of us. These 8 million workers are an integral part of our society, and reality dictates that we recognize that and find a fair way to integrate them fully into our society. We can do this while still protecting the labor standards in this country by wage and hour enforcements. We need to take our failing immigration system and turn it into something that can work for all Americans. And failing it is. We have a huge, and I mean a huge, backlog of visa applications pending that are preventing husbands from being with their wives and parents from being with their children.

The current delay in reunifying families from the Philippines is 22 years. Is this a humane system? That is outrageous. Not only do we have to speed up the process; we have to make more family and employment visas available. This bottleneck needs to be opened up. The first and foremost action we should take to fix our immigration system is to bring families back together and allow them to be reunified. Sadly, however, the Bush proposal does nothing to help solve the problem of family reunification.

Secondly, we need to offer a future to those immigrants who have been working in this country for years, have paid their taxes, abided by our laws, and contributed to their communities all over this Nation. The fact is that they are here now, and they have earned their right to stay. While some may not have come through the proper channels, they should not be condemned outright for leaving despair and poverty behind for a better life. These workers have had a positive impact on this country through their contributions, and a guest-worker program alone does not even begin to acknowledge this reality.

Not only does earned legalization take this hidden work force out of the shadows, but it provides certainty for employers and hope for the employees that they can work towards a meaningful goal: legitimate acceptance in the United States. Another reality is that the immigrant children of these workers also deserve a place in our society. It is only to our benefit that they have access to a good education. They should be granted a vehicle for obtaining lawful permanent status and qualify for in-state educational benefits and financial aid.

Again, the Democrats take this into account in the overall debate on immigration reform, but the Republican Party chooses to ignore this quick and easy change that could go forward right away without further delay.

The Bush administration and the Republican leadership also ignore the fact that legislation already exists to expand the current guest-worker program. If President Bush is serious about moving forward on immigration reform and not just playing election-year politics, he should call on the Republican majority in the House to pass the Berman Ag Jobs bill. We can get this done now.

Finally, let us focus our national security efforts on protecting this Nation against real terrorist threats instead of using it as an excuse to round up 8 million law-abiding workers and kicking them out of this country. I do not know about other Members, but I would much rather have the Department of Homeland Security knowing the identities of the people living here because they are no longer hiding from authorities for fear of deportation.

Let us get real about the immigration dilemma in this country, real about the kind of hard-working, sincere people these immigrants are, how they have benefited this country, and what it would take to put the immigration system back in working order. Let us take our heads out of the sand and get to work on real immigration reform. I am serious about the work ahead, and I challenge my colleagues in the House to give more than lip service to the idea of meaningful immigration reform.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. RODRIGUEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RODRIGUEZ addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEDICARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG LEGISLATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor tonight to once again highlight several questionable activities by Republicans during and after the Medicare prescription drug legislation passed the House of Representatives last year.

Seniors have already begun to voice their opposition to the new prescription drug bill, as well they should. Seniors know that the Republican bill forces seniors to get their prescription drug benefits outside of Medicare. They have already calculated the supposed prescription drug benefit they would be getting under the law and realize that it is minuscule.

Just to cite some examples, consider that seniors with a thousand dollars in annual prescription drug costs would pay $857 out of their own pockets; or that those seniors with prescription drug costs of $5,000 a year would be forced to pay $3,920. Now I ask: What kind of benefit is that? If seniors are not getting the money, where is the $500 billion that it is now estimated that this prescription drug so-called benefit would cost the Federal Government? Where is the money going if it is not coming to the senior citizens?

There is no doubt in my mind that both Republicans here in the House and in the Bush administration are concerned that seniors are not buying this plan. Many of our seniors have contacted us and told us that this is a terrible plan and it is not going to help seniors, and it is a boondoggle for the special interests, HMOs, and the pharmaceutical companies. I think what is happening is the Republican leadership here in the House and President Bush and his administration realize that the public thinks, rightly so, that this Republican prescription drug plan for seniors is a farce. So last week we got wind of the fact that the Bush administration's Department of Health and Human Services was going to spend $22 million to rebut criticism, and this was stated by the administration, to ''rebut criticism of the new Medicare law through an advertising campaign on television and through the mail.''

Some may have already seen these ads. I think it is outrageous. I have to say that here we are talking about how bad this bill is as part of our free speech that we all exercise, and seniors are saying it is a bad bill, and the Bush administration has the gall to now spend $22 million in taxpayer money to try in their own terms, and I quote, to ''rebut criticism of the new Medicare law.''

□ 2045

I think the American public should be concerned that the President is spending $22 million of the taxpayers' money, money that could be used to actually help seniors with their prescription drug bills, than trying to rebut legitimate criticism of the Republican and the Bush administration Medicare prescription drug plan.

President Bush should be concerned that seniors are not buying his prescription drug bill, but maybe, instead of spending taxpayers' money to try to rebut legitimate criticism, he should be talking about how he could change the bill. Or, alternatively, if the President wants to use his own campaign dollars, he has amassed about $150 million in campaign contributions over the last couple of years, a lot of which has come from the pharmaceutical and the insurance industry, if he feels that he needs to rebut the criticism, then let him spend money out of his own campaign war chest from those same people that he helped in creating this terrible legislation. Do not use the taxpayers' money to do it.

The Republicans are saying, and this is what I have heard, they claim they are just trying to inform seniors about the new prescription drug plan with this taxpayer-paid ad campaign. One of the ways that you know that that is not the case is that the Department of Health and Human Services decided to use the same media firm that is working on advertising for President Bush's reelection campaign. We know there are a lot of advertising agencies out there, but why would the Department of Health and Human Services just happen to choose National Media, Inc.,

which is the same media firm that is working for the President's reelection campaign?

