

the scary headlines or heard radio and television news stories and commercials about Congress cutting Medicare. People are understandably confused. It is true that Congress is working to reform Medicare as we know it today, but the changes are to improve, not ruin Medicare. Let me try to explain what will be happening to Medicare as it affects beneficiaries in my western Wisconsin district.

First and foremost, there are no cuts of Medicare benefits and services received by beneficiaries. No Medicare beneficiary will receive less than they do now. In fact Federal spending for Medicare will continue to increase from \$170 billion in 1996 to \$244 billion in 2002, a 40 percent increase over 7 years. How is that a cut?

The confusion comes from the fact that Medicare payments will not increase as fast in the future as they have in the past. We, as a Nation, can no longer afford a Medicare program that continues to grow at 10.5 percent a year. If we maintain this double digit growth, we would face a dilemma of either increasing premiums paid by beneficiaries to an unaffordable rate, turn Medicare into a welfare program funded by general tax revenues, or worse yet, do nothing and bankrupt the Medicare system. None of these options is desirable or responsible public policy.

Most of us agree that Congress needed to find a way to control Medicare growth, update and improve services and maintain the system for today's and tomorrow's beneficiaries.

H.R. 2525, the Medicare Preservation Act Passed by the House of Representatives begins our effort to improve and preserve Medicare in a balanced, sensible way. It gives Medicare beneficiaries the right to stay in the traditional fee for service Medicare without an increase in copayments or deductibles. Beneficiaries also will be able to choose from private health care plans available in their community—managed care plans [HMOs], a new Medical Savings Account, or plans offered by new Provider Service Organizations [PSOs], a network of doctor and hospitals, especially important to an area like western Wisconsin where traditional HMOs are not always practical. Beneficiaries will not be forced to change to enroll in an HMO, MSA or PSO. Congress makes it an option that helps control costs.

For rural America, the House passed bill makes some of the most significant improvements to Medicare since the program was created in 1965. One provision in particular will do much to help establish and begin to make Medicare HMOs and PSOs a choice for beneficiaries throughout western Wisconsin. Pat Robert, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, and I, as the Republican chairman of the Rural Health Care Coalition along with others negotiated an improved Medicare payment formula with the Leadership in the Adjusted Average Per Capita Cost [AAPCC] for each county. Improving the payment formula will actually allow for greater health care options and competition in rural America.

Right now, in my home county of Trempealeau, beneficiaries do not have the choice of selecting an HMO or PSO. Traditional fee for service is the only delivery system available for Trempealeau County Medicare beneficiaries. Many may be happy with the fee for service system, and it will remain available to them, but an update of improved health care delivery systems is long overdue. It is important that Congress provide Medicare

beneficiaries with health care options that are available to other Americans.

What does an increased AAPCC payment formula mean to beneficiaries in Trempealeau County? Currently, the Trempealeau County AAPCC payment is \$231 a month per beneficiary. Generally, managed care providers will consider offering a Medicare plan when the monthly payment reaches \$320 per beneficiary. The current payment of \$231 in Trempealeau County is not attractive enough for an HMO or PSO to offer health care coverage. Under the provisions we negotiated, the Trempealeau County payment will jump to \$300 in 1996 and a minimum of \$320 in the following year. Below is a chart demonstrating that this new payment formula is beneficial for western Wisconsin as well as other rural communities and efficient markets. Given this payment increase, a managed care provider might actually find it economically viable to set up shop in western Wisconsin.

HEALTH PLAN CONTRIBUTION LEVELS [SIMULATIONS] BY COUNTY UNDER H.R. 2425, THE MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT [MPA]

County	Current 1995 AAPCC pay- ment	1996 Update per- cent- age	1996 AAPCC payment
Barron	\$258	9	\$281-\$300
Buffalo	238	9	259-300
Chippewa	271	9	295-300
Clark	273	9	297-300
Crawford	245	9	267-300
Dunn	241	9	262-300
Eau Claire	306	8	330
Grant	251	9	273-300
Jackson	246	9	268-300
La Crosse	266	9	289-300
Monroe	225	9	245-300
Pepin	265	9	288-300
Pierce	254	9	276-300
Polk	274	9	298-300
St. Croix	297	9	323
Trempealeau	231	9	251-300
Vernon	211	9	229-300

Note: These figures are simulations, which do not include the service index. The actual results could differ, but probably only marginally. For 1997, all counties will achieve a funding floor of \$320 or higher.

Some may paint a picture of doom and gloom suggesting that Medicare reform is bad, but nothing could be further from the truth. Working to reform Medicare does not destroy Medicare. Earlier this year the future of Medicare was uncertain. Today because of House passage of the Medicare Preservation Act the future is brighter and more secure. My support of this legislation helped to guarantee Medicare's survival. I hope you will agree with me that Medicare is worth saving.

