

Since that day, part D has never failed to disappoint its supporters and its detractors.

First, we learned that part D would cost almost twice as much as Congress was originally told. Next came the confusing enrollment process. So many seniors had no place to turn.

In New York seniors had 46 plans to choose from. Seniors recruited their children and grandchildren and their Congress people to help them navigate the confusing on-line application process, but they had problems figuring out which plan was the right plan for them.

While hosting town hall meetings on part D last year, I encountered many seniors who were thinking about not even enrolling in a plan because the process was just too confusing.

Today, many seniors are locked into plans that offer too little or too much coverage. Part D's faults are compounded by the fact that seniors were locked into their plans for a year. But providers could drop certain drugs from their plans without consequences.

Finally, after months of confusion, seniors are finally getting some relief on prescription drugs. But not as much as they could be. Medicare still isn't allowed to negotiate prices with drug companies like the VA can. And seniors can't reimport drugs from Canada to reduce costs either.

But part D's biggest problem is about to emerge. Many seniors are about to discover the plan's doughnut hole.

Mr. Speaker, the doughnut hole most people didn't understand, but it is the gap in the coverage that part D enrollees face when they purchase \$2,250 worth of prescription drugs in a year. Once seniors hit the doughnut hole, they will have to pay for their next \$3,100 worth of prescription drugs. Only after paying that money will their coverage continue. The saddest part of the doughnut hole is that a great many of the seniors aren't even aware that it exists.

We thought, in my district anyhow, that it would be late August before people would start reaching the doughnut hole. Unfortunately, in my area, we are getting the phone calls now. And since Medicare isn't allowed to negotiate with drug companies, seniors will pay the usual inflated prices for their drugs while they struggle to come out of the doughnut hole.

So soon many seniors will be back in the same predicament they were before part D. Some will have to decide whether to pay their bills or purchase prescription drugs. Others will put their health at risk by reducing their dosage in order to afford their medication. And many will have to spend their way out of the doughnut hole every year for the rest of their life.

The doughnut hole isn't just the result of bad legislation, it is a threat to our public health. Seniors will take less drugs than they are prescribed to avoid falling into the doughnut hole.

Part D penalizes seniors who take a lot of medication. Seniors essentially

get fined over \$3,000 for buying prescription drugs they need. It is absolutely absurd.

It is time to fix part D. It is time for a prescription drug plan that puts the interests of our seniors and the disabled before the interests of big drug companies.

Mr. Speaker, let's start listening to the seniors who attend part D town hall meetings on Long Island and across the country, instead of drug lobbyists.

In the next few weeks, thousands of seniors will be getting an unexpected bill for more than \$3,000 for Medicare. Let's fix part D.

It is time for a simple, affordable and guaranteed prescription drug plan for our seniors. Part D has caused nothing but headaches for seniors since Day 1. And now it threatens to penalize them for taking their medication.

Mr. Speaker, it is a shame that we couldn't have worked bipartisanship, because I actually do think that we could have solved this problem by working together. Unfortunately, politics got in the way of policy.

I was hoping, as I held my seminars in my district, I did not come out and say anything negative. I said, I am here to help you get through it. It is the law of the land, and I will continue to do that. But to put our seniors through this is wrong.

We should come up with a better idea. We should fix Medicare. We should make it easier for our seniors.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 250, CARL D. PERKINS CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-598) on the resolution (H. Res. 946) waiving points of order against the conference report to accompany the bill (S. 250) to amend the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998 to improve the Act, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 5682, UNITED STATES AND INDIA NUCLEAR COOPERATION PROMOTION ACT OF 2006

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-599) on the resolution (H. Res. 947) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 5682) to exempt from certain requirements of the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 a proposed nuclear agreement for cooperation with India, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

**SUNSET COMMISSION
LEGISLATION**

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim my time out of order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from New Jersey is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor of the House again this Tuesday evening as part of the weekly Congressional Constitution Caucus efforts to highlight the Federal Government's limited powers as defined by the United States Constitution, specifically, the 10th amendment of our cherished Bill of Rights.

And I would also like to take this time to thank the gentlemen from Texas and Kansas for their efforts, the gentlemen, Mr. BRADY and Mr. TIAHRT, who have been leaders on the topic that I am going to discuss briefly, and that is the need for an independent body and procedures to review the merits of the many, many Federal programs that the American taxpayer has to pay for.

In light of our high taxes and even higher deficit, the time for increased efficiency couldn't be greater than today. The American worker is working harder than he should be, sending too much of his hard earned dollars down here to the Federal Government, only to see it wasted on layers and layers of redundancy and red tape and bureaucracy.

And so for that reason, I am here tonight to show my support for Mr. TIAHRT's H.R. 5766 and Mr. BRADY's H.R. 3282, which are going to be scheduled for a floor vote later this week on Thursday.

Due to these gentlemen's efforts, we have legislation they have drafted, they have set up a process of reviewing the effectiveness of Federal programs. It is a simple concept to make sure that the Federal Government is as efficient as it could be, in essence, to reduce the amount of time and energy that the American worker has to work, and the money that he has to send from his paycheck down here to Washington.

It is no secret that there are many Federal programs that are simply not serving the American public. There are programs that are duplicative, that are no longer necessary, that simply waste taxpayers dollars. The taxpayer currently works 192 days just to pay for his share of the Federal Government spending. That is just about a week ago they finished working that, and now you are working for yourself. So we are simply asking our constituents to put in a few less hours under these bills to help them to keep more of their money in the Federal budget.

It was Ronald Reagan once said that the closest thing to immortality that he would ever find here on earth is the Federal program. Well, we are trying to end that and make sure that some of