It is not a coincidence. Who knows what benefit or collusion there is in the fact that the taxpayers' money is being used for an ad campaign to rebut the Democrats' and others' criticism and at the same time it is the same agency that the President's reelection campaign has hired. But it is clear from this collusion, if you will, this is not a coincidence. The sole purpose of these taxpayer ads is not to inform seniors about the new prescription drug law but instead to try and convince them that the law is not as bad as they think. Both the television ad and the two-page flyer that they are sending out are oversimplified and distorted and I think they are clearly political propaganda that should not be paid for with taxpayers' funds.

Let me just give my colleagues an example, because I have some of the ads now and I can just show them how political they are and why they should not be paid for by the taxpayers. Let me give my colleagues one example of how the Department of Health and Human Services' distortion of the Medicare prescription drug law is played out in these ads.

In one of the ads an announcer states, and I quote, it's the same Medicare you've always counted on, plus more benefits like prescription drug coverage. That is the end of the quote. Any viewer of this ad is naturally going to assume that the prescription drug benefits would be available through Medicare.

The ad goes on to claim, and I quote, it's the same Medicare you've always counted on, plus more benefits like prescription drug coverage. The fact is the supposed prescription drug benefit is not included in Medicare. Instead, seniors have to go outside of Medicare, either to an HMO or a PPO, to get their prescription drug coverage. So the ad is totally inaccurate. It is suggesting to the viewer that you can get your prescription drug coverage through traditional Medicare when in fact you cannot. You have to join an HMO or something like it, like a doctors' group called a PPO in order to get the benefit. So it is not like traditional Medicare and you are just adding the benefit.

I think it is simply wrong and it is unacceptable for the Bush administration to use the taxpayers' money for such a misleading and useless ad and flyer, $22 million that could be used to help seniors with a prescription drug benefit rather than thrown away on this ridiculous ad campaign.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, I joined several of my colleagues in sending a letter to the Comptroller of the General Accounting Office asking the agency to investigate this misuse of government funds with the ads. Because, frankly, I think it is illegal. Last Friday, the General Accounting Office agreed to investigate the legality of the ads and the flyers.

I do not think there is any question it is illegal. The law is clear that Federal law bars the use of public funds for political or propaganda purposes. There is no way anybody can interpret this and say it is not political or propaganda purposes.

It is my hope that the GAO will see these ads for what they are and conclude that the taxpayers' dollars should not be used by the Bush administration in an attempt to sell its lousy prescription drug bill.

I want to talk about the next step. This is what the administration is doing, using the taxpayers' money to try to distort what this Medicare prescription drug bill, so-called, is all about. But it is not just the Republicans at the Department of Health and Human Services that I am concerned about.

Because today's Roll Call newspaper, the Capitol Hill newspaper, includes an article about how the House Republican Conference, that is the Republican Members of Congress, is now coming up with a script described as similar in fashion to the one created by the Department of Health and Human Services that I just talked about that its Republican members could use for public service announcements. These public service announcements again would be taped at taxpayers' expense through Congress' recording studio.

So now we have got the Bush administration through its agency spending taxpayers' money, the Members of Congress, if they do these public service announcements, taping them at taxpayers' expense through Congress' recording studio.

It is going to be interesting to see how House Republicans try to spin this. They have been trying to spin how this legislation was good. Now they are trying to spin how this taxpayer ad campaign is a good thing.

So far, none of this has worked. Because, basically, the American people understand that it is all spin and there is no substance to any of it, and I would suggest that now the ads, I think, in my opinion are illegal.

I am just hoping that at some point the House Republicans would wake up and realize the reason seniors do not like their prescription drug law is not because the House Republicans have not explained it properly but just because seniors see through all the rhetoric and already know that this Republican prescription drug bill provides a paltry benefit as I explained before. Why in the world would a senior want to have to spend all this money out of pocket to get a very paltry benefit?

The bottom line is that when this bill goes into effect in a couple of years, and it does not go into effect until 2006, which is another reason why you would ask why all this money is being spent on ads to promote it when it does not even go into effect for a couple of more years, but the bottom line is that when it does go into effect most seniors will not even take it. They should not, because it is not giving them any kind of benefit.

Mr. Speaker, this prescription drug legislation, in my opinion, is a perfect example of how the Republican majority has turned the people's House of Representatives over to the special interests and to the wealthy elite; and I think seniors should not be and have not been fooled into believing that this legislation was written for their benefit. The Republicans did not write this bill to help the seniors. They wrote it to benefit the insurance companies and the pharmaceutical companies.

In fact, many of my colleagues, and I have said for months that this so-called prescription drug bill was being written not here on Capitol Hill but instead downtown in the offices of PhRMA, which is the trade organization for the pharmaceutical industry, and also written by the insurance companies. Here in the Republican-controlled House of Representatives, the only true voices that matter as far as Republicans are concerned are those of the special interests and the wealthy elite.

I have talked about the ad campaign, but I see that some of my colleagues are here. I would like to yield to the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS), who has been outspoken on the need for a prescription drug benefit and the need for us to be able to import low-cost prescription drugs from Canada. He has been outstanding on this issue.

Mr. SANDERS. I want to thank my friend from New Jersey for his consistent leadership on an issue that is so important to tens and tens of millions of Americans.

I think the first point to be made and that many American seniors are wondering about is, hey, what is in this benefit for me? Is it good? We hear from the President, we hear from some of our Republican friends that this bill is going to go a long way to solve the problems of seniors paying very, very high prices for their prescription drugs and a whole lot of money out of their own pockets. So let us get the facts straight. Let us put it right out there on the table.

If you spend $500 a year out of pocket, what are you going to pay out of the President's new plan? You are going to pay $733. What? For $500 worth of prescription drugs? Yes, that is the case. Because there is a premium of $35, a deductible of $250 and coinsurance, copayment of 25 percent from the first $251 to $2,250. If you spend $1,000 out of pocket, you are going to pay 85 percent out of your own pocket. If you spend $3,000 a year, you pay 64 percent. If you spend $4,000 a year, you pay 73 percent. Does that sound like a very good deal?

