

INTERVIEW with DEBORAH D. PRYCE

U.S. Representative from Ohio's 15th district, 1993 through 2008

Taped Friday 2/26/2010. Rest of page is from <http://womenincongress.house.gov> --

Deborah Denine Pryce was born in Warren, Ohio, on July 29, 1951. She graduated from Ohio State University in 1973 and received her J.D. from Capital University Law School three years later. From 1976 to 1978, Pryce served as an administrative law judge for the Ohio state department of insurance. She worked as a prosecutor and municipal attorney for the city attorney's office of Columbus from 1978 to 1985. Pryce served two terms and was the presiding judge in the municipal court of Franklin County from 1985 to 1992. In 1990, she adopted her daughter, Caroline. After Caroline's death from cancer in 1999, Pryce founded Hope Street Kids, a nonprofit organization devoted to curing childhood cancer. In 2002, she adopted a daughter, Mia.

In 1992, when 13-term Republican Representative Chalmers Wylie retired from the House, Pryce ran unopposed in the GOP primary. In a hard-fought, three-way general election for the open seat in a district covering western Columbus and its outlying suburbs, Pryce prevailed with 43 percent of the vote. She was re-elected to the six succeeding Congresses, with comfortable margins...

From the beginning of her congressional service, Representative Pryce occupied a leadership position. Elected Republican freshman-class president in 1993, Pryce also was named to the congressional Republican transition team in the following Congress, when Republicans gained control of the House for the first time in 40 years. Two years later in 1996, she was selected a Deputy Majority Whip for the Republican Party. In 1998, GOP colleagues elected Representative Pryce Secretary of the House Republican Conference, the body that oversees the organization of the party. Pryce ran unopposed for the Republican Conference Vice Chair spot in 2000, and in the race for Conference Chair for the 108th Congress (2003–2005) she defeated two opponents to become the highest-ranking woman in the Republican Party. She was re-elected GOP Conference Chair for the 109th Congress (2005–2007).

Aside from a brief stint on the Select Committee on Homeland Security in the 107th Congress (2001–02), Pryce's major committee focus was on the Rules panel. In the 107th and 108th Congresses, she chaired its Legislative and Budget Process Subcommittee. In the 109th Congress, while Republicans still controlled the House, Pryce left the Rules Committee to accept a seat on the Financial Services Committee, where she was the fourth-ranking Member. She chaired the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Monetary Policy, Trade, and Technology... From both the Rules and Financial Services committees, Representative Pryce authored key provisions of laws to modernize the nation's financial services industry and sponsored legislation to protect consumers' personal and financial information...

In the 2006 elections, however, when Republicans lost their majority status for the first time in 12 years, she narrowly defeated Democrat challenger Mary Jo Kilroy by a 50.2 to 49.7 margin.

PART ONE -- EARLY YEARS

DEBORAH PRYCE: I grew up in northeastern Ohio, in a little town called Warren. It's a Democratic bastion, and always has been, but -- I was brought up Republican. My parents are both Republican -- they were business-owners; that's probably why. My mother is the more outspoken in her conservatism. They were both pharmacists, and so was my grandfather. And so we had a small family business, and our entire family worked it. There were five children, and I'm the oldest.

But -- I came of age during the Vietnam War, the [George] McGovern campaign, the feminist movement, the Kent State shooting in Ohio, and -- for a time -- that colored my political leanings.

FRANK GREGORSKY: Many of us boomers were through liberal "phases" when we were young.

PRYCE: That's right! [Laughter] I didn't re-register, though; I always stayed a registered Republican. I went through that stage, but never changed my stripes officially.

A funny aside: When I was in [law school], the Watergate hearings were on. I was working up in Hyannis port -- as a maid at a Howard Johnson's motel. I think I followed a boyfriend up there and my father would not allow me to go unless I had a job. So I watched those hearings in these random motel rooms while doing the cleaning [laughter], and they left a distinct impression upon me. I had a major crush on Howard Baker, but [otherwise] was greatly chagrined by it all.

GREGORSKY: That's a great story -- watching the Senate Watergate Committee, room to room, in chunks.

PRYCE: At a dumpy Howard Johnson's -- or, I guess nothing is "dumpy" in Hyannis port. But there I was in the bastion of liberalism, and kind of being embarrassed by our party's President. I never thought I would become involved in politics; I never "liked" it.

