


AMENDMENT #7

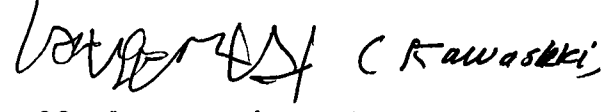
CS HB 109 (JUD)

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perjury, scheme to defraud, [OR] fraud, mail fraud, misuse of funds, corruption, or tax evasion may not receive a state pension benefit if the

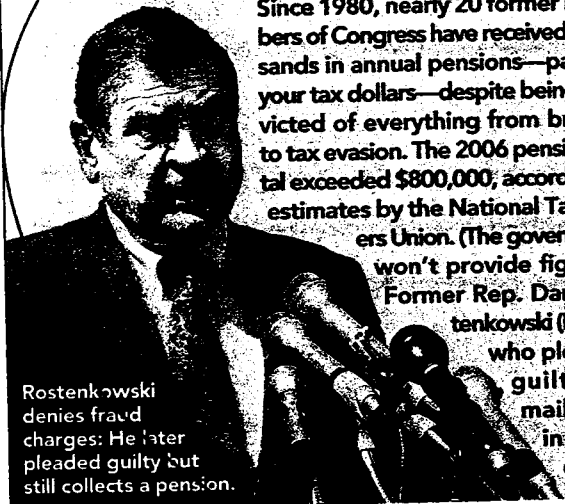


BY GRUENBERG



By Lyric Wallwork Winik

[In the News] Your Tax Dollars: Congressional Criminals Cash In



Rostenkowski denies fraud charges: He later pleaded guilty but still collects a pension.

Since 1980, nearly 20 former members of Congress have received thousands in annual pensions—paid by your tax dollars—despite being convicted of everything from bribery to tax evasion. The 2006 pension total exceeded \$800,000, according to estimates by the National Taxpayers Union. (The government won't provide figures.)

Former Rep. Dan Rostenkowski (D., Ill.), who pleaded guilty to mail fraud in 1996, collect-

ed the most: about \$126,000. Other estimates for 2006 include Sen. David Durenberger (R., Minn.), misuse of funds, \$86,000; Rep. Austin Murphy (D., Pa.), violating election law, \$78,000; Rep. James Traficant (D., Ohio), corruption, \$40,000; and Rep. Randy Cunningham (R., Calif.), bribery, \$36,000. Congressmen already have pensions more generous than the private sector's and are eligible for regular cost-of-living raises. This year, both the House and Senate are voting to strip pensions from convicted legislators—but only those found guilty in the future of certain crimes, such as bribery.

[Your Health]

The Most Dangerous Medical Mistake

As many as 90,000 Americans die each year from medical errors, but the kinds we most fear—such as being given the wrong medication—are often not the deadliest. Misdiagnosis is. "An astounding 15% of all patients who enter a hospital or doctor's office this year will be misdiagnosed, and about

15% of all patients get the wrong diagnosis.

half will face serious complications, even death," says Dr. Jerome Groopman, chief of experimental medicine at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. He explains that doctors fall into traps

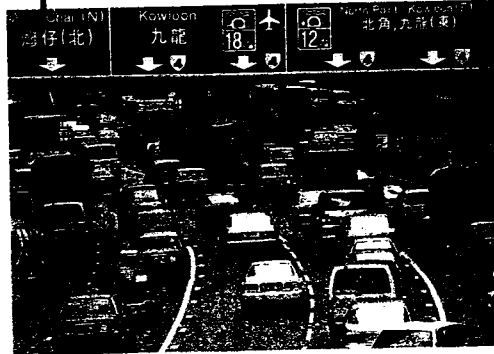
in their thinking, such as getting stuck on a series of symptoms and mistaking heart disease for acid reflux. Our health system is partly to blame, he adds: "The rush to turn doctors' offices into an assembly line intensified this problem. Doctors with one eye on the clock are at greater risk of making cognitive mistakes." The best defense is an informed patient. For tips on how to avoid medical errors, go to parade.com.

[From Abroad]

China and The Price of Gas

Americans drive an estimated 226 million vehicles, but China is closing the gap. It will have at least 130 million cars in eight years, and they'll need gas. Right now, up to 80% of China's oil demand goes for trucks and freight transport. But Beijing is constructing a 52,800-mile highway system—about the same length as the interstates built in the U.S. since the 1950s. China's increased demand for oil will translate into higher costs at the pump for us.

More cars in China means more for gas here.



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