What is even worse, as the gentleman from New Jersey has indicated, because there is no cost containment in this bill, the Consumers Union of America has estimated that one year after the implementation of this legislation,

seniors will be paying more out of their own pockets for prescription drugs than they pay today. Why? Because when there is no cost containment, prescription drug costs will go up 15 percent, 15 percent, 15 percent. Three years from now, prescription drug costs will be 40 or 50 percent higher, nullifying the minimum benefits in this bill.

This is a bad, bad bill providing minimal benefits to our seniors.

I was reminded in the process of how this bill became a law, and the gentleman from New Jersey will remember how when we were kids we went to school and they say this is how a bill becomes a law. I am afraid they are going to have to rewrite those textbooks because let me tell the listeners and my friends how a bill becomes a law in the United States Congress in 2004.

First of all, of course, you have to contribute a whole lot of money to get your voice heard. On June 19, 2002, 2 days after Republicans unveiled their new Medicare bill, surprise, surprise, the pharmaceutical industry staged a fund-raiser for President Bush and the Republican Party in which it raised a record-breaking $30 million in one night. It goes on from there.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. If the gentleman will yield, if the gentleman from Vermont recalls, and the gentleman from New Jersey was there as I was that night they raised that money, we were actually in committee working on the prescription drug bill and we had to recess early that night so that they could go off to their fund-raiser and collect the millions of dollars that they raised.

President Bush highlighted the event. The event was cochaired, as I recall, by the CEO of a British drug company, which also, obviously, has operations in the United States. But the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), the chairman of the committee who is soon to go work for the drug industry, shamelessly recessed the hearing about 5 or 6 o'clock. So they go out and change into their evening clothes, go off, do the fund-raiser, come back, and then we started the next morning.

Mr. SANDERS. It is important for the American people to see how a bill becomes a law.

Number one, if you have an interest and you want a bill to become a law, stage a massive fund-raising event and contribute to the President of the United States. That is step number one. I know it is not in the local textbooks, but that is really how it goes on.

Step number two, ignore the will of the Nation's elected representatives. What do I mean by that? What I mean by that is that on July 25, 2003, the House of Representatives, and frankly in a bipartisan way, had the courage to stand up to the pharmaceutical industry and the Republican leadership and they passed strong reimportation legislation which says that pharmacists, prescription drug distributors and Americans should be able to purchase safe, affordable, FDA-approved medicine in any one of 26 industrialized countries, thereby lowering the cost of prescription drugs in the United States by 25 to 50 percent.

But if you are serious about making a bill into a law, you have got to ignore that. You ignore what the House did, you ignore the votes that are in the Senate, and you say good-bye to that. But the gentleman from New Jersey just told us what you do. You suddenly put into the bill in conference committee language that says, amazingly, that the United States Government and Medicare cannot negotiate with the pharmaceutical industry to lower the cost of prescription drugs.

That is step number two in how a bill becomes a law in the year 2004 in the Republican Congress.

Step number three, and this is a beauty. I do not think the textbooks in high schools or elementary schools have this one. Ram your bill through even if you do not have the votes.

What does that mean? How do you do that?

On November 22, 2003, at 5:53 a.m., the House Republicans passed their Medicare bill. By all accounts, it was an historic night in the Capitol. Under House rules, as we all know, votes are supposed to last for 17 minutes; and then the Speaker gavels the rollcall to an end. Amazingly enough, that particular vote lasted a record-breaking 3 hours. Three hours. That is part of the process of how a bill becomes a law: Ignore the rules of the House.

Mr. PALLONE. The other thing, just to add to that, is that when the 17 minutes are up, because I was here, the votes were against the bill. In other words, there were 218 votes, which is a majority, against the bill. So the bill lost at that time. It is just amazing.

Mr. SANDERS. That is the third key point. Ignore the rules of the House of Representatives; and if you are losing, do not accept that. Just keep going and 3 hours later twist enough arms so that at 5:53 in the morning, I believe it was, you will get the votes to pass it.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. If the gentleman will yield, I do not want to argue with the gentleman from Vermont, but he has got to be fair. The fact is that the Republicans worked all summer to learn how to do this. It was not that they just figured out how to ram a bill through in the middle of the night in November to do the drug bill. If the gentleman will recall, in the middle of the night on a Thursday night in April, they rammed through by one vote a cut in veterans' benefits.

□ 2100

Then in the middle of the night on a Thursday night in May, they eviscerated Head Start by one vote. Then in the middle of the night on a Thursday night in June, they cut education by, I believe, three votes. Then in the middle of the night on a Thursday in June or July, they did it again. Then even in the middle of the night in September, they passed $87 billion for Iraq. So they are getting pretty good at this. They may not follow the civics textbooks quite as well as we are hoping they would, but they have learned how to do things in the middle of the night when the press is gone, when the public has gone to sleep, when nobody much is in the press gallery, and then it really does not get very much attention in the papers. I hesitate to interrupt the gentleman, but I will go back to my friend from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, just a few more steps on how a bill becomes law. Step number four is to mislead members of one's own party, of one's own party who have reservations about this bill. There were many honest Republican conservatives who had from their own perspective doubts about the bill. They did not want to spend the kind of money that is going to have to be spent. So what the President says and what the Republican leadership says is this bill over a 10-year period is going to cost $395 billion; they can vote for it, $395 billion. Amazingly enough, 2 months later, 2 months after the President signed the bill into law, he submitted a budget to Congress that put the estimate of that legislation at $530 billion. Only $135 billion off over a 10-year period. It is likely many of us believe, in fact, that that bill will cost a lot more because it does not have any cost containment.

Step number five is to stick to one's story regardless of the facts. In the State of the Union address, the President stated that ''for a monthly premium of about $35, most seniors can expect to see their drug bills cut roughly in half.'' Unfortunately, that claim is simply untrue. The reality is that most seniors will see their drug bills cut by only about one third and maybe even less.