But hooking up with Greg LaShucka, the newly elected City Attorney in Columbus -- he hired me as a young Prosecuting Attorney -- his job was "political" of course [in that] he

was elected. So everybody that worked for him became somewhat political. Greg happened to be a Republican. So I reclaimed my Republican credentials, went to work for him, and never left again [laughter].

GREGORSKY: This was late '70s?

PRYCE: That was about 1978. And I worked hard on his next campaign, which got me back in the swing of things. Later on, he actually encouraged me into my first election. They needed somebody to fill out the ticket in the judicial races, and he strongly encouraged me to take that on. It was almost a throwaway -- you know, get on the ballot, tie up this [incumbent Democratic] judge, so she couldn't be out helping others: "Nobody gets a free ride." Judges in Ohio are still non-political people -- you're not allowed to run with a party designation -- although I was a Republican, endorsed by the party. And I ended up winning.

GREGORSKY: Franklin County Municipal Court.

PRYCE: Yeah, I think I started in '85.

GREGORSKY: So you were a lawyer and then a judge. Inside that "system" you got to see human nature close up, people fighting over some very basic things. How did this kind of shape your view of mankind and womankind before you actually got to Capitol Hill?

PRYCE: I campaigned on that a little bit in my first congressional race -- about seeing life very "up close." Teenage pregnancy, drug abuse, illiteracy, health care, including mental-health issues -- things that come in front of a judge, one at a time. It became a good "stump speech" -- people got it. And those experiences kind of made me a moderate. How do we develop a sense of ideology? Being on the front lines of people's problems day in and day out led to sort of the "compassionate conservative" approach to politics.

GREGORSKY: Can you do a boil-down regarding why people make changes that are long-term positive but also difficult?

PRYCE: Well, each situation is different, and things are complicated. Money doesn't cure everything -- and neither does policy. Communities and religious groups taking an

interest [and becoming] a bigger part of America than government is -- I saw that as a better solution. Maybe not as broad a solution, but I as a Judge felt that way very strongly.

It's much like education -- when parents get involved, the outcome is better. When you have somebody by your side -- not a bureaucrat, but somebody who cares about you [and wants you] to succeed or improve -- the outcomes are always better. I was not necessarily volunteering to get involved in their lives, but -- that was my job. I used probation tools, rehabilitation programs [and was part of the social transition] where domestic violence became looked at as actual crimes.

PART TWO -- REFORMS, 100 DAYS, VIEWPAC

PRYCE: I got there and -- you know how you're all thrown together at orientation? It's like the first year in law school -- those friends are friends for life.

Well, I kind of "hung" with Jack Quinn, John McHugh, Peter King, Rick Laszlo -- the New York and New England guys; basically, other moderates. Two other freshmen had been campaigning for Class President and struck these guys at least -- my buddies -- the wrong way. So it turned out to be a campaign for "anybody but..." I had the impression that I was recruited by them, kind of "put out there," as the alternative to these other guys that they didn't like [laughter].

GREGORSKY: Was there a three-way ballot?

PRYCE: Oooohh, I don't even remember. I just remember emerging as the "non-threatening" alternative. And maybe [laughter] that was because I didn't have a clue; maybe it was because I was a woman, and '92 was the Year of the Woman -- and let me also say that they made the caveat that this was the interim class president.

In many ways [our Class] was an indecisive and difficult group. We didn't really elect a class president 'til maybe six months later.

But I led the group through the initial stages of the orientation and getting our quote-unquote "demands" to Leadership -- and we agonized over that process for days and days

and days: "We want X amount of people on the Committee on Committees; we want this to be our signature issue" -- whatever -- and it just took forever to [get clarity on] that.

GREGORSKY: Who was the vice-president?

PRYCE: I don't remember if we had one.

GREGORSKY: Despite Bush going down in flames, we picked up a net of 12 seats in 1992, mostly because Perot's 19% nationally brought new people to the polls and they leaned Republican. So your class had to number at least two dozen?

PRYCE: At least. It might have been closer to 40.

GREGORSKY: Okay. You all came in during the aftermath of the House Bank scandal. It was a time of generational change in the House, more so than a classic fight over ideology. The atmosphere got very, very -- it wasn't even Democrat versus Republican, it was "you're doomed and I'm not. Those bounced checks made you a marked man, and I'm lucky to survive."

PRYCE: Right.

