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LOOK FOR THE MOVIE FILM FEST CALENDAR
IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE "COMIC NEWS"

TH 7:20 @ 11:45 STARTING FR 7:21 12:00 NIGHTLY

PULP FICTION
COMING NEW JERSEY EDITION

Th 7:20 @ 5:15, 7:15, 9:15
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LOOK FOR THE MOVIE FILM FEST CALENDAR
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DeFazio: Get FDA off people's backs

■ **HEALTH:** Bill would make alternative treatments more accessible

By Marcelene Edwards
Associate Editor

Responding to what he calls excessive limits on the availability of alternative medical treatments, Rep. Peter DeFazio joined other House and Senate members last week to introduce a bill designed to give people more options in health care.

The Access to Medical Treatment Act allows individuals to get non harmful alternative health treatments without the treatments' going through the Food and Drug Administration's approval process.

But the Food and Drug Administration has safety concerns with legislation such as this.

Responding to a similar bill last year, Mary K. Pendergast told the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources that these bills "could needlessly expose patients to dangerous products."

There will be no requirement to study drugs carefully in humans prior to use in treatment, she said.

All drugs that currently go through the FDA must meet strict standards before they are approved. New drug applications that are presented to the FDA must contain substantial scientific evidence of both the safety and effectiveness of the drug for its intended uses, and the drug must be tested on ani-

mals for toxicity. That information will be used in developing a plan for testing on humans, according to the FDA.

After extensive studies of reproductive effects, effects on the fetus and long-term use, the test results are submitted to the FDA. FDA medical officers, chemists, statisticians and pharmacologists review the application to determine if the sponsor's data in fact show that the drug is safe and effective, according to the FDA.

But DeFazio says this process of approving drugs through the FDA is costly and time consuming. Many alternative treatments using natural materials cannot be patented, but unless patented, their originators cannot afford to meet the FDA's requirements for new drugs, according to a press release from DeFazio's office.

"As we confront escalating medical costs and struggle to protect the Medicare program, alternative medicine offers affordable and often effective treatments for chronic illnesses that require long-term care," DeFazio said.

DeFazio said he became involved in the issue because it is a personal interest of his. Over the years he has used the services of acupuncturists and naturopaths. He is also responding to the public's demand to make non-harmful alternative and potentially life-saving treatments more widely available to consumers, said Jacquelyn Davis, a spokeswoman for DeFazio.

Dr. Daniel Hardt, a naturopath

in Eugene, said the act is a very good thing for health care, because it gives the doctors more choices. Hardt dismisses many of the safety concerns held by the FDA, saying that you have to give credit to the consumers' ability to make healthy decisions.

"Consumers are the ultimate check on the market," he said.

Hardt points to a case in Washington where he says a doctor was investigated by the federal government for using B vitamins from Germany that had not been approved. The Access to Medical Treatment Act would improve this situation, he said.

The bill requires full disclosure to patients of the contents and possible side effects of treatments and mandates that patients be notified if the federal government has not yet proved the drug to be safe or effective. It also specifies that only state-licensed health care providers working within the scope of their practice may administer the treatments. The bill strictly regulates how claims can be made on treatment effectiveness, and prohibits all advertising and labeling claims when a treatment's promotion is linked to a personal financial incentive.

"I want to get the thousand-pound gorilla known as the FDA off of the backs of people who want access to beneficial alternative health treatments without compromising the public's safety," DeFazio said. "This legislation will accomplish that goal."

Forum: U.S. must provide leadership

■ Continued from Page 1

territory and had proclaimed their own Serbian Republic of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

One international proposal for a cease-fire involved dividing the country into 10 semiautonomous regions, in each of which one of the contending ethnic/religious groups would dominate.

"Yet, multi-[ethnic]-accommodation is the tradition of Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Western government has failed to see this," Yasui said.

"This war was not started from ancient hatred or spontaneous fighting," he said. "It was a well thought-out war by the Serbian president and intellectuals."

"If the United States doesn't take leadership as a

multi-ethnic state, then the Europeans won't follow," he said. "This was proved by the Gulf War."

"And just because Bosnia doesn't have oil, we're not involved," he said. "We have to ask our government for moral leadership and to stop the cost-benefit analysis."

George Zaninovich, a University political science teacher, asked, "Why haven't the Serbs in the United States spoken out against the war?"

A member of the audience, Midhat Delic, a University student who came from Bosnia four months ago, answered, "Of everyone who is opposed to the war, none of those are ready to give up what the Bosnian Serbs have gotten by force in Bosnia — none of them is ready to give up the territory."

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