top of her game, committed and dedicated to the community and came from a great generation of black women," said Cleveland Councilman Joe Jones.

The biggest commitment she made was the love of God and God's children. In essence, Mrs. Odell Kinney had a heart as big as Texas. The lingering effects of her good work will last forever.

AFGHANISTAN'S FUTURE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 8, 2003

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, an unfortunate pattern is developing with the Bush Administration—militarily, in Afghanistan and Iraq, American forces have been extremely successful. I voted for the military action in Afghanistan, and against that in Iraq, but it is obvious that in both cases the American military performed extremely well and the people of the United States can be confident of the ability of our armed forces to do whatever is necessary to protect us and to advance our legitimate security interests.

Unfortunately, this administration's record in the aftermath of these military victories has been much less reassuring. The situation in Iraq is of course a very distressing one, and is widely known. In part because of the attention that is understandably focused on Iraq, with the continuing toll on American military personnel and the chaos and political troubles in the country, Afghanistan has to some extent been, as the headline in *The New York Times* for July 1 says, "Lost in the Shuffle."

I recently met in my office here with representatives of Afghans for a Civil Society, and I was troubled by the grave defects they described in American policy there. In particular, we are clearly doing much too little to support President Karzai—who seems to be a man genuinely trying to promote democracy and economic development in a difficult situation.

Mr. Speaker, I supported America's military intervention into Afghanistan to deal with the terrorists who had unleashed mass murder on the United States. And I believe that overthrowing the brutal, bigoted Taliban regime was also a service to human rights. But having done that, we have an obligation to help put a coherent government in Afghanistan in its place, and I regret to say that I do not think this administration is showing sufficient will in this regard.

Subsequent to my meeting with people from Afghans for a Civil Society, I read last week in *The New York Times* a very thoughtful and disturbing article by Sarah Chayes, who had been in that meeting, in which she points to one of the central weaknesses of America's policy in Afghanistan. Because redeeming our obligation to the people of Afghanistan is so important both in moral and geopolitical terms, I ask that Sarah Chayes' important article be printed here.

[From the *New York Times*, July 1, 2003]

AFGHANISTAN'S FUTURE, LOST IN THE SHUFFLE

(By Sarah Chayes)

KANDAHAR, Afghanistan—en miles outside this dust-blown city, the historical capital of Afghanistan, gunmen belonging to the local warlord guard the airport, which American forces use as a base. The hefty fee the guards get from the United States has allowed them to build a marble-faced barracks nearby.

Kandaharis, baffled, keep asking me, "Why are the Americans helping President Harold Karzai and helping his enemies, the warlords, too?" To them the problem with this practice is clear: United States policy is in danger of failing because America won't stop hedging its bets. At stake is not just the fu-

ture of Afghanistan, but a whole region's hopes of escaping a 30-year nightmare. And ultimately, what happens in Afghanistan will shape relations between the Muslim world and the West.

The hedging of bets has taken many forms since the fall of the Taliban a year and a half ago: a dizzying succession of officers at the United States Embassy for the first six months; the lack of any reconstruction projects outside Kabul until after the grand council chose Mr. Karzai as transitional president; and later, international donors' obsession with quick-impact projects, known as quips, that didn't cost much and wouldn't be much of a loss if they failed.

Afghans, meanwhile, have been waiting for major reconstruction that would make a real difference. The Kabul-Kandahar road, on which work has only just begun, has become a cause célèbre. What was once a six-hour trip to the capital to deliver, say, Kandahar grapes, and the exquisitely fragrant raisins they dry into, is now a three-day trek—and 72 hours on the road means grape mash. A good road to Kabul would make all the difference to Kandahar's merchants, and jump start a whole region's economy.

And what about other projects that would substantially improve Afghan lives? There's the road to Urozgan, an isolated town that is easy prey to Islamic extremists and is at minimum a nine-hour drive from Kandahar along a ribbon of iron-hard dirt. The Helmand Province irrigation system, built by American engineers in the late 1950s, now lies crippled after years of neglect and Soviet sabotage. Donors, however, are loath to commit their money to big projects like these.

But the most dangerous form of bet-hedging has been American support for local strongmen. Eager for Afghan forces to help fight the Taliban, the United States brought these warlords back from exile after 9/11. What began as a relationship of convenience was cemented in a brotherhood of arms, as United States troops fraternized with the exotic fighters they had bivouacked with. Because they had reaped weapons and cash in the bargain, the warlords were able to impose themselves as provincial governors, despite being reviled by the Afghan people, as every conversation I've had and study I've done demonstrates.

Their positions have been reinforced by international donors who, for convenience's sake, distribute much of their reconstruction assistance through the warlords. The donors' reasoning sounds plausible: "So-and-so is the governor," numerous United States officials have told me. "The day President Karzai removes him, we will support that decision. But until then, we have to work with him." It's a bit disingenuous, since this explanation ignores the way these men became governors.

It also begs the truth. In late May, President Karzai summoned to Kabul the 12 governors who control Afghanistan's strategic borders. For the previous fortnight, Afghan and international officials say, he had been preparing to dismiss the most egregious offenders: four or five governors who are running their provinces like personal fiefs, who withhold vast customs revenue from the central government, who truck with meddlesome foreign governments, who oppress their people, who turn a blind eye to extremist activities while trumpeting their anti-Taliban bona fides. United States officials, saying they were taken aback by the scope of the Afghan government's plan, discouraged him. The plan was scrapped, and the Afghan government made do with an agreement in which the recalcitrant governors promised to hand over customs revenue owed the central government.