

REPUBLICAN CUTS DEVASTATE HOUSING

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the rescissions voted by the Appropriations Committee last week threatens serious harm to the social fabric of our Nation. By increasing military spending, and focusing overwhelmingly for reductions on programs which seek to provide assistance for those most in need in our society, you and your fellow Republicans have seriously erred. Increasingly, it is becoming clear to many people that the priorities of the House Republicans threaten seriously to exacerbate some of the gravest social and economic problems we face. I will from time to time be sharing with our colleagues information I receive about the devastating effect these cuts will have as they become available to me from people in my district and elsewhere who are grappling with these issues.

For example, on March 3, the New Bedford Standard Times printed an article in which the executive director of the New Bedford Housing Authority Joseph Finnerty, clearly outlines the terrible effects which will result from the devastating cuts voted in housing programs by the Appropriations Committee last week. Interestingly, Mr. Speaker, some in your party have sought to justify these cuts by pointing to defects in the way HUD has been administered.

It is true that HUD has suffered from maladministration in recent times—most grievously during the 8 years of Ronald Reagan, when Samuel Pierce presided over a department which was corrupt, inefficient, and overall a disaster. Victimized lower income people today who are in continuing need of housing because of the outrageous record of Secretary Pierce under President Reagan is terribly unfair. But that is what the Appropriations Committee has chosen to do.

Mr. Speaker, in the hopes of persuading my colleagues not to go forward along this path, I ask that the New Bedford Standard Times article featuring Mr. Finnerty's discussion of housing programs be printed here.

[From the New Bedford Standard Times, Mar. 3, 1995]

REDUCTION WOULD CAUSE CHAOS, FINNERTY SAYS

(By Bill Ibelle)

The massive federal funding cuts that are racing through Congress will have a devastating effect on public housing tenants in New Bedford, according to Executive Director Joseph Finnerty.

The cuts, which would slash the maintenance budget and the five-year modernization program by 30 percent each, would create "chaos" in the city's public housing, Mr. Finnerty said Thursday during the Housing Authority's monthly meeting.

"This is not a false alarm," he said. "The new Republican majority in Congress has the votes for these cuts. Now, just when we are on the verge of major improvements in our neighborhoods, we have this ax hanging over our head."

The maintenance cuts, which would amount to \$625,000 a year, would cause a steady deterioration in public housing, Mr. Finnerty said.

"This is not something that is going to be felt immediately, but it will have a devastating long-term effect," he said, "These cuts

are unprecedented, massive and eroding to public housing."

The federal cuts also would kill or seriously delay major modernization projects like the one scheduled for the aging Bay Village complex later this year. That project includes lead paint and asbestos removal as well as installing new windows and doors. Similar modernization projects have already taken place at the Westlawn and Brickenwood projects and are about to begin at Presidential Heights.

"The improvements we're making now are not just for public housing tenants but for all residents of the surrounding neighborhoods," said Mr. Finnerty. "By modernizing these units, we're making these neighborhoods into a better investment."

Mr. Finnerty also unveiled exterior drawings for the 43 units of new public housing to be built throughout the city this year. The units will replace units lost with the demolition of Evergreen Park.

The duplex units are designed to blend in with the single family homes common to the city's neighborhoods:

Three of the sites will have two duplexes each (the corner of Shawmut Avenue and Coggeshall Street, the corner of Cottage and Campbell streets and a plot that runs between Sylvia and Howard streets).

One site will have four duplexes (North Street behind the City Hall annex parking lot).

One site will have two row houses with a total of seven units (South First and Rivet streets).

The largest site will have eight duplexes (New Plainville Road just north of the tank).

Mr. Finnerty said the Housing Authority completed buying all six sites Feb. 24. Construction is slated to begin in June and last 12 to 14 months.

In other business the board:

Approved payment of an additional \$10,864 to the Boston Architectural firm, Hicks & Krockmalnic, for rebidding of the Presidential Heights modernization project. Due to a legal challenge by two of the unsuccessful bidders, the Housing Authority had to cancel the original contract and put the project out to bid a second time.

The \$4.5 million project which includes removing lead paint and asbestos, installing exterior siding, windows, doors and building new porches and fixing the roofs, is slated to begin this summer.

Approved payment of an additional \$3,875 to Enviroscience for drawing up new bid specifications for lead and asbestos removal at Presidential Heights.

Approved a \$15,980 contract to Coro Construction of East Greenwich, R.I., for re-roofing eight duplexes on Chaffee Street. Coro was the lowest of eight bidders.

Approved the payment of \$5,255 to Seaview Construction of Providence for installing railings at Harwich Manor.

Approved a \$23,763 contract with Electronic Sales and Service of New Bedford for installing a communications system that includes 43 portable radios. The system will be used by the authority's maintenance staff.

Approved a 2.3 percent increase in the income limits for the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program, which serves 182 families in the city.

