

traveling the dangerous roads of Afghanistan and Iraq to personally interview the injured and their families, document their experiences, and work with U.S. military officials to earn them compensation. In organizing a group of 150 Iraqi volunteers who went to hospitals and into towns, Marla helped produce the first comprehensive list of people killed or injured in Iraq by U.S. weapons.

Marla also achieved a great deal of success in recruiting the efforts of military personnel, humanitarian organizations, and the U.S. Congress for her cause. Through her boundless energy and determination, she lobbied the Senate and helped win the insertion of language in an appropriations bill that provided \$2.5 million to help victims in Afghanistan; this money has now grown to \$7.5 million. She also succeeded in securing a \$10 million appropriation for Iraqi victims, which is used to rebuild homes and schools, provide medical assistance, and make loans. While in the Middle East, Marla networked with military commanders, realizing they often had the freedom and resources to assist victims quickly.

In her interactions with Congress, the U.S. military, and others in positions of authority, Marla persuasively argued that achieving an accurate accounting for the loss of life in Iraq and Afghanistan would not only make the recompense of wartime civilian casualties easier, but would also assist U.S. led reconstruction efforts. Through it all, Marla's sunny disposition and ability to make friends easily proved invaluable in recruiting the assistance of journalists, U.N. officials, non-governmental organization staff, and the U.S. military in documenting the plight of civilians and providing relief to war-torn families.

Marla's contributions to the most vulnerable of citizens did not come without making a great deal of personal sacrifice, however. CIVIC operated on a shoe-string budget of about \$100,000 a year, which often left Marla depending on friends and family to secure enough money for airline tickets and living expenses. When returning to the U.S. from overseas, Marla would often stay with friends, sleeping on their sofas, to continue her work when returning to the United States. Her ability to succeed in the most difficult of circumstances is a testament to her natural ability and drive, and serves as an inspiration to many.

Mr. Speaker, few people possess the undying commitment to selflessly and courageously pursue justice on behalf of the less fortunate as did Marla Ruzicka. During her lifetime, Marla viewed it as her personal obligation to fight for the less fortunate in this world and, under the most difficult of circumstances, demanded and achieved justice for so many victims of war and conflict. Her relentless dedication and optimism won over the hearts of the most influential people, making it possible to relieve the suffering of those most in need. Her actions were nothing short of heroic, and should serve as an inspiration to us all. I ask those in this distinguished body to join me in offering my condolences to Marla's parents, Clifford and Nancy Ruzicka. They should be commended on their daughter's extraordinary commitment to improving the world one life at a time.

RISK AND RESPONSIBILITY: THE ROLES OF FDA AND PHARMACEUTICAL COMPANIES IN ENSURING THE SAFETY OF APPROVED DRUGS LIKE VIOXX

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to speak about this critical public health issue that has affected the entire U.S. The Vioxx case presents us with a valuable opportunity to examine an industry in order to help it improve. The problem is not only that the FDA does not have sufficient regulatory authority to protect the public, though that is certainly true. The problem actually lies with the way pharmaceuticals are priced. I'll explain.

In the Vioxx case, Merck displayed a litany of predatory behavior. Vioxx research teams were stacked with people who had financial associations with Merck. Merck manipulated research protocols. They delayed publication of negative findings about Vioxx. They succeeded in getting people to take Vioxx that did not have a medical need by spending \$161 million for direct-to-consumer advertising alone. And direct lobbying to doctors is a well-known practice that has the same result. Lastly, 10 members of a 32-member FDA advisory board in charge of determining whether Vioxx should continue to be allowed on the market, had ties to industry. Had those advisers abstained, the committee would have voted that Vioxx should not return to the market. And these are only the things we know about. More concerns are likely to be uncovered as we dig deeper.

Would Merck be doing all this if Merck was the only maker of Vioxx? Absolutely not. When there is competition in manufacturing, just like there is in most other sectors, the capability to squeeze so much profit from a single drug is gone. But under a monopoly, which is what Merck has with its patented Vioxx, the sky is the limit on profits. Only the patent holder or licensee can sell it, so they control the market. And when a company controls the market, they have considerable leeway to corrupt the process in ways similar to what we have seen with Merck.

The usual justification for patent monopolies is that patents are yielding innovation, which is critical for new pharmaceuticals. But we are not getting that innovation. The number of New Molecular Entities approved by the FDA has been in decline several years running. Copycats or me-too's constitute roughly 70 percent of new FDA approved drugs. In other words, the pipeline is drying up.

If we want to avoid another Vioxx down the road, we need to get to the root of the problem. We need to bring innovation back up, control perverse incentives, and drive drug prices back down to a similar level as other developed nations. We do that by changing the financing of pharmaceuticals.

Put simply, the NIH, which is currently responsible for much of the innovation in pharmaceutical research, should drastically increase its already successful pharmaceutical research program. The innovations that result should be available for any qualified entity to manufacture, which would introduce competi-

tion into the market. It would boost innovation, competition would drive down prices as it does in the generics market, and the incentive to engage in Merck-like behavior would be drastically reduced.

IN RECOGNITION OF ANTHONY BENEDETTI

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, it is my great pleasure to rise today to honor a man who has spent 37 years of his life representing the interests of working men and women in Central New Jersey.

Anthony Benedetti, on June 1, 2005, retires as Financial Secretary and Treasurer of the Sheetmetal Workers International Association Local 27.

For the last several decades, Anthony Benedetti has unselfishly represented the Sheetmetal Workers International Association. His outstanding work and leadership have served as a guide to other employees throughout the years. It is doubtful that the Sheetmetal Workers International Association would have functioned the same way without his tireless efforts.

I want to offer Mr. Benedetti my congratulations and thanks for his outstanding career of service. It is with men like Anthony Benedetti that our nation's labor movement is such a huge success. He will be deeply missed.

Mr. Speaker, it is my sincere hope that my colleagues will join me in honoring and recognizing Anthony Benedetti as a determined and exceptional worker who affected the lives of many people.

POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE ASSERTED BY REPRESENTATIVE NADLER, H. REP. 109-51, CONCERNING H.R. 748, THE CHILD INTERSTATE ABORTION NOTIFICATION ACT OF 2005

HON. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 5, 2005

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the point raised by the gentleman from New York regarding the malreporting of the Republican Leadership of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to H.R. 748, the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act of 2005.

Under Rule IX, paragraph (1) of the House Rules, Mr. NADLER justifiably asserts his point because not only his but my "rights and reputation" have been offended by the conduct of the Chairman in publishing House Report 109-51. To reiterate, the language used in pages 45-49 patently malreport and malign the authors of amendments to H.R. 748, the Child Interstate Abortion Notification Act of 2005.

Two days ago, on May 3, 2005, the Ranking Member of the Committee on the Judiciary led debate on his resolution of privilege, H. Res. 253 that concerned the ways in which the act