GREGORSKY: Porter Goss told me the Bank wasn't even a "bank," and the terminology was all wrong, but -- it really did set the stage for a revolution which Newt managed to capitalize on [in November 1994]. So you come in [one election prior] and there's Bob Michel -- the last of the Old Guard -- presiding over this bubbling cauldron. Can you give a sketch of the Conference in those early days?

PRYCE: It hit me even earlier, because [my predecessor] Chalmers [Wylie] -- that was one of the reasons for his decision. His poll numbers had dropped so drastically -- I think his wife had made use of the Bank, I don't even know if it was him. And a freshman from our own delegation -- John Boehner, part of the Gang of Seven -- really rallied around the abuses, and made it their class's signature issue, so to speak. And, as I was grasping at some of these issues, John Boehner, demonstrating his leadership qualities even then, was one of the only members of the Ohio delegation to reach out and help.

GREGORSKY: Um-hmm.

PRYCE: And so I logically kind of "glommed on" to these same [House reform] issues. But that meant I did not get Wylie's endorsement. But the Class of '90 was prescient. Those guys had a vision, and it was not Bob Michel's vision. They did set the stage [for '94]. It was Jim Nussle, Boehner, Doolittle, and I forget who all was in that group. And these were the same guys who were the [Dick] Arme y backers. Whether or not Jerry Lewis was, he was portrayed as the Bob Michel "go along to get along" side of the Conference.

GREGORSKY: And he was! That was not an unfair portrait. In fact, Jerry was one of only 47 GOPers to vote for Bush's tax hike in October of 1990, which enraged Arme y. And Arme y went on to overthrow Jerry for Conference chair two years later.

PRYCE: Yeah, and that [Leadership race is] very vivid in my recollection. Both sides were really "mining" the freshmen, and I didn't have a clue [laughter] -- this was just all new to me, never having anticipated being on the national stage, and not knowing the players. But Jerry had been very helpful to the women who were running that year --

GREGORSKY: Yeah, yep.

PRYCE: It wasn't Jerry himself, but Letitia Hoadley must've been assigned to me, because she and I had regular conversations; I sought her guidance [during the '92 campaign]. And the John Boehners, who were my mentors [upon getting to Washington] were on the other side. So I did the very foolish and naive thing of keeping my vote to myself, and would not commit to either [Lewis or Arme y]. When you do that, nobody appreciates you, and everyone thinks you're suspect. I got such arm-twisting from both sides, but especially from the Arme y people.

GREGORSKY: But, if it really is a too-close-to-call race, can't withholding your decision still be very "smart"?

PRYCE: But I never revealed it -- to this day, to anybody. And I won't to you either [good-natured laughter] -- just keeping with tradition here. I hope they both thought I voted for 'em, but -- in reality -- it works the other way, as I would learn from my own Leadership races!

GREGORSKY: What took place from November '94 to the final "Contract" vote in May of '95? I'm looking for stories -- breakthroughs, near-misses, late nights, management lessons -- based on this web reference: "Pryce also was named to the congressional Republican transition team in [her second term], when Republicans gained control of the House for the first time in 40 years."

PRYCE: Well, that was crazy. The transition team was headed up by Jim Nussle. We made a lot of decisions, but they were -- we didn't make decisions, we made recommendations. My major role, in terms of things that were lasting, was [to implement] a commitment from Newt that he would make that Congress, the new Congress, "family friendly." And then [chuckling] we went right into the One Hundred Days. We had a room up there on the third floor, arranging for families to be welcome at our retreats, and --

GREGORSKY: What was the room up on the third floor?

PRYCE: It's the room directly across from the main doors of the House Gallery, and it's the Family Room. It's a two-story [area], very comfortable and spacious; spouses and children and others can use it. There were toys and books and TVs and baby things. Later Tom DeLay and other started using it for their prayer meetings. It was just a nice comfortable space.

GREGORSKY: Two stories?!?

PRYCE: Uh-huh! An inside stairwell went up to like a loft. But we dedicated it to congressional families. I also worked very hard at making families welcome at our retreats -- spouse programs and other things. This was also when Newt gave me the authority -- the "moral authority," so to speak, to start reaching out to women. Women Members would meet. I would convene dinner groupings. Nancy Johnson helped me with that -- she lived over by the Capitol Hill Club. We reached out to K Street, to government women, and just kind of helped them befriend us. This was the first time women Republican Members, you know, felt The Sisterhood, so to speak, you know?