Step number six is to turn one's work on the bill to one's own personal gain. And I think the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) made this point. Here we have the chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce that wrote this legislation, took the lead in shaping this bill. According to The Washington Post, that gentleman, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. TAUZIN), is expected to take a job from PhRMA, which is the lobby from the pharmaceutical industry, and leave the House of Representatives before his term expires. Another key player, Thomas Scully, the immediate former head of the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the White House point person on the Medicaid bill, recently left his post to work for a law firm that represents pharmaceutical and other health care interests; and we were told that this bill was really written for the senior citizens of the United States, not for the pharmaceutical industry.

The last and final point in terms of how a bill becomes a law is to use taxpayers' money to ''educate'' the citizens if they are not buying their story. Recently, President Bush has launched a $23 million advertising blitz all at taxpayer expense to tout the Medicare bill. A media firm working for his reelection campaign will get a cut of the pie for buying the air time for the government touting the new Medicare law.

The bottom line here is, I think it is time to rewrite the textbooks in this country about how a bill becomes a law. What we have seen in the last many months, a year, is a shameful process. It is a process of big money buying clout and buying legislation, and it is something that we have got to change immediately.

I yield back to my friend.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. And I know he is being a little sarcastic in talking about how a bill becomes law, but the fact of the matter is we can use his example on so many occasions in what has been happening here in the last few years under this Republican majority. And what happened with this Medicare prescription drug bill is a great example, as the gentleman has said; but there are many others, and it is just like the whole place has just turned over on the Republican side to the special interests, the corporate interests, the wealthy elite. And I never thought I would see the day when that would happen, but that is where we are.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. And I am so glad that my distinguished colleagues are here; and to my good friend from Vermont, I think we should label this Special Order ''incredulous,'' still seeking answers, and I think the history books will be rewritten as to how this Congress gets legislation passed, and maybe we should even write a new book on ethics and integrity and whether or not this House can retain its name because when I came here, and I know that when I go into my district I always cite that this is the people's House, to be run and organized and directed and moved by the people of the United States of America.

To the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), my good friend, let me, first of all, thank him for organizing this Special Order. And let me just make a brief mention of the Hispanic Caucus that was on the floor earlier, and they were discussing of course the concerns they had with the Bush administration's impact on the Hispanic community; and I might cite just for a brief moment his plan on immigration. Here is another plan that seemed to not come from the origins of what is best for the people, and of course the gentleman is aware that that is a plan that is called guest worker or temporary worker so that millions of those who are, in fact, hard-working and taxpaying individuals who may have come here undocumented will have a program that in 3 years will throw them into oblivion, and they will have no pathway and no access to legalization. That is another program that is going to be costly, have no direction; and I would hope that we will all work together as a caucus to be able to promote a plan that works.

I think at the same time when we look at our ethnic communities, both African Americans and Hispanics who are aging in this Nation, we know that the prescription drug benefit that this President has offered to us is a sinking hole, and I might cite for my colleagues that we are already in a $551 billion deficit. And, Mr. Speaker, we now have a prescription drug benefit that is really taking the lights and we are turning it on because, as my colleagues have said, this bill was voted on in the dark of night. I think every television set in America was off because we were here at about 3 or 4 in the morning, and I think what my good friend from Vermont did not say is that the vote began at 2 a.m. and actually we stayed on the floor for a good 3½ hours while Members were being cajoled and accosted and I do not know what else was occurring to change their votes.

I think it is important to reiterate that at the time we cast our votes, we had defeated a guaranteed prescription drug benefit that was not itself. In fact, it was not that. We defeated a plan that would deny the United States' 44 million Medicare recipients the ability to harness their power and to be able to negotiate the cheapest price. We defeated that. Instead, we passed a $534 billion bill that is growing and that will not be in place until 2006.

So I want to join my colleagues just to point out to the American public, and particularly to our seniors, that we are not going to forget them and we are not going to leave them now. We are going to continue to raise these issues on the floor of the House over and over again until this bill falls on its own weight and falls on the spear where it needs to go, and then we can finally get a guaranteed prescription drug benefit with life, with sanity, and that recognizes the needs of seniors all over this country.

Might I also add insult to injury, my grandmother used to use that phrase frequently, to note that in addition to the $534 billion cost and the gift to our good friends in the pharmaceutical industry, and might I say that when the pharmaceutical companies do good things, I am interested in working with them. When they work on a cure or vaccination for HIV/AIDS, when they begin to coordinate with African nations in being able to help the blight and devastation and the horror of HIV/AIDS, I want to collaborate and work with them. But when we have a bill that has a direct benefit and gift to them which says they cannot negotiate a cheaper price on behalf of the people of the United States of America, then I believe it is time to stand up and be counted with seniors rather than to be counted with corporate interests.

But in addition to that, might I cite, and again I said this Special Order is all about just being absolutely incredulous about what is going on, and that is to find out that $9.5 million from Health and Human Services will be taken out and utilized by the White House for a television ad campaign to rebut criticism of the new Medicare law. In addition, $3.1 million will be used for newspaper, radio, and Internet ads in, and I compliment them, both English and Spanish in order to again talk about this ill-fated legislation. Insult to injury. $534 billion and growing and no one will be served because there is not a real guaranteed Medicare prescription drug benefit. HMOs will be getting the bulk of the money, the same HMOs that will close up shop when they find it is not profitable to be in areas like Houston, Texas, that lost six of them about 6 years ago or rural areas of America. And then we add insult to injury, as I say, one thing after another; and we are going to spend close to 12, $14 million in order to explain a bad bill.

