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HOUSE

BILL	DATE	PAGE(S)
H.R. 6444	Sept. 15, 1982	H6983

ACTION
Remarks by Mr. Waxman

DEFEAT OF H.R. 6444, PATENT LAW RESTORATION URGED

(Mr. WAXMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, later today, we will be asked to vote on an issue on suspension, H.R. 6444, which seeks to extend the patent period for pharmaceuticals. The pharmaceutical industry argues that when the Government takes up the time during which they otherwise would receive profits from their drugs because of the drug approval process, they ought to have the patent time extended. They have an argument to make, but what they seek to do in this legislation is to extend the patent period to include the time that they take to do testing to see if the drug is safe and effective. If there were no Government agency involved, they would still have to do this testing to be sure they are not going to be hurting people and become liable for injuries.

The consequences of a longer patent period will mean that the seniors in this country who are the primary purchasers of drugs will be paying the highest possible price for those drugs. There cannot be competition with the generic equivalent until that patent period runs out.

This bill is excessive. It is going to do a great deal of harm to people on limited fixed incomes. I think it is unnecessary. If it were to be passed at all, it should be passed in a much more restrictive form.