Approved a 1.2 percent increase in the income limits for the federal Assisted Housing Program.

Voted to support efforts by John G. "Buddy" Andrade to increase membership in the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts among public housing tenants. Mr. Andrade requested the authority's support in drumming up interest for a Scouting show scheduled April 2 at the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School on Ashley Boulevard.

Fielded a request from the Caroline Street Tenants' Association for several maintenance improvements. The residents asked the authority to cut down an apple tree, complaining that youths throw the apples through windows, the apple blossoms attract bees and the fallen apples are hazardous to senior citizens using walkers and canes. The association also requested the removal of tree roots that have caused sidewalks to buckle and the installation of outdoor lighting around the apartments.

Observed a moment of silence at the beginning of the meeting in honor of commissioner Umberto "Battle" Cruz, who died unexpectedly last month.

COMMON SENSE LEGAL STANDARDS REFORM ACT OF 1995

SPEECH OF

HON. JACK REED

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, March 10, 1995

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 956) providing for further consideration of the bill (H.R. 956) to establish legal standards and procedures for product liability litigation, and for other purposes:

Mr. REED. Mr. Chairman, I was one of two Democrats to support H.R. 956 during its consideration by the Judiciary Committee.

I support product liability reform and I support the core principles of the original H.R. 10/H.R. 956.

A CAP ON PUNITIVE DAMAGES

We need to bring certainty and proportionality to the process. Everyone agrees that some awards are totally out of proportion to the harm done. The cost of insuring for this uncertainty is part of the litigation tax that drives up costs for all consumers.

Proportionate, not joint, liability for de minimis tortfeasors. This is a necessary reform: defendants who are peripherally responsible should not be handed the entire bill for someone else's wrongdoing just because they may have deep pockets.

A STATUTE OF REPOSE

Manufacturers should not be sued for a product that is still being used long past its useful life. And they deserve protection against suits that result from misuse or alteration of their products.

However, this bill has been distorted by the adoption of a series of floor amendments and the failure of the Rules Committee to allow consideration of amendments that would have, in my opinion, improved the bill.

For example, an amendment by Mr. BERMAN of California that would have provided relief from joint liability for de minimis tortfeasors while retaining liability for highly culpable wrongdoers was not allowed to be offered, in spite of the fact that this amendment received bipartisan support in the Judiciary Committee. As it stands now, the bill offers protection not only to de minimis tortfeasors but to serious wrongdoers who are 80 or 90 percent responsible for an injury.

But it is really the adoption of several floor amendments that vastly expand the scope of the bill that prevent me from being able to

support the bill in its final form. These amendments were adopted without the benefit of hearings and careful deliberation and may have many unforeseen and unintended consequences.

For example, the bill now preempts State laws that impose punitive damages on drunk drivers and sexual predators, among others. It also will enable clever wrongdoers to escape punitive damages. For example, the manufacturers of the drug Zomax reported adverse reactions to the FDA as required to gain an exemption from punitive damages under one of the floor amendments; then, before the FDA could act, they intentionally dumped their inventory on the market, causing 14 deaths and 400 allergic reactions. I do not believe this is the type of behavior we should shield from punishment. Finally, because of the way the caps are structured, the bill disadvantages children, seniors, women, and middle income working Americans who are injured. A high income executive who is injured by a Ford Pinto would receive a far higher share of the damages allowed under State law than a child or a senior citizen injured by the same product. I do not believe these are the results my constituents are looking for when they ask for litigation reform. Although I support tort reform, I believe this bill needs improvement.

I hope that the final conference report will return to the sound principles of the original bill, and embrace true product liability reform. If it does, I intend to support it.

However, at this time I do not believe that this bill is worthy of support. I voted in favor of a projob creation bill in committee that became, on the House floor, a bill that tilts the court system against people of modest means, and includes several anticonsumer provisions.

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF THE CHIROPRATIC PROFESSION

HON. JOHN E. ENSIGN

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. ENSIGN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the chiropractic industry's tremendous contribution to improving the health of Americans for the past 100 years.

The year 1995 marks the chiropractic profession's centennial. In 1895, Daniel David Palmer founded the chiropractic profession and opened the first chiropractic school in Davenport, Iowa, in 1897. The profession has come a long way since 1895. Today, more than 50,000 chiropractors serve 15 to 20 million patients. The improved standards of education and quality of practice has given rise to the tremendous growth in this field.

While early chiropractors had difficulty gaining acceptance in the health care field, they now enjoy broad support from the public and their fellow health care professionals. Chiropractic care is now widely recognized as one of the most effective and efficient treatment for back ailments, especially for sufferers of severe or chronic back pain. An increasing number of Nevadans rely on the choice and freedom in health care options that chiropractic care offers them. Recognizing this trend, Congress provides for chiropractic care in Medicare and