I just say to my colleagues I could not miss the opportunity to join them in just citing for the American public to hold their horses, do not give up hope. We may have missed it for a moment, but we will not fail for long because once this hocus-pocus, smoke and mirrors is finally unveiled to the American public, and some people have said we cannot do anything about it, we cannot get it repealed, I believe it is going to fall on its own weight. And we will have to go back to the drawing board and be able to find a way expeditiously, not 6 years, 10 years, to be able to solve this problem on behalf of the American people and as well the growing number of those who will be needing those benefits and who deserve these benefits who served us well.

We talk about the Greatest Generation. I close simply by saying that we have been blessed by the fact that so many are being able to age in this country, and I am gratified for it. Medicare of 1965 allowed that. And I will not stand by silently while we destroy a vision and a plan that would add to the quality of life of seniors in this Nation. And with that, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentlewoman because she has been down here so many times talking about this issue which she has mentioned and which I find incredible. We are talking about over $500 billion now for this program. Where is the money going? It is not going to the seniors. It is going to the special interests. It is going to the HMOs. It is going to the pharmaceutical companies. And now on top of that, the administration has the gall to spend, and she mentioned $9 million, and I think that is just for the TV ads. The total is

22 million if we add all the printed material and everything else they are sending out to promote a bad bill. It is just incredible. All taxpayer funded. But I appreciate her being here.

I yield now to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), who I have to say is not only the ranking member on our Health Subcommittee, but he has repeatedly pointed out not only the faults of this legislation but also how the special interests wrote the bill, and now the administration is spending money to try to justify the bill, all for these special interests that really have no concern about the senior citizens. I yield to the gentleman.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) would yield, I think we should know this. The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) serves on the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and he is the ranking member of his subcommittee, and JOHN DINGELL is a ranking member of the full committee, and I saw the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) on the floor.

Let me just thank the gentleman. I think most people do not know the battles, the internal committee battles, that occur around trying to fight for good legislation.

□ 2115

Before I leave the floor, I want our colleagues to know that the Democrats on the Committee on Energy and Commerce stayed late into the night. I think you all were marking up a bill at 12 midnight. It was some days, obviously, before we were destined for the floor, but I know there were long hours.

As I understand the history of that committee markup, many, many amendments were offered to try to correct some of the poison pill aspects of that legislation; many, many amendments, including reimportation, including this issue dealing with the inability to negotiate.

I do not think it should go unsaid the kind of work that was done on behalf of the American people. It is never seen. And we appreciate that you were trying to bring to this floor a credible alternative. If my memory serves me well, and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) might correct me, I do not think we were allowed to debate on behalf of the American people a credible substitute or alternative, or at least given the decency and respect, not for us, but for all of those suffering, given the decency to present to our colleagues, who would have voted with us, an alternative to what is now a catastrophe. So I just wanted to thank you and express my appreciation.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I thank my friend from Texas and for her speaking out and leading on this and other issues.

She is exactly right. If you remember this bill, a lot of us, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), a lot of us on the committee said that we should include a prescription drug benefit inside Medicare. Seniors understand Medicare. They understand premiums, copays, deductibles. They are not asking for insurance company choice. They are not asking for a choice of slick insurance company brochures. They like Medicare the way it works, choice of physician, choice of hospital, and we hoped choice of prescription drug.

That was never allowed to be debated on the House floor. It is either vote for the bill or vote against the bill.

Several people have talked tonight about how all that happened, but I want to share a handful of numbers that I think really sort of sum this up.

First of all, when President Bush spoke from the floor of this House of Representatives, not far from where the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is now standing, during the State of the Union, he said that this new law, this new Medicare bill he signed in December, fulfilled a basic commitment to our seniors. It kept a promise, fulfilled a basic commitment to our seniors.

This bill did fulfill some commitments, but, unfortunately, the commitments the President had were not to our seniors, and let me illustrate that for a moment.

There are 100 Members of the United States Senate, there are 435 Members of the House of Representatives. Many people in the country know that. There are 535 Federal elected officials on this side of the Capitol and the other side in the Senate. There are 675 prescription drug registered lobbyists, 675 lobbyists, more than one per Member.

In many ways, that tells the story, especially when you couple the fact that there are 675 lobbyists with the fact that the drug industry last year gave $21.7 million to Republican campaigns, and when you also factor in that the word on the street is that President Bush will get $100 million from the drug industry this year for his reelection.

So I do not know why the gentleman from Vermont (Mr. SANDERS) or any of us should have been surprised that this bill was written by the drug industry for the drug industry. At the same time, the insurance industry had its hand on this bill. They contributed almost $26 million to Republican candidates last year. They also get a big part of this bill.

So when the President signed this bill in December, this prescription-drug-Medicare-privatization bill, the President then said the cost was $400 billion. It ended up being much more than that, which I think they knew then but did not tell us for another 7 weeks.

But of the $400 billion, the Congressional Budget Office, a nonpartisan organization, said that of the $400 billion, $139 billion would go to additional profits for the drug industry. Now this is an industry that is already the most profitable industry in America. They had a 17 percent profit margin, according to Fortune. The rest of the Fortune 500 companies had a 3.1 percent margin. Theirs was 17 percent. It is pretty clear this is an industry that is doing pretty darn well anyway.

But they are getting $139 billion more in profits under this $400 billion bill. The insurance industry is getting a $14 billion direct subsidy from the government.

So it is no surprise that this bill turned out the way it has. It was a bill of, by and for the drug industry and of, by and for the insurance industry. You do not need a scorecard to figure that out in this business in these days in this government.

I have been in politics a long time, but I have never seen this place owned and operated by interest groups the way it is. If there is a choice, if George Bush has a choice between the public interest and corporate interests, it is corporate interests every time.

The prescription drug bill is written by the drug and insurance industry; Social Security privatization is written by Wall Street; energy legislation is written by Enron and DICK CHENEY'S other cronies. Privatization in Iraq, a $7 billion private contract went to Halliburton, a company that still pays the Vice President, still pays the Vice President of the United States $3,000 a week; and we have given them $7 billion in non-bid contracts.

