

and the State Department's annual human rights reports mandated by Congress are but two examples of our two branches working together to keep a spotlight on human rights abuses.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF PHARMACIES ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, today, I am proud to recognize the contributions of our Nations' pharmacies to the American health care system. Over 200 members of the pharmacy community—including practicing pharmacists, pharmacy school faculty and students, state pharmacy leaders, and pharmacy company executives—will come together to highlight the importance of supporting policies that protect access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilizes pharmacists to improve quality and reduce health costs.

Currently, there are over 50,000 community pharmacies operating nationwide. Pharmacists are one of the Nation's most accessible health care providers, and nearly all Americans live within about 2 miles from a community retail pharmacy. Pharmacy has a long history of receiving, filling, billing, and dispensing prescriptions in tandem with counseling. But pharmacists, utilizing their specialized education, also play a major role in medication therapy management, disease state management, immunizations, health care screenings, and other health care services designed to improve patient health and reduce overall health care costs.

Pharmacists help patients adhere to their medications to improve health outcomes and reduce the risks of adverse events and unnecessary costly hospital readmissions and emergency room visits. Pharmacists are uniquely qualified to work with patients to help manage their medications and play an essential role in helping them take their medications as prescribed. Unfortunately, only 50 percent of Americans living with chronic diseases adhere to their drug regimens. Patient nonadherence costs the Nation's economy an estimated \$290 billion each year, not to mention the avoidable loss of quality of life for patients and their loved ones. Congress recognized the important role of local pharmacists when it included a medication therapy management, MTM, benefit in Medicare Part D. As we have seen the increasing power of this benefit in improving patient health outcomes, I support community pharmacy's efforts to strengthen the MTM benefit so it is available for seniors and others struggling with chronic conditions and other illnesses.

As the face of neighborhood health care, pharmacies across the Nation offer these and other cost-saving programs and services to help patients take medicines they need to achieve positive results from appropriate use of their medications. For more than a century, pharmacies and pharmacists have made a difference in the lives of

people in North Carolina and the rest of America. In order to ensure pharmacies continue to exist in our local communities, pharmacists deserve fair reimbursements for the cost effective medications that they dispense.

Today, I celebrate the value of pharmacy and support efforts to protect access to neighborhood pharmacies and utilize pharmacies to improve the quality and reduce the costs of health care. Finally, I would like to congratulate over 200 pharmacy leaders, pharmacists, students, and executives and the pharmacy community for their contributions to the good health of the American people.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO S. MARK McCURRY

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize S. Mark McCurry, who has served as parish administrator of Calcasieu Parish for more than 20 years. He will retire on April 3, 2010, and I would like to take some time to make a few remarks on his accomplishments and contributions to the Louisiana community.

Mr. McCurry started his career with Calcasieu parish as assistant administrator in 1976. In 1983 he was named Outstanding Young Man of Lake Charles, thus beginning a notable career as a public servant. Furthering his career with Calcasieu parish, in 1988 he became parish administrator, and he continued making great strides for the State of Louisiana. In 1999, Mr. McCurry was named Appointed Public Official of the Year by the Calcasieu Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers and in 2003 he was the recipient of the statewide Public Service Award given by the Louisiana Public Health Association.

In addition to his time as parish administrator, Mr. McCurry served Louisiana in many other arenas. He sat on the board of directors of First Federal Bank of Louisiana and was chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Methodist Foundation of Louisiana. He also presided as president of the Organization of Parish Administrative Officials of the Louisiana Police Jury Association.

Mr. McCurry has been credited with "raising the level of professionalism in police jury affairs," as well as, "making local governments work together more effectively." He has been a great asset for the State of Louisiana.

Thus, today, I am proud to honor a fellow Louisianan, Mr. S. Mark McCurry, for his distinguished service to Calcasieu Parish and to the State of Louisiana. ●

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 2:11 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the

following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 3650. An act to establish a National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program, to develop and coordinate a comprehensive and integrated strategy to address harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, and to provide for the development and implementation of comprehensive regional action plans to reduce harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

H.R. 4506. An act to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes.

At 3:08 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that Mr. SCHIFF, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN, of California, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. GOODLATTE, and Mr. SENBRENNER are appointed managers on the part of the House to conduct the trial of impeachment of G. Thomas Porteous, Jr., a Judge for the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana, that a message be sent to the Senate to inform the Senate of these appointments, and that the managers on the part of the House may exhibit the articles of impeachment to the Senate and take all other actions necessary in connection with preparation for, and conduct of, the trial, which may include the following: (1) Employing legal, clerical, and other necessary assistants and incurring such other expenses as may be necessary, to be paid from amounts available to the Committee on the Judiciary under House Resolution 15, One Hundred Eleventh Congress, agreed to January 13, 2009, or any other applicable expense resolution on vouchers approved by the Chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary. (2) Sending for persons and papers, and filing with the Secretary of the Senate, on the part of the House of Representatives, any subsequent pleadings which they consider necessary.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bill was read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 4506. An act to authorize the appointment of additional bankruptcy judges, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bill was read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 3650. An act to establish a National Harmful Algal Bloom and Hypoxia Program, to develop and coordinate a comprehensive and integrated strategy to address harmful algal blooms and hypoxia, and to provide for the development and implementation of comprehensive regional action plans to reduce harmful algal blooms and hypoxia.

MEASURES READ THE FIRST TIME

The following bill was read the first time: