

Gralston - what's your sense at this point?

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THE WEEK AHEAD

TODAY

SENATE

Convenes at 3 p.m. to consider S.1963, Interstate Banking Act.

HOUSE

Convenes at noon. No legislative business is scheduled.

SENATE COMMITTEES

Appropriations

Agricultural Services

Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations for the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Foreign Agricultural Service, Soil Conservation Service and Federal Crop Insurance Corp. **Witnesses:** from the Agriculture Department, Eugene Moos, undersecretary, international affairs and commodity programs, James Lyons, assistant secretary, natural resources and environment, Grant Buntrock, administrator, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Richard Schroeter, acting administrator, Foreign Agricultural Service, Christopher Goldthwait, general sales manager, Paul Johnson, chief, Soil Conservation Service, and Stephen Dewhurst, budget officer, and Kenneth Ackerman, manager, Federal Crop Insurance Corp. 138 DSOB. 2 p.m.

Commerce

Maritime Authorization Act

Full committee hearing on S.1945, Maritime Administration Authorization Act. **Witness:** Transportation Secretary Pena. 253 RSOB. 10 a.m.

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Time May Run Out For Jobs Initiative

After a flurry of activity earlier this year, efforts to revamp the federal unemployment compensation and dislocated worker programs may be losing momentum on Capitol Hill, congressional aides and House members said in interviews last week. "At this point, it's more an administration priority than a congressional priority, but I think the administration will press its case," **House Education and Labor Elementary, Secondary and Vocational Education Subcommittee Chairman Dale Kildee**, D-Mich., told *CongressDaily*. The Clinton administration plan is aimed at converting the unemployment system into a re-employment system, establishing one-stop career centers for dislocated workers and consolidating several dislocated worker programs. But Kildee said while the administration "feels the present system isn't working," some members of Congress fear changes in the present system might cause more problems than they would solve.

In addition, Kildee and **Education and Labor ranking member Bill Goodling**, R-Pa., said that with action on healthcare reform legislation looming, the committee's agenda may be so packed it will be difficult to consider another large comprehensive program. "It's going to be difficult," Kildee said. And Goodling confirmed the notion. "The platter is too full, but it's got too much on it that doesn't belong there," Goodling said, contending he would prefer to see the committee tackle the job training issues, rather than an issue like OSHA reform. "With the changing employment situation, it's one of our most important issues," Goodling added. He said Republican members continue to work on an alternative to the Clinton plan that would consolidate far more job training programs than would the Clinton plan. On the other side of the Capitol, a Senate aide said the issue re-

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House Republicans Crafting New Theme

House GOP leaders are quietly hammering out a new, more refined message aimed at sharpening what key Republicans acknowledge is a national identity that remains out of focus — particularly in the wake of the Bush presidency. "The fall-out from the Bush years is a Republican Party that is out of touch and for the rich," a top Republican leadership aide said last week in an interview. "It's a challenge to House Republicans, in particular." The effort is focused in part on drawing up what an aide to **Minority Whip Gingrich** said is a new "vision statement." House Republicans met last week to study the latest draft, and a product seems likely to be presented to the House GOP Conference in coming weeks or perhaps months, the aide said. The new vision for the party is likely to build on themes Gingrich has highlighted in recent speeches on "renewing American civilization," as well as discussions at the House Republicans' annual issues retreat earlier this year in Salisbury, Md.

One top Republican aide said that in 1993 — having just lost the White House — the GOP focused on honing what it stands for as a party. The aide said the GOP has developed a number of proposals along these lines, from anti-crime proposals to a healthcare bill. Now, the challenge is to formulate a public message to better articulate GOP ideas. "I think the first year out of the White House, we searched for who we were," the aide said. "We did do that. Now the second part of the process is telling people who we are." Said the Gingrich aide, "The question is how the party sees itself and [how it leads] into the next century." **Rep. John Boehner**,

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★ WHAT DO THESE ISSUES HAVE IN COMMON? ★

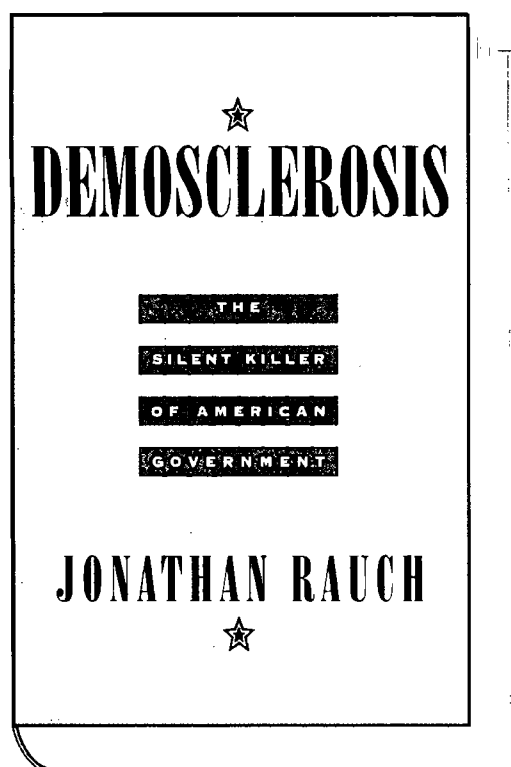
- HEALTH CARE REFORM
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Forum," which is co-chaired by **Reps. David Skaggs**, D-Colo., and **Jim Leach**, R-Iowa.

Thursday, **House Energy and Commerce Health and Environment Subcommittee Chairman Henry Waxman**, D-Calif., plans another strike at the tobacco industry.

Waxman plans a hearing featuring testimony from Victor DeNoble, author of an unpublished Philip Morris study that found nicotine exhibited one of the key characteristics of an addictive substance. Philip Morris agreed at Waxman's last hearing on the issue to allow open discussions of the findings.

HEALTH: The House Education and Labor Labor-Management Subcommittee Tuesday will resume its markup of healthcare reform legislation. It will do a walk-through of the proposal crafted by **Subcommittee Chairman Pat Williams**, D-Mont., which is similar to President Clinton's plan.

Meanwhile, House Ways and Means Committee Democrats will continue to examine healthcare reform issues in private caucuses Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and may begin formulating a markup document from which to begin committee consideration.

The full committee could begin working on a bill as early as the first or second week in May. The panel's Health Subcommittee approved healthcare reform legislation last month.

And on the third House committee with major jurisdiction over healthcare legislation, **Energy and Commerce Chairman Dingell** this week is expected to continue to try to secure 23 Democratic votes for his reform proposal.

Dingell last week was several votes short, and he hoped to pick up several votes by proposing to exclude the smallest employers — those with under 10 employees — from mandates to provide insurance for workers and paying a tax.

While **Reps. Rick Boucher**, D-Va., and **Richard Lehman**, D-Calif., last week suggested they might now be able to support Dingell's proposal, they said they would have to consider the changes and talk to constituents over the week-end before deciding.

However, Dingell's chances for 23 votes may have been damaged Thursday when one key swing vote, **Rep. Jim Slattery**, D-Kan., said he did not think he could support any employer mandate.

And although Dingell has said he wants to begin marking up a bill as soon as possible — this week if he can secure the votes — committee Republicans late Friday sent a letter urging him to allow sufficient time for them to review the mark and prepare amendments.

The Republicans also insisted on CBO estimates before going to markup. They noted they had not yet seen any legislative language, and asked for a minimum of two weeks. In addition, they re-stated their desire to work with the Democrats on a bipartisan reform bill.

Another Energy and Commerce member, **Rep. Jim Cooper**, D-Tenn., this week is expecting the CBO to complete and release an economic assessment of his managed competition healthcare reform plan. Cooper already has criticized the CBO's scoring methodology. The CBO was hoping to have the numbers ready by Wednesday.

On the Senate side, Finance Committee Democrats and Republicans also are expected to continue to meet privately this week on healthcare reform in an effort to formulate a bipartisan reform bill.

On other fronts, the American Association of Retired Persons today plans to issue a report on problems the elderly have in paying for prescription drugs. The report is expected to show that in 1991, nearly half the senior citizens surveyed had no prescription drug coverage and spent an average of \$500 a year on the products.

HOUSING: HUD Secretary Cisneros will testify Thursday at a Senate Banking Committee hearing on the Housing Choice and Community Investment Act.

INSURANCE: The Senate Commerce Committee Wednesday will hold a hearing on the Natural Disaster Protection Act, under which the government would

provide re-insurance to companies insuring against natural disasters.

Thursday, the House Energy and Commerce Consumer Protection Subcommittee will hold a hearing on Metropolitan Life Insurance Co.

JUDICIARY: The House Judiciary Committee this week will focus on firearms. Its Crime and Criminal Justice Subcommittee today will hear testimony regarding the Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act.

Markup sessions for the Assault Weapons Ban Act are scheduled for the subcommittee Tuesday, and for the full committee Wednesday.

On the Senate side, Attorney General Reno is scheduled to testify before the Judiciary Committee regarding crime prevention for children at risk.

LEADERSHIP RACES: Congressional Black Caucus Chairman **Kweisi Mfume**, D-Md., this week is expected to hold a news conference on his leadership ambitions.

Mfume is expected to decline a bid for House Democratic Caucus chairman, but he told *CongressDaily* last week he is "looking at" a run for vice chairman.

Chief Deputy Majority Whip Barbara Kennelly, D-Conn., and **Rep. Louise Slaughter**, D-N.Y., are the only announced candidates in the vice chairman's race.

MERCHANT MARINE: The Senate Commerce Committee today will hold a hearing regarding the FY95 reauthorization of the Maritime Administration. The committee will continue Wednesday with a hearing on reauthorization of the U.S. Coast Guard.

TRADE: The U.S. Trade Representative's office Saturday is scheduled to release its annual list of the world's worst unfair traders in terms of market barriers and intellectual property violations.

The USTR is expected to release a list of priority foreign countries, a priority watch list and a watch list.

GOP Th me

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R-Ohio, who is working on developing the GOP message with **Rep. Peter Hoekstra**, R-Mich., among other Republicans, observed, "We as a party have never been real good at painting an accurate picture of what we're about and what we do."

The process of developing a new message — which is being crafted in consultation with Senate Republicans and the Republican National Committee — is unfolding as part of an overall effort to energize and include more rank-and-file members in the leadership of the conference.

It also comes as Gingrich continues to place his imprint on the direction of the GOP in anticipation of his all-but-certain election as minority leader later this year; **Minority Leader Michel** is retiring.

Meanwhile, **GOP Conference Chairman Richard Arme**y of Texas also is developing a "proclamation" of the top 10 bills the Republicans would pass if they were the majority party.

The list is slated to be released later this year and will likely include such proposals as comprehensive budget re-

form, including a budget resolution that would be signed by the president. Budget resolutions do not currently require a presidential signature.

"You've got to develop a message and get it out," Arme>y said. "We realize we have to do a better job of projecting ourselves."

Job Programs

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mains on the back burner. "I haven't sensed any urgency yet," the aide said, although he said the administration may apply pressure to act on its plan.

Meanwhile, Kildee and Goodling did say they are intrigued by a wrinkle that has been added to the job training debate in recent weeks: the possibility that the Student Loan Marketing Association may seek a role in a new program that would make job retraining loans.

Sallie Mae officials last week released a survey showing employers believe there is a need for greater access to capital to finance job retraining. Agency officials also have been circulating a background paper discussing several roles the agency could play in providing that capital.

"There's a large resource of money" at Sallie Mae, Kildee said.

Goodling agreed, saying the agency "certainly knows how to be successful — and we need all the help we can get."

Schedule

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HOUSE COMMITTEES Appropriations

FY95 Appropriations

Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations. H-307 Capitol. 9 a.m. **(Rescheduled from April 22.)**

Fish and Wildlife Service

Interior and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations for the Fish and Wildlife Service. B-308 RHOB. 1 p.m. **(Rescheduled from April 14.)**

Transportation

Transportation and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations for the Transportation Department. 2358 RHOB. 10 a.m.

Judiciary

Public Safety, Firearms Protection

Crime and Criminal Justice Subcommittee hearing on H.R.3527, Public Safety and Recreational Firearms Use Protection Act. **Witnesses:** Steve Sposato; Michelle Scully; Ken Brondell Jr.; David Milzman, associate director, trauma services, Georgetown University Medical Center; John Magaw,

director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; Jim and Sarah Brady, Handgun Control Inc.; Suzanna Gratia; Phillip Murphy; Jacquie Miller; Sylvester Daughtry; Tony Loizzo; and John Pitta. 2237 RHOB. 10:30 a.m.

TUESDAY

SENATE

Meeting time unavailable.

HOUSE

Convenes at 10:30 a.m. to consider nine bills under suspension of the bills.

SENATE COMMITTEES Appropriations

Justice Programs, INS

Commerce, Justice, State, the Judiciary and Related Agencies Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations for the Office of Justice Programs and Immigration and Naturalization Service. S-146 Capitol. 10 a.m.

Defense

Defense Subcommittee hearing on FY95 appropriations for the Defense Department. S-407 Capitol. 10 a.m. **(Closed.)**

Foreign Operations Programs

Foreign Operations Subcommittee hearing

on FY95 appropriations for foreign operations programs. 138 DSOB. 3 p.m.

Armed Services

Acquisition Streamlining Act

Full committee markup of S.1587, Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act. 222 RSOB. 2:30 p.m.

Chemical Demilitarization

Nuclear Deterrence, Arms Control and Defense Intelligence Subcommittee hearing on FY95 defense authorizations for the chemical demilitarization program. **Witness:** Robert Walker, assistant secretary, installations, logistics and environment, Army. 222 RSOB. 9:30 a.m. **(Rescheduled from April 14.)**

Environment and Public Works

Public Buildings Reform Act

Water Resources, Transportation, Public Buildings and Economic Development Subcommittee hearing on S.1760, Public Buildings Reform Act. 406 DSOB. 10 a.m.

Finance

Healthcare Reform: Taxation

Full committee hearing on taxation of employee health benefits. 215 DSOB. 10 a.m.