GREGORSKY: Sure. You guys didn't do candidate-recruitment at all, did you?

PRYCE: Not at that point. But what was an informal working [and social] group turned into VIEWPAC, and we raised a lot of money. Then we started recruiting, and funding, women congressional candidates. "VIEWPAC" stood for Value in Electing Women. And we were able to fully fund every viable woman -- we gave each one \$5,000. And we were so successful that Nancy Pelosi took us to the FEC and shut us down -- on the allegation that I had two Leadership PACs -- like she -- you know, what happened to her.

GREGORSKY: So eventually there was a ruling?

PRYCE: I was finally vindicated by the FEC, though in the meantime VIEWPAC went into sleep mode. But we're in the process of reviving VIEWPAC right now...

So that all sprung out of Newt wanting to put the women on front lines. He always made me responsible for getting our women Members at the front for the press conferences. He got it, you know? He knew that the visual was important. Way more than Bob Michel ever, he realized the importance of women in our Party -- not just having us in the picture, but making sure we had a voice.

PART THREE -- TWO SPEAKERS, GOP CONFERENCE

GREGORSKY: Who were Newt's best supporters, most loyal people -- I mean, Walker was gone by this point, and Weber had left after '92. So which Members could go to Newt and say, "Mr. Speaker, ya gotta climb down off this one, you're pounding this one a little too heavy"? -- you know, "wake up," "wise up" -- who could talk that way to Newt?

PRYCE: [Eight-second pause]. Hmmph. Very good question -- I'm trying to think.

GREGORSKY: He's such a strong personality, and we all knew, as we worked for him in the early days, that he would "take that" from very few people. It had to be a special relationship.

PRYCE: Um-hmmm. And we're talking about the years surrounding the [attempted] coup?

GREGORSKY: Yeah, basically I mean the [three years he had left] after the two government shutdowns, which I think were a PR disaster that Newt was, I think fairly, blamed for because he didn't negotiate that well with Clinton late in that showdown --

PRYCE: I agree.

GREGORSKY: -- and [December 1995] seemed to break the momentum of the so-called Republican Revolution.

PRYCE: Um-hmmm, um-hmmm [pause]. Well, I would have said Nussle, but since then I've learned that Nussle was really an Armey guy.

GREGORSKY: Um-hmm.

PRYCE: [Eight-second pause] I don't know.

GREGORSKY: Maybe a name will come to you [when you do the mark-up].

PRYCE: Maybe Bill Thomas, as he rose as a Newt ally, but -- I don't know how much sway he had over the Conference politically. You know what I'm saying? At the internal stuff, Bill wasn't bristly. Dave Dreier might have been -- he was always at the right hand of the Speaker, no matter who it is. But -- I don't know. If I can think of names, I'll get back to you...

GREGORSKY: By the time you became Conference chair, Republicans had held the majority for four Congresses and had two more to go. Bush gets reelected, although it could easily have gone to John Kerry -- but it's almost like we're the majority party [of America] now.

PRYCE: Um-hmmm.

GREGORSKY: Now part of that's 9/11, part of it is low interest rates [allowing a housing boom to take the place of the technology boom] -- whatever. But you are presiding over this big, sprawling congressional "family" that's actually running things.

PRYCE: And it was [pause] -- it was a very tough time. After 9/11, the country was together for a good six months, maybe. But then things started to fall apart. The war spending, and the war itself, and the Medicare expansion -- and the fact that Republicans became what we always argued against -- was very hard. It was hard to preside over.

And I was such a team player -- I was loyal to Denny Hastert, and to the President. But -- being the Conference Chairman is a really insightful job. Because you stand there at least once a week, in front of all your colleagues, and can read their faces, their body language -- you don't have to wait for the speeches, because you know what's coming [laughter] when they raise their hand; you can sense so much.

And we were a very divided Conference. But we did stick together and were able to accomplish many things. But it's not surprising that we kind of fell apart -- at the seams.

GREGORSKY: What kind of a guy was Tom DeLay, and was the heavy-handed "Hammer" accusation -- was it plausible, was it fair?

PRYCE: Oh yeah. Oh, yeah. It was more than fair.

GREGORSKY: And not just for going after donations on K Street -- I mean, his style was just a steamroller.