PAJARO VALLEY WATER LEGISLATION

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to resolve a major water resource problem in the Pajaro Valley of Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties, CA.

My bill would authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into any contracts or agreements he deems necessary to assist the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency to implement the provisions of their Basin Management Plan for the resolution of the groundwater overdraft problems currently being experienced in the area.

Mr. Speaker, the Pajaro Valley is one of the most important agricultural regions in this Nation. Agriculture is the foundation for the local economy. The Pajaro Valley is one of the Nation's major producers of strawberries and other vegetable and fruit crops. Last year, the valley produced crops with a value in excess of \$460 million.

For over 30 years, however, residents of the area have struggled to find a publicly acceptable solution to the problem of groundwater overdraft. Groundwater is the only major source of water for more than 30,000 acres irrigated in the valley. In 1984, the California State Legislature, and the citizens of the area, authorized establishment of the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency. The agency was directed to develop a comprehensive plan for the elimination of the groundwater overdraft problem and to find a long-term, stable water supply to preserve agriculture in the valley.

In November, 1993 the Agency finalized the Basin Management Plan which presents a comprehensive strategy for solving the groundwater overdraft problem in a manner acceptable to local residents. The plan—or BMP—is a comprehensive and thorough document. It examined every viable option and provides a reasonable set of solutions acceptable to local residents.

The BMP doesn't look to someone else to finance or solve the problems of groundwater overdraft. Rather, it presents a series of near- and long-term measures to correct the problem.

Further, the local resident will not send the bill to someone else. The BMP authorizes locally-imposed fees and other charges in order to finance implementation of the preferred alternatives. The local residents are committed to solving this problem, including paying their share of the costs.

There is, however, one major impediment to successful implementation of the BMP. The Secretary of the Interior currently lacks authority to enter into contracts or other agreements to implement various aspects of the BMP. As a result, the agency is not able to take advantage of its entitlement to 19,000 acre-feet of water from the San Felipe Unit, Central Valley Project. Without a contract, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to secure the financing needed to build the facilities outlined in the BMP.

Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely vital that the groundwater overdraft problems of the Pajaro Valley be resolved as soon as possible. The future of the local economy is based on continued supply of high quality groundwater for the production strawberries and other valuable crops.

The local residents have done their part. They have established a local water district, developed a sensible and cost-effective solution, and they are willing to pay for it themselves.

Now it is time for the Federal Government to do its part.

We should authorize the Secretary of the Interior to enter into such contracts or agreements as he deems appropriate to help the local residents solve this critical problem.

Mr. Speaker, I urge prompt passage of this important legislation.

SUPPORT BAHAI'S IN IRAN

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday September 20, I introduced the "Baha'i Resolution" which condemns Iran's ongoing repression of its Baha'i community. American Baha'is, who reside in every congressional district, are deeply concerned for the fate of more than 300,000 co-religionists in Iran. The survival of the Baha'i community is threatened by the regime's denial of legal recognition and the basic rights to organize, elect community leaders, educate their youth and conduct the normal activities of a law-abiding community.

Since 1982, the U.S. Congress has adopted six resolutions expressing its concern for Iran's religious persecution of Baha'is. There is good evidence that these congressional resolutions, together with appeals by other nations and the United Nations have helped to persuade Iranian officials to moderate their actions against Baha'is. During the 1980's, more than 200 Baha'is were executed and thousands imprisoned solely on the account of their religious beliefs.

While it is encouraging that the Iranian Government has not continued its barbarous policy of executing people simply for their religious beliefs, the ongoing repression of the Baha'i community continues and must be changed. Baha'is are currently being held under sentence of death merely because of their religious beliefs. It is imperative that we keep pressure on the Iranian officials until Baha'i community is no longer threatened by this repressive government.

The following honorable Members of Congress have already co-sponsored this legislation: LANTOS, SMITH, HOYER, HAMILTON, HYDE, OBESTAR, MEEK, WILLIAMS, GEJDENSON, SCHIFF, NEY, KLUG, DURBAN, MORELLA, ROYBAL-ALLARD, KILDER, MILLER, PELOSI, SPRATT, SLAUGHTER, BATEMAN, MCKINNEY, ENGEL, ABERCROMBIE, and BROWN. I am inserting into the record a copy of the resolution, and I urge my colleges to join me in support of this resolution.

