

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

COST-CONTAINMENT: THE BEST MEDICINE

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 2004

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member wishes to commend AARP CEO Bill Novelli for sending a letter Monday to the heads of the leading pharmaceutical companies, requesting their cooperation in holding down drug price increases.

While this Member has questions about limiting drug price increases to an amount no greater than the level of inflation as advocated in this letter, this Member generally supports several of the concepts mentioned by Mr. Novelli, including prescription drug reimportation and drug efficacy studies.

Clearly, millions of Americans are finding prescription drug reimportation from Canada and other countries to be a viable and necessary alternative to high-priced drugs in the United States. The number of those Americans is growing every day. It would be wrong for Members of Congress to ignore this reality and to ignore the excessive cost of prescription drugs in America.

Large pharmaceutical manufacturers have long been gouging American consumers by charging substantially more, in some cases up to 90 percent more, for prescription drugs sold in the United States than in Canada and other industrialized countries. Increasing numbers of Americans understandably refuse to be exploited by the pharmaceutical industry any longer. The exploitation of American consumers must end. The excuse that most of the world's pharmaceutical research and development takes place in America does not justify the continued degree of cost-shifting onto the backs of American consumers. Profit levels of American, foreign, and multi-national pharmaceutical firms are among the highest in the business world, as is the level of their advertising budgets and inducements offered to prescribing physicians.

The reimportation debate is not a battle of right versus left. It is a battle of right versus wrong. It is simply wrong to require Americans to pay the world's highest prices for prescription drugs, so they thereby can subsidize consumers everywhere else on earth to generate the research, advertising and profit revenues for pharmaceutical companies.

As a Member of Congress serving in the people's House, this Member has a responsibility to do what is right for Nebraskans and all Americans. This Member supports prescription drug reimportation because Americans deserve access to quality drugs at world market prices and reimportation seems to be the only solution immediately available to reduce the gross overcharge of American consumers for prescription drugs.

This Member is also supportive of drug efficacy studies. This Member offered an amendment to the House Labor, Health and Human

Services, and Education appropriations bill, requiring the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) to spend \$12 million to conduct research on the clinical appropriateness and cost-effectiveness of prescription drugs. This language was maintained and included in the final appropriations measure, which was signed into law.

Americans deserve the best health care for their dollar. It is essential for clinicians, patients, health plans, insurers, and those financing health care services to have access to credible, objective information on the benefits, risks, and costs of prescription drugs so they can make informed decisions about the prescriptions they consume and prescribe. Americans need information regarding the effectiveness, quality, and cost-effectiveness of new drugs, in comparison with existing alternatives, especially when new drugs can cost much more than those now on the market. Understanding which medicines work the best for which patients and at what costs, as well as understanding how to administer and monitor medication use in a way that ensures patients' safety is of critical importance to the health care system.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, this Member encourages measures to control the outrageous costs of lifesaving prescription drugs. This is the best medicine for Nebraskans and all Americans.

TRIBUTE TO MS. FLORIS INGRAHAM JOHNSON

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 2004

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Ms. Floris Ingraham Johnson, who celebrated her centennial birthday on Monday, March 15, 2004.

Born in 1904 to the late Eldred and Helena Moss on Governor's Harbor-Eleuthera, The Bahamas, Ms. Johnson will be feted during ceremonies this Sunday at the Ebenezer United Methodist Church in my District. The Rev. Dr. Jimmie L. Brown, the distinguished Pastor, will lead his congregation in paying this unprecedented tribute to our centenarian celebrant.

I would like to join the family, relatives and friends of Ms. Johnson toward reserving the utmost respect and genuine admiration for her 100 years of living, working and serving the less fortunate of our community. In fact, she worked to take care of the elderly until she was 83 years old. It is my understanding that she was genuinely inspired to focus her vocation of service to the elderly by a genuine devotion to her Christian stewardship. She joyfully welcomes the challenge of each day, abiding by her favorite Scripture passage: "This is the day which the Lord has made. Rejoice and be glad!" This is the simple recipe of good living with which she manages to de-

fine every passing day by looking at it as an opportunity to perform yet another work of love and another work of compassion for those yearning to see God's design in their lives.

Ms. Johnson's quest for the quiet and dignified life is remarkably characterized by her passion for the simple things in God's wonderful world of creation—beautifying her surroundings with the planting of flowers, especially roses, and embellishing her home with varied knick-knacks she has picked up from nearby nickel-and-dime stores. She has also devoted countless days in defining the longevity of her life by volunteering for the Feed the Hungry in Africa organization and by working with the Salvation Army and the Red Cross.

Although she immensely enjoyed independent living until she was 97 years old, she is now a resident of the Franco Nursing Home where she is genuinely loved and respected by her fellow residents and the nursing staff. Indeed, she is uniquely blessed in that she never had to suffer any sick day in her life with ". . . no pains, no aches—just old age."

I join the Rev. Dr. Jimmie L. Brown this Sunday as he leads the congregation of Ebenezer United Methodist Church in thanking God for the blessings He has bountifully given to our birthday centenarian, Ms. Floris Ingraham Johnson. We are comforted by her exemplary life of simplicity and devotion, and it is this legacy that she bequeaths to us, and for which we will honor her.

Happy centennial birthday, Ms. Johnson, and God bless and love you!

CONGRATULATING KUAM FOR 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO GUAM

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 16, 2004

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to commend and congratulate KUAM and its staff and management for 50 years of service to the community of Guam. Believe it or not, I was one of KUAM's first employees, starting work at the station 2 weeks before it went on the air.

Prior to the advent of KUAM, the only radio service provided in the Marianas was Armed Forces Radio Services, which began broadcasting in Guam shortly after World War II. On March 14, 1954, after almost a decade of broadcasting, Armed Forces Radio Services went off the air at 5:55 p.m.

At 6:00 p.m., 5 minutes later, the Star Spangled Banner was broadcast on 610 AM and KUAM radio was born. This marked a significant milestone as it was the first commercial broadcast in Guam and the Marianas. Notable from the first day's broadcast was a congratulatory message from Frank Sinatra, who inadvertently ended his greeting with the Hawaiian Aloha instead of the Chamorro Hafa Adai. An

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