PRYCE: His style was a steamroller, and the Texas delegation allowed, or provided, him the springboard to make his problem our problem. Tom's political instincts were the best, except when it came to himself. As for Hastert -- I think Denny Hastert was a great Speaker; but, if I could've tweaked it, I certainly would have had him standing up more against Tom, and what the Conference did on Tom's behalf.

PART FOUR -- MECHANICS, FAMILY TIME, 2006

GREGORSKY: Talk a little about the planning of a Conference, the advance conversations trying to bridge or at least stop those divisions from blowing up.

PRYCE: That was one of my skills that I was most proud of. We didn't have a lot of controversy -- outside of the Conference. Everything "ugly," for the most part, that was gonna be said we said it to ourselves inside the room. I felt like the mother hen of the party, in that good behavior was rewarded, and everybody left with the sense that this might not be what they wanted, but this is the team --

GREGORSKY: What was the physical structure? Was there a table you would sit at not far from a podium people would come up to talk from?

PRYCE: Yeah, uh-huh. We usually met down in HC-5, or in the Cannon Caucus [Room] -- but the acoustics in Cannon Caucus were terrible. And so we ended more in HC-5. But we were a big Conference, and it was really tight in there

GREGORSKY: "Cheek by jowl"?

PRYCE: Yeah, I'm really envious of the new Visitors Space that they can use now. But we would try to feed them each time, because food draws people [chuckling]. Everybody sat and we'd line up the chairs with as many aisles as we could provide. The Leadership sat up front, to the side --

GREGORSKY: So there might be five or six people, sitting --

PRYCE: Yeah, um-hmm. Then I had two podiums -- one for me, and one for whoever wanted to speak from it.

GREGORSKY: Were they normally 9 a.m., 10 a.m., meetings?

PRYCE: Nine on Wednesdays.

GREGORSKY: One of the ways Newt [as Speaker] sought to be family-friendly had a political aspect. "Leave your family in the district" meant that the family was rarely in Washington, the workweeks got shorter and shorter, and therefore partisan rancor grew because of lack of interaction -- the spouses didn't interact [at all], Democrats and Republicans didn't have as much time on the racquetball court. Some of the old-timers -- Livingston, Lungren, Porter Goss -- say this contributed to the nasty atmosphere. True?

PRYCE: I think it could have. Definitely, if you don't spend "personal" time with people, you don't become friends; you don't know them as well. In the old days -- I mean, I don't know that [the change came about] just because Newt said it should, I think it was done because transportation became easier. The days of Bob Michel riding to work across Illinois, Ohio and Pennsylvania with [Dan] Rostenkowski, you know? Instead, people flew. You didn't drive. Technology changed a lot.

GREGORSKY: I know you had a very close election in '06, and it was a terrible year for Republicans all over the place. But it was after that election you decided to give up the Conference?

PRYCE: Yeah. The handwriting was on the wall -- the whole year: I had to concentrate on my district, and not concentrate on Leadership so much. It became an issue in the campaign -- and four years, you know [pause] -- and there's another mentality, and I think it's a male mentality, of "up or out." I never bought into that. I don't think you have to continue up the ladder or else you're nobody again; there's a lot of places to serve, and so I didn't see it as a "black mark" having to step out of the Leadership at all. But I do know that it would have been harder for a man to do that.

GREGORSKY: I want to agree with that emphatically --

PRYCE: [Laughter]

GREGORSKY: -- because the tradition is bipartisan in the House of losing a Leadership election, and [sometimes] not even serving out your term! Just take a bank-president job or college presidency, like three weeks later! Bill Gradison, Kweisi Mfume, Bill Gray -- it just seems to be mortifying to be repudiated by your colleagues.

PRYCE: Yeah, and first of all I didn't want to test that, so I just decided -- you know, my constituents are telling me to concentrate on being home, I got that message loud and clear, and I would probably face a very real challenge [in the Conference]. Adam Putnam actually jumped out of the box before I even announced that I was not going to do it, although I had planned to [not seek another term as Conference chair].

GREGORSKY: Did you get credit for that back home? Like "she heard us" --

PRYCE: There was -- yeah, there was some conversation. I don't think there was any editorializing, but I got that advice definitely from "my" newspaper and my advisors here [in the district]. So they certainly gave me credit; I don't know that the constituents did -- though I think people "get it" maybe more than we give 'em credit for. But it's hard to say.

PART FIVE -- RULES PANEL, POLICY, LAWS

GREGORSKY: Let's talk about your legislative accomplishments and what you feel your legacy is.