I mean, this place has been for sale. Never in its history has it been for sale the way it is now. As I said, if there is a choice between corporate interests and the public interest, this crowd, TOM DELAY, BILL THOMAS, BILLY TAUZIN, the leaders of the House, the leaders of the Senate and President Bush, they choose corporate interests every single time. And that is troubling to all of us who have tried to honorably serve in this business for many years.

And just to sort of crown it off, and then I will yield back my time to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE), who has been terrific on explaining this issue and understanding this, and then to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY), now this bill, the payment to the insurance industry, the President signed the bill in December. March 1st, the first of billions of dollars of subsidies goes to the insurance industry. March 1, 2004, this year, March 1, the insurance industry begins to get checks worth billions of dollars from the Federal Government.

But you know what? Seniors do not get this prescription drug benefit until 2006. So the insurance companies get their money 3 months after the President signed it; seniors do not get the drug benefit for some 2½ years after the President signed it.

What kind of morally bankrupt social policy, morally bankrupt Congress, can do that kind of thing to the people of this country?

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, the amazing thing is we started off this evening, and I am sure we are going to hear from our colleague from Illinois who brought this to our attention, about this multi-million dollar ad program that the Health and Human Services Department is putting on to try to justify this Medicare bill. You might say to yourself, well, if it does not come into effect for another 2 years, why do they even need to start a $22 million ad campaign 2 years earlier? The ad campaign I think is totally illegal.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. I am sure it has nothing to do with the election.

Mr. PALLONE. It is just amazing to think the ad campaign is not only to try to tell people that this bad bill is good, but they have to do it 2 years before it goes into effect? As the gentleman said, the only reason is they are concerned about what happens in November in the election.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. You know what else? They are concerned about what happens in the election. The President and Karl Rove, the political strategist in the White House understand this bill has not gotten a very good public reception; and the reason it has not is because the public is catching on that it is written by and for the drug industry and it is written by and for the insurance industry. The public also, the seniors especially in this country, are beginning to read the fine print of the bill, and they see there is hardly any money out of this $400 billion for their drug benefit. So much of it goes to drug and insurance interests that they just really get pennies on the dollar.

Mr. PALLONE. And the spokesman for the President said, or for the department, which is the Bush administration, said the reason we are spending the $22 million on the ad campaign was ''to rebut criticism of the new Medicare law.''

So they are specifically saying the reason they are doing the ad campaign is because they do not like the criticism of the law. How can you say that that is not an illegal expenditure of money, when you are not allowed to spend taxpayers' money for political or propaganda purposes? It is unbelievable.

I want to say the gentlewoman from Illinois not only has been out front on this Medicare issue, but she was the first one to bring to our attention on the floor last week that this money was being spent. But as the time goes on, we realize it is even worse than we originally thought.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his leadership on this and for this evening to bring to the attention of our House of Representatives just how really bad this media campaign is and how cynical it really is.

I heard the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) talking about the windfall that will come to the pharmaceutical industry because of the passage of this bill, something like $140 billion in additional windfall profits. But I do not know even in their wildest imaginations if they realized the taxpayers were also going to fund the media campaign to sell the plan that will bring them the $140 billion. So we are talking about a neat little $22 million ad campaign that is beginning.

I am sure maybe you talked about some of these things earlier, but you were just talking, too, about the political nature that we feel is involved in this ad campaign, that the timing has much more to do with an election in November than it does with really educating and informing seniors about the reality of this legislation and what it is going to mean to them. Fortunately, the seniors are smarter than I think some people on the other side of the aisle may think.

However, to add to the political connection, some of us wrote a letter to Dara Corrigan, the Acting Principal Deputy Inspector General of the Department of Health and Human Services, and in that letter we were requesting an investigation of this ad campaign. Let me bring it to your attention.

The letter in part says, ''It has also come to our attention that a media firm currently working for the President's reelection campaign has been hired to purchase the $9.5 million worth of television ad time for this new commercial. National Media, Inc., stands to make a windfall from this campaign. This is the same company that has been repeatedly hired for ad campaigns primarily funded by the Republican Party and by the drug industry. National Media, Inc., has done ad campaigns for Citizens for Better Medicare, a drug industry front group that has spent tens of millions of dollars on ads attacking lawmakers interested in lowering the cost of prescription drugs.''

Now, we just passed a new campaign finance reform law that actually makes certain kinds of interlocking consultants and ad producers, et cetera, actually illegal.

I do not know if this is legal or not legal. We want the investigation to proceed forward, but it certainly smells bad when you have the Federal Government, with taxpayer dollars, taxpayer dollars, millions, hundreds of millions of Americans putting money into an ad campaign. I have seen it. I do not know if you have. It has been in the media market in the Chicago area. I saw it on television here in the D.C. area.

That ad campaign is promoted by the very same people who are working for the President's reelection campaign. To me, that is a smoking gun.

Mr. PALLONE. What I said earlier, and I strongly believe it when I say it is illegal, is because you cannot spend taxpayers' money on this kind of campaign for political or propaganda purposes. Now the fact that you point out this is the same media firm that is involved with the President's reelection, I think basically proves, or certainly shows dramatically, that it is political. In other words, this company is doing ads for the President's campaign, and now they are doing these ads for the department. They are getting paid now by taxpayers' money. So I think that kind of lends support to the idea that this is political.

I will even go one step further, which maybe you will not, but I would like to know at some point, hopefully with your GAO investigation or some other means, we will find out whether they get maybe a little discount on the political side for getting the contract to do the taxpayer-funded campaign. Who knows where this all goes? But it smells. There is no question about that.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. The worst part of this deception is that it is going after senior citizens who count on prescription drugs day in and day out to extend and enhance and perhaps save their lives, and it is telling them things like, the ad itself, where a senior says, ''So how is Medicare changing?'' And the answer, ''It is the same Medicare you have always counted on, plus more benefits, like prescription drug coverage.''