H. CON. RES. 102

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, and 1994 the Congress, by concurrent resolution, declared that it holds the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including members of the Baha'i Faith, Iran's largest religious minority;

Whereas the Congress has deplored the Government of Iran's religious persecution of the Baha'i community in such resolutions and in numerous other appeals, and has condemned Iran's execution of more than 200 Baha'is and the imprisonment of thousands of others solely on account of their religious beliefs;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to deny individual Baha'is access to higher education and government employment and denies recognition and religious rights to the Baha'i community, according to the policy set forth in a confidential Iranian Government document which was revealed by the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in 1993;

Whereas all Baha'i community properties in Iran have been confiscated by the government and Iranian Baha'is are not permitted to elect their leaders, organize as a commu-

nity, operate religious schools or conduct other religious community activities guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and

Whereas on February 22, 1993, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights published a formerly confidential Iranian Government document that constitutes a blueprint for the destruction of the Baha'i community and reveals that these repressive actions are the result of a deliberate policy designed and approved by the highest officials of the Government of Iran: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—

(1) continues to hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all its nationals, including members of the Baha'i community, in a manner consistent with Iran's obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international agreements guaranteeing the civil and political rights of its citizens;

(2) condemns the repressive anti-Baha'i policies and actions of the Government of Iran, including the denial of legal recognition to the Baha'i community and the basic rights to organize, elect its leaders, educate its youth, and conduct the normal activities of a law-abiding religious community;

(3) expresses concern that individual Baha'is continue to suffer from severely repressive and discriminatory government actions, solely on account of their religion;

(4) urges the Government of Iran to extend to the Baha'i community the rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants of human rights, including the freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, and equal protection of the law; and

(5) call upon the President to continue—
(A) to assert the United States Government's concern regarding Iran's violations of the rights of its citizens, including members of the Baha'i community, along with expressions of its concern regarding the Iranian Government's support for international terrorism and its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

(B) to emphasize that the United States regards the human rights practices of the Government of Iran, particularly its treatment of the Baha'i community and other religious minorities, as a significant factor in the development of the United States Government's relations with the Government of Iran;

(C) to urge the Government of Iran to emancipate the Baha'i community by granting those rights guaranteed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international covenants on human rights; and

(D) to encourage other governments to continue to appeal to the Government of Iran, and to cooperate with other governments and international organizations, including the United Nations and its agencies, in efforts to protect the religious rights of the Baha'is and other minorities through joint appeals to the Government of Iran and through other appropriate actions.

A THOUGHTFUL PROPOSAL ON UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH IRAN

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 1995

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, relations between the United States and Iran are and

have remained for the past 15 years at an all-time low. There are disturbing signs that Iran is seeking to develop a nuclear capacity, and clearly Iran has been an unstable influence throughout the Middle East and Central Asia. The United States has—wisely in my view—pursued a policy of seeking to isolate Iran and to limit economic, political, and diplomatic relations with the extremist Iranian Government. We have undertaken a major diplomatic effort to urge our allies in Western Europe and Japan to join us in economically isolating Iran in order to bring about democratic and rational change in Teheran.

Mr. Speaker, I have been among those who have called for strong sanctions against Iran. Earlier this year, I proposed, and my colleagues on the Committee on International relations accepted, my amendment to the American Overseas Interests Act which would impose tough sanctions, including reduction of foreign assistance, against Russia if that country goes ahead with reported plans to sell advanced nuclear technology to Iran. I have also supported legislation to impose tougher sanctions against Iran and restrict the ability of international oil corporations to deal with the Iranian companies and the Government of Iran.

The position I have taken on these issues involving Iran are taken because of my serious concern with the policies pursued by the Government of Iran, and not from any sense of irreconcilable problems with Iran. There are possibilities for change in Iran—for the evolution of government institutions that will allow the people of Iran to express their wishes through an open and free and democratic process and there are possibilities that will permit the people of Iran to enjoy the full spectrum of human and civil rights to which they are entitled. I would welcome the end of radical Islamic extremism in Iran and rejoice if we could witness the return to serious and responsible participation of Iran in the international community. The positions I have taken on U.S. policies toward Iran are motivated by that desire.

Mr. Speaker, last summer, the Washington Post, July 9, 1995, published an analysis and a thoughtful, but iconoclastic, proposal about the steps that might be taken by the United States in an effort to produce the domestic changes in Iran that will make it possible to bring an end to U.S.—Iranian hostility. I am not certain that this proposal will achieve its objectives, but it has been put forward by a gentleman whose experience, insight, and thoughtfulness I admire greatly. For this reason, Mr. Speaker, I ask that this article—"Beyond the Great Satan How the U.S. and Iran Can Mend Their Rift"—be placed in the RECORD, and I urge my colleagues to give it careful and thoughtful consideration.

This excellent article was written by Mr. Hushang Ansary. Mr. Ansary has an extremely distinguished record in business, government service, and diplomacy. He is an international entrepreneur with business interests in the United States, Europe, and the Pacific rim. He worked his way through high school serving as a correspondent for the International News Service and the King Features Syndicate. He later earned a Ph.D. in Economics and International Relations from the University of Seoul, South Korea. After World War II, Mr. Ansary worked in Japan, initially as a business