

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT—A TRIBUTE TO LAVONNE CICHOCKI

HON. STEVE C. LATOURETTE

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, while the Congress has been grappling, often in a partisan manner, with the task of balancing the Federal budget, I received word yesterday from home that quickly made me remember what's most important in life.

Fifteen years ago, I was a young, enthusiastic, idealistic, and probably obnoxious, public defender. Shortly after my arrival our office was joined by another young attorney, Chuck Cichocki. Chuck and I shared pretty much the same dreams and hopes. We both wanted to do our jobs well; we both wanted to build a family; and we both wanted to give our children the ability to share the American dream.

Both of us were pretty successful in realizing those goals. With his wife, LaVonne, Chuck's family welcomed three beautiful children into the world. Chuck and LaVonne enjoyed a model marriage, a nurturing family, a respect of their community and each other. Sadly, the news from home yesterday was that, after a long and courageous struggle with cancer, LaVonne passed away.

LaVonne Cichocki was a loving wife, a devoted mother and a great friend to all who knew her. Despite her pain, she remained active in her family's activities, her kids' school activities, and her participation in the events that helped shape the community in which they lived.

The world is certainly a better place today because of LaVonne's life, and, sadly the sun shines a little bit dimmer with her passing.

Mr. Speaker, our prayers must be with the Cichocki's today, and my most fervent hope is that we redouble our efforts and focus our attention more on helping families like Chuck and LaVonne's realize their dreams, and less time fighting for political points.

A TAX CREDIT AND BALANCED BUDGET

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, this Member highly commends to his colleagues the following two editorials which appeared in the Omaha World-Herald on November 16, 1995, and November 17, 1995.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Nov. 16, 1995]

HOUSE-SENATE TAX CREDIT PACT HAS GOOD NEWS
FOR MIDDLE CLASS

Republicans in the House and Senate have worked out of sensible compromise on the GOP's proposal for a family tax credit.

The compromise would permit families to reduce their federal income-tax payment by \$500 for each child under age 18, sources said. The credits would be available for single parents with an annual income up to \$75,000 and for two-parent families who earn up to \$110,000 a year.

An earlier version passed by the House set the income-limit at \$200,000. The income has

been capped at a lower level to make the tax cut more palatable to moderate Republicans. Democrats had made it sound as if the majority of families with children were rich.

That, of course, is nonsense. The government already spends billions on welfare, food stamps, subsidized housing and income supplements for children in low-income families. But just above them are middle-class families in which one or two working partners earn a total of \$30,000, \$40,000, or \$50,000, paying taxes, having Social Security contributions withheld and carrying the added responsibility of securing good child care.

Federal tax policy has for years been tinkered with to improve people's lives. But the benefits have not gone to households that looked like a traditional family. Married couples where the wife was not in the labor force saw their median income, in constant dollars, plateau at about \$30,000 from 1967 to 1992. Meanwhile, couples where both partners worked for pay enjoyed a rise in median income from \$38,500 in 1967 to \$50,000 in 1992.

The value of the personal exemption, one of the main tax benefits for families with children, has declined. Sponsors of the 1995 Republican tax credit say the credit is designed to restore fairness.

Other provisions of the compromise tax package would reduce taxes on capital gains. Farmers and small-business owners would be able to pass more of their holdings to their heirs. The "marriage penalty," a tax quirk that discriminates against married couples, would be made less onerous.

The compromise version of the child tax credit was based on a plan approved by the Senate in which families with children would receive about 60 percent of the \$245 billion total over the next seven years. Senate sponsors said this includes 29 million families with about three-fourths of the nation's 69 million children.

For the Democrats to portray this as a tax cut for the rich is to use the irresponsible rhetoric that increasingly makes their party's positions appear irrelevant.

[From the Omaha World-Herald, Nov. 17, 1995]

DEMOCRATS IGNORE KERREY'S WISE ADVICE

Congressional Democrats and President Clinton should have taken to heart the advice that a member of their party, Sen. Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, offered recently.

In the midst of rhetoric over emergency spending and borrowing legislation, a statement made Tuesday by Kerrey stood out: "Democrats need to accept the idea that we are going to balance the budget in seven years. Republicans have the majority, and they have won that argument."

Kerrey told an audience of moderate Democrats Monday that their party needs to lead by proving that it can make difficult decisions on spending and taxes. He said the party's leaders need to accept spending cuts, restructure government and decentralize government power.

As the world watches in amazement while a great country embarrasses itself, Clinton has dug in his heels and, as of late yesterday, was refusing to accept the GOP goal of balancing the budget in seven years. As Sen. Charles Grassley of Iowa put it, "everything else" in the Republicans' budget plan was negotiable. But the seven-year goal for reducing the deficit to zero is now the reason for Clinton's refusal to sign a temporary extension of the debt ceiling and spending authority.