If I am a senior and I am watching this, I am thinking, here it is, what I have been waiting for, a prescription drug benefit.

The first thing they are going to find out is, no, forget it, there is going to be nothing for 2 years except for, and we will talk about that later, this card. So there is not going to be any Medicare prescription drug plan of any sort for a couple of years.

Then when they really find out the details, some of them are going to find out, ''If I join this plan, I am going to spend more on my Medicare.'' Millions of seniors would spend more if they signed up.

So when they say it is the same Medicare you always counted on, plus more benefits like prescription drug coverage, it is not true. It is simply not true.

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The most generous thing we can say about it is that it is certainly not the full story and, for many seniors, simply not true.

Then it says, ''Can I keep Medicare just how it is?'' And that is a question that seniors are asking. They love their Medicare, for good reason. They can count on it, they can take it to the hospital, they can make sure that they can go see their doctor. They know their Medicare, and they love it. ''Can I keep Medicare just how it is?'' they ask on the ad. They say, ''You can always keep your same Medicare coverage.'' The thing they do not say is how much you may have to pay for it.

Mr. PALLONE. Or, alternatively, that they may not get a prescription drug benefit at all if they keep the traditional fee-for-service plan.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Exactly. So, yes, you can keep your Medicare, but you

may not get the same benefits; your premium may go sky high because the HMOs are skimming off the healthiest and the wealthiest. And, yes, you can have your Medicare, but it is going to cost so much more. Again, at the most generous, it is an incomplete answer and, really and truly, a deceptive answer. Seniors have to watch for that.

And then, ''Will I save on my medicines?'' And the announcer says, ''You can save with your Medicare discount drug cards this June and save more with new prescription drug coverage in 2006.'' Do my colleagues know what? Many seniors already have a prescription drug card. Actually, they may have a few prescription drug cards. But under this new plan, they are only going to be allowed one Medicare discount card, which may not even provide all the medicines that they need.

The ad is misleading because seniors are led to believe that all of their medicines are going to be covered. It means that seniors will have to pay in order to get the discount card. It is not free. The ad does not mention that drugs that may be covered when you get the discount card could be dropped, leaving you with no savings, or you may end up in the middle of the year needing another medication you did not know about that is not on the card.

This is a bad deal, and this ad is telling seniors, in a glowing ad, it is a nice ad, is it not? I mean, it is pretty. It is pretty. I mean, it is so wrong. The ad is so wrong. But the fact that the seniors are actually paying for this ad that gives a false picture of their Medicare, which they love and they want to know the truth about, is nothing short of, I do not know if technically so but, in my mind, criminal.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I want to yield to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), but of course what the gentlewoman is talking about are the TV ads, but we understand that this is going to be followed up in millions of dollars of print material, brochures that are going to be going out that are basically doing the same thing. So this is just the beginning; the TV ad is just the beginning of what they are going to do to try to distort what this is all about.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, this is a full media branding operation. I am sure all of the Madison Avenue guys are in there figuring out, how many impressions does it take? Who reads their mail? How many people watch television? Oh, yes, it is a very slick ad in time for the election.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, one of the producers of the ads did the 2000 George Bush ads, and it was found out after the election that they did this subliminal message on one of those 2000 ads when they were talking about Al Gore in the George Bush campaign where they put the word R-A-T-S, ''rats,'' on the screen very quickly, so the human mind does not know that it sees it, but it actually was on the screen and it sticks in their mind without their knowing it. That is sort of the subliminal advertising that has been studied. The guy that did that is being paid by taxpayers and by seniors with Medicare money to do these ads.

That is incredible, considering, as the gentleman from New Jersey said at the beginning that the Bush campaign already has $100 million in the bank. The drug companies are going to put $100 million more in his campaign. They are going to make $140 billion or more extra profits from this bill. So it is pretty clear that they could have afforded it themselves, but they let taxpayers pick it up. It is pretty amazing.

Mr. Speaker, when I hear my friends talk about this, just about Medicare, I know people at home think that everybody is for Medicare, they would not want to mess up Medicare. But one of the differences of the two parties is that my friends on the other side of the aisle, and I think they are intellectually honest about it, but they really have never believed in Medicare. If we just briefly look at the history, 39 years ago when Medicare passed, only 10 Republicans voted for it. Gerald Ford voted against it, Bob Dole voted against it, Donald Rumsfeld voted against it, Strom Thurman voted against it in the Senate. They did not much like it then.

Then, in 1995 when the Republicans finally had the majority, the first thing Newt Gingrich did was try to cut Medicare by $270 billion and then predicted that it would wither on the vine. So this is a group that has never really bought into the whole point of traditional fee-for-service Medicare that serves 40 million people in this country. They want private insurance to do it. They have always wanted private insurance to do this. That is why they allowed the private insurance companies to write the bill.

But if this bill stays in effect, in 20 years Medicare will not be recognizable. It will be just like it was before 1965 when half the people in this country who are over 65 had no health insurance. Today, darn near everybody does, because we have this universal, beloved program called Medicare. The only people who really do not like Medicare are a few doctors that think they should be able to charge more and a bunch of Republican Members of Congress. Basically, the country likes this program. We should not be privatizing it. We should not be turning it over to insurance companies, because the government has run Medicare so well.

Mr. Speaker, the administrative costs for Medicare: 2 percent. The administrative costs for private insurance: 15 percent. The fact is, Medicare is efficient, it is humane, it excludes nobody, it is available for everybody once you turn 65. It is a program that works. And Republicans, in the name of prescription drug coverage, have set this program to its early death if it continues.

That is why we have to repeal this law. We have to stop it from ultimately taking effect. We have to turn the drug companies and the insurance companies, throw them out of the temple and come back and write this bill the way it ought to be written.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, what really bothers me, as the gentleman said, since the seniors are so supportive of Medicare and think it is such a good program, when they see these brochures and these other ads going out that are going to have the official Medicare, or government, seal on them, they are going to naturally think, the government is not going to lie to us. The Medicare administration, department is not going to tell us something that is not true.

The gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) mentioned the subliminal aspect. There is a certain sort of seal of authority that comes from the fact that these brochures and these ads and everything are actually from the government; and that really bothers me too, to think that people are going to think that this is an official government enterprise, educating them about the program when, in effect, it is just distorted, what they are being told.

I yield to the gentlewoman from Illinois.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to reinforce the point that the Republicans never really liked Medicare, but that continues to this day in spades. When we heard one of the leaders on the other side of the aisle, one of the chief negotiators on this bill, or authors of this bill say, To those who say this will end Medicare as we know it, I say, I certainly hope so.

So seniors have to understand who is driving the legislation and where their disrespect for Medicare really lies.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I give credit to the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS), the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, who wrote this bill, at least he was honest about it. He said, I sure hope it ends Medicare as we know it. Another prominent Republican on the Committee on Rules called Medicare a Soviet-style program. I wish the media would report those kinds of statements, because that is one of the few times that they are going to be honest. But in the Presidential race this year and in races for Congress, we are going to see people look into the camera and speak into the microphone and say, We love Medicare; we are preserving Medicare and protecting Medicare. We know they are not. They are not. They know they are not. That is why they are sending out, at taxpayers' expense, all of these phoney brochures, as the gentleman said, with the seal of government approval to engage in political campaigns with public dollars. That is what they are going to do all year. Seniors need to be warned when they get those mailings that they simply are not true, that they are not telling the truth about Medicare, that they want to undercut Medicare. They are deceptive. They are wrong. They are probably illegal. They should stop.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons I think it is so important for us to keep talking about this is because if the Bush administration gets away with this, where is it going to end? In other words, now they are spending $9 million on TV, $22 million total. If they think they can get away with it, they will double it. They will triple it. It just sets a terrible precedent. So that is why I think it is so important. I know the gentlewoman from Illinois started talking about it last week. We have to keep at it with the GAO, with the Inspector General to try to stop this, because if not, where is it going to end? It will just continue on over the next 6 months.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the gentleman from New Jersey who I know has some drug companies in his State, and he has shown more courage in speaking out for the right things. The drug companies do good things, there is no doubt about it; but they also abuse the public interests in so many ways. The gentleman from New Jersey has always been there fighting for his constituents, even when many wealthy interests in New Jersey do not quite like what he does. All of us appreciate that.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman. I appreciate what the gentleman said. The bottom line is we know that the drug companies do a lot of good things; but when they are not doing good things, we have to tell them that it is not good. Otherwise there is no end to it. I think this ad campaign is a perfect example of abuse on the part of the administration.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, at the end of the day, I really put my faith in the senior citizens of this country. I have the pleasure of being the executive director of the Illinois State Council of Senior Citizens working on issues like this; and if I know the seniors, they will sit down, put pencil to paper, and figure out exactly what this bill does or does not do for them. They will know that this campaign is a sham and a scam; and if the other side of the aisle thinks that this is going to carry the day during the elections, I think the senior citizens of this country are going to prove them wrong.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. FATTAH (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of travel difficulties.

Ms. SLAUGHTER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of attending a funeral in the district.

Mr. WAMP (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of family obligations.

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. SCHIFF) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HINCHEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. NORTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. EMANUEL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HILL, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. COOPER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHIFF, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BERRY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MOORE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CARDOZA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TAYLOR of Mississippi, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. THOMPSON of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CONYERS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HINOJOSA, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GUTIERREZ, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ, for 5 minutes, today.

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and February 11 and 12.

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

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. OBEY, and to include therein extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost $2,340.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 41 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Wednesday, February 11, 2004, at 10 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

6666. A letter from the Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting a report on U.S. military personnel and U.S. individual civilians retained as contractors involved in supporting Plan Colombia, pursuant to Public Law 106—246, section 3204 (f) (114 Stat. 577); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6667. A letter from the Deputy Secretary, Department of Defense, transmitting the semiannual report of the Inspector General and the classified annex for the period April 1, 2003 — September 30, 2003, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. app. (Insp. Gen. Act) section 5(b); to the Committee on Armed Services.

6668. A letter from the Assistant Director, Legislative and Regulatory Activities Division, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule — Rules, Policies, and Procedures for Corporate Activities; International Banking Activities [Docket No. 03-26] (RIN: 1557-AC04) received January 8, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

6669. A letter from the Director, Office of Legislative Affairs, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Deposit Insurance Regulations; Living Trust Accounts (RIN: 3064-AC54) received January 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Financial Services.

6670. A letter from the Director, Corporate Policy and Research Dept., Pension Benefits Guaranty Corporation, transmitting the Corporation's final rule — Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits — received January 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

6671. A letter from the Director, Office of Congressional Affairs, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule — Financial Information Requirements for Applications To Renew or Extend the Term of an Operating License for a Power Reactor (RIN: 3150-AG84) received February 2, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

6672. A letter from the Director, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Direct Investment Surveys: BE-15, Annual Survey of Foreign Direct Investment in the United States [Docket No. 030818205-3281-02] (RIN: 0691-AA48) received January 28, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

6673. A letter from the Assistant Secretary For Export Administration, Bureau of Industry and Security Administration, Department of Commerce, transmitting the Department's final rule — Revisions and Clarifications to the Export Administration Regulations [Docket No. 031212313-3313-01] (RIN: 0694-AC24) received January 30, 2004, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on International Relations.

6674. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 15-313, ''Henry Kennedy Memorial Tennis Courts Designation Act of 2004,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1—233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.

6675. A letter from the Chairman, Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting a copy of D.C. ACT 15-312, ''Police and Firemen's Service Longevity Amendment Act of 2004,'' pursuant to D.C. Code section 1—233(c)(1); to the Committee on Government Reform.