PRYCE: My children's health issues, obviously -- you know the story about my daughter, who passed away from cancer. **SEE APPENDIX, added 5/13/2010**

GREGORSKY: Um-hmm.

PRYCE: That gave me the "moral imperative" to do something, and I certainly was in a position to do something -- and when those two things come together, you have to do something. My Rules Committee position gave me no jurisdiction over anything of particular consequence, but it provided a lot of latitude to do whatever I wanted.

GREGORSKY: Right.

PRYCE: And being in a Leadership role only enhanced those abilities, so -- advancing children's health issues [and] the cause of children [generally] is very important. But I also got involved in a lot of financial-services stuff, and health care in general. I enjoyed the Rules Committee because I didn't have to get "pigeonholed," and was able to pretty much --

GREGORSKY: Well, if you're the traffic cop you don't have to be trapped in one of the buses.

PRYCE: Yeah, that's right [chuckling].

And here's the text I put into the e-mailed agenda...

<< Congresswoman Pryce's legislation reflected her commitment to children and health care issues. She authored the Child Abuse Prevention and Enforcement Act in 1999, a law that boosted federal funding to investigate and prevent child abuse. As the mother of two adopted children, she worked to ease transitional adoption practices for foster parents. Pryce also authored the Afghan Women and Children Relief Act of 2001, which authorized the President to provide health and education assistance to women and children living in Afghanistan through non-governmental organizations. In addition to the creation of her own pediatric cancer research foundation, Representative Pryce was a leading advocate of increasing federal money for cancer research and expanding access to clinical trials for cancer patients. She authored the Patient Navigator, Outreach, and Chronic Disease Prevention Act of 2005, to help individuals in underserved communities overcome cultural, linguistic, and financial barriers to access the health system, which President George W. Bush signed into law. >>

PRYCE (written in): My proudest legislation was the "Conquer Childhood Cancer Act," signed into law on July, 29, 2008. My Democratic colleagues on Energy & Commerce named it after my daughter, Caroline Pryce Walker. It passed the House unanimously -- I got Ron Paul to take a pass {smile} -- and, to get him to release his "hold" in the Senate, I exploited the fact that Tom Coburn had known Caroline and was a spiritual counselor through her illness and death.

APPENDIX

Congresswoman Shares Story of Child's Cancer Ordeal by Dave Cureton, www.cancerpage.com

The setting was a congressional hearing on cancer care. The leadoff witness, her voice gripped by emotion, was a mother who lost her young daughter to cancer nine months ago. But this testimony was especially close to home to members of the House Committee on Government Reform. The witness was one of their own: Rep. Deborah Pryce (R-OH).

As the panel launched a two day hearing on such issues as pediatric cancer care and complementary and alternative therapies, Pryce shared the confusion and frustration of a family suddenly struck by the disease.

Carolina Pryce Walker, 9, died September 4, 1999, a year after being diagnosed with neuroblastoma. Pryce told of taking her daughter to a pediatrician three times in an effort to identify the cause of her leg pain. Pryce said it was dismissed as "shin splints," even "growing pains" before being misdiagnosed as Ewing's Sarcoma. Children are not only less likely than adults to be screened for cancer, said Pryce, they're more likely to have their symptoms dismissed.

The cancer wasn't diagnosed until Pryce and her husband, Randy Walker, brought their daughter to the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, where a study was focusing on Ewing's sarcoma.

The confusion began right away as they started asking doctors what they should do. "Everybody had their own way of treating (the cancer) and we had to decide." But that was just the start. Then came the challenge of making sure something didn't go wrong.

Pryce told the committee that one way for other parents to avoid going through that ordeal would be to establish a health care version of the judicial system's court-appointed special advocates, knowledgeable people with a duty to watch out for the patient's care and comfort. "If we had not made it our business to know and understand every step of every procedure," Pryce testified, many irreversible mistakes would have been made."

She had high praise for hospice care, but not for the actions of some doctors as her daughter was nearing death. Pryce said much of the pain Caroline suffered seemed unnecessary. During her daughter's final radiation treatment, Pryce recalled, the physician refused to allow her even a small dose of Valium.

Out of their ordeal, Pryce and her husband founded a non-profit program, Hope Street Kids, to fight childhood cancer.

SOURCE: www.CancerPage.com coverage of the House Committee on Government Reform hearing, June 7, 2000