Kerrey is chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. He has a major role in next year's elections. Digging in left of center and shouting about Republicans "destroying" Medicare and showering "the rich" with windfall tax breaks at the

expense of the elderly and working class has been the strategy for some party leaders.

That tactic is working, regrettably, in part because the baseless charges are seldom held up to examination by news organizations.

Kerrey has proposed a more honest approach—one that could make the 1996 campaign a genuine referendum on how far the government should go in the way of reform and how fast. Unfortunately, the president and other leading Democrats still are defying the Republican budget plan and behaving with a stubbornness which they hope will pull their poll numbers higher.

TRIBUTE TO PATRICIA MCGARRY DRAKE

HON. WILLIAM J. MARTINI

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. MARTINI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a very special member of the Eighth Congressional District of New Jersey.

Patricia McGarry Drake has recently decided to retire after an outstanding career in public service, where she is recognized State-wide for her expertise in administrative skills. In 1968, Pat began as a typist in the Essex County Clerk's Office, and in 1990, she was elected Essex County Clerk. Currently, she serves as president of the County Officer's Association of the State of New Jersey.

Pat is a life-long resident of Essex County, NJ, where, despite her busy schedule, she found the time to raise four children and two grandchildren. She is also a leading member of several civic and charitable organizations. One such organization, the Patricia McGarry Drake Civic Association, makes charitable donations to needy families.

Furthermore, Pat is very proud of her direct Irish heritage. Her father, Thomas, was born in County Roscommon, Ireland, and her mother, Kathleen, was born in County Sligo, Ireland. In recognition of her achievements, she was honored as Irishwoman of the year by the Friends of Brian Boru in 1986. She has also been honored by many other organizations throughout her career. Most recently, she was selected as Essex County Irish Woman of the Year in 1995.

Mr. Speaker, I ask you to help me salute Patricia McGarry Drake for her illustrious performance and sincere dedication as a public official in this county.

SHERIFF HOHERCHAK

HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my good friend Peter Hoherchak, sheriff of Carbon County, PA. Pete will retire from his post this year and is being honored by friends, colleagues, and family on November 18. I am proud to have been asked to participate in the tribute to him.

There are few public servants who will be missed as much as Pete, who is well-loved and respected by the people of Carbon County. He is the epitome of the ideal sheriff: wise, compassionate, and fair. His enforcement of

the law has been exercised with a deep respect for the law, balanced with his respect for humanity.

Pete was one of eight children, born in 1930 in what is now Jim Thorpe, PA. Educated in local schools, he served with the 14th Division of the U.S. Army in Germany for 3 years. For 18 years Pete served as a business consultant, but turned his interests to law enforcement in the mid-1960's. He attended a local community college and studying criminal law and medical-legal investigation. Pete was appointed Justice of the Peace under Gov. William Scranton from 1968 to 1970.

In 1971, he became Chief Deputy Sheriff of Carbon County under Sheriff Louise D. Lisella. He was then elected sheriff in 1976 serving four consecutive terms in that capacity. Pete was the top vote-getter in each of his elections. During his tenure, Pete saw the need for a new correctional facility and worked hard to bring the idea to reality. In January 1995, the new facility was dedicated.

Pete's expertise and leadership was acknowledged by the Pennsylvania Sheriff's Association in the many positions he held on that board and finally as its president in 1986. He still serves on the board of trustees for the association.

Mr. Speaker, Sheriff Peter Hoherchak has been a dedicated public servant for almost 30 years. He not only serves his community in a professional capacity but also does valuable volunteer work for the community. He remains a leader in the Carbon County Democratic organization. He and his wife Claire are the proud parents of one son and four daughters and have six grandchildren. I am extremely proud of my long friendship with this outstanding public official. I join with the community in thanking Pete for a job well done and wish him many happy years of retirement.

IN HONOR OF ELEANOR
TIEFENWERTH, A LEADER OF
THE COMMUNITY WHO SERVES
THE PEOPLE

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today before the House of Representatives to pay tribute to Eleanor Tiefenwerth, a citizen who exhibits never-ending dedication to the community. She will be honored by the Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation at their 30th Annual Dinner Dance on November 17, 1995.

The Bayonne Economic Foundation is a social service agency in its 30th year. The foundation is dedicated to serving the people of the community through various outreach programs, including Head Start and Meals On Wheels. The foundation's slogan is "People Helping People". Mrs. Tiefenwerth exemplifies this motto.

Mrs. Tiefenwerth, a native of Bayonne, is a graduate of Jersey City State College. While a volunteer with the Bayonne Economic Opportunity Foundation, Mrs. Tiefenwerth developed the skills which she retains as its executive director. She has been instrumental in increasing the level of services the foundation offers to the community. These innovations include providing crosstown transportation for both senior citizens and the disabled.

In addition to her duties with the foundation, Mrs. Tiefenwerth also serves as a commissioner on the Bayonne Housing Authority, a member of the Community Education Advisory Council, and secretary to the Community Action Programs. In 1994, she spent 2 weeks in Russia with groups from People to People International and the Russian Ministry exchanging ideas on social issues affecting the world.

Mrs. Tiefenwerth has received numerous awards for her selfless service to the community, including the Jersey Journal Woman of Achievement, the Golden Recognition Award from Hudson County and the Distinguished and Caring Service Award from the Hudson County Director of Human Services. She is a volunteer with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Parent Teacher Associations at the municipal, county, and state levels.

I am proud to have such a dedicated woman serving the citizens of my district. I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Eleanor Tiefenwerth for her service and dedication to the community.

THE MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT OF 1995

HON. RODNEY P. FRELINGHUYSEN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 17, 1995

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of passing this historic legislation to save Medicare from bankruptcy and preserve and protect the program for current and future beneficiaries.

There is no issue more important to elderly Americans than their health care security. Medicare gives beneficiaries peace of mind every time they go to the doctor or spend a few days in the hospital.

That is why, when I received the alarming news in April that Medicare was headed toward bankruptcy, I began meeting and corresponding with people throughout district 11.

I held 14 town meetings to listen to constituents, met with senior citizen clubs in 5 counties, reached out to our health care providers, met with hundreds of individuals in my office, and reviewed thousands of letters and telephone messages on this matter.

Our dialog enabled me to work constructively over the past eight months with my colleagues to ensure that the citizens of New Jersey will only benefit from modernizing the 30-year-old, government-run program.

I am proud of what we have accomplished. The Medicare Preservation Act saves Medicare from bankruptcy and provides elderly Americans with the same choices as individuals in the private sector have to meet their health care needs. And make no mistake about it, spending on each beneficiary will increase—from \$4,800 today to \$6,700 in 2002.

I have read in the newspaper and heard on television some disturbing and often erroneous reports about our Medicare Preservation Act.

I have been outraged by the tactics being employed by some politicians in Washington and by groups outside Washington that are funding their television and radio commercials. It is unconscionable that they would resort to distortions and half-truths in an attempt to

frighten Medicare beneficiaries about the future of a program they have come to rely on to pay their doctor and hospital bills.

Mr. Speaker, Medicare is teetering on bankruptcy, and it is important that we act now to preserve, protect and strengthen this vital program.

Medicare costs have been soaring. Medicare alone now consumes 11 percent of the entire Federal budget and is increasing at the rate of 10.5 percent a year. That's more than three times the rate of inflation and seven times faster than the 65 and older population is growing.

They've been paying taxes all their entire life to support the Medicare program. But the fact is that retirees are collecting far more in benefits from Medicare than they actually paid in taxes to support the system. An individual who turns 65 this year will, on average, receive \$129,000 more in benefits from Medicare than he or she contributed to the system. Although this imbalance is certainly not the beneficiary's fault, it helps to explain why Medicare is in dire financial condition.

Next year, for the first time in history, Medicare will pay out more money on seniors' hospital bills than it collected through payroll taxes. The reality is Medicare is teetering on bankruptcy.

Unless some action is taken now to control skyrocketing costs the Medicare hospital insurance trust fund, which pays hospital expenses for America's seniors, will be bankrupt in just 7 years. It's important to know that is not a prediction made by Congress, it is the conclusion reached by the trustees responsible for maintaining the financial stability of the Medicare program—including three members of President Clinton's cabinet.

And there is another, equally important crisis that must be addressed—the financial condition of Medicare part B, which covers doctor bills and lab tests.

Spending on this portion of Medicare has increased by 53 percent in just the past 5 years. If nothing is done, spending on part B will actually double over the next 7 years from \$37 billion to \$74 billion. The Medicare trustees have called this rate of growth in spending on part B "clearly unsustainable." Under our plan, part B spending still creases to \$6,800, just a slower rate.

Against this threat of imminent bankruptcy, our opponents want you to believe that our plan to save Medicare is actually aimed at paying for tax cuts. They're wrong.

Even if there were no plan in Congress to provide tax relief to middle-class families, the Medicare Board of Trustees confirm the need to take immediate action to preserve Medicare for today's seniors and those approaching retirement age.

Remember, the Medicare trust fund is financed exclusively through every worker's payroll tax. There is no plan, not even a suggestion, to cut the payroll tax and thereby reduce the money available to Medicare. But even leaving the payroll tax alone, Medicare will be bankrupt in just seven years.

As the Washington Post stated in a recent editorial:

The Democrats have fabricated the Medicare-tax cut connection because it is useful politically. It allows them to attack and duck responsibility, both at the same time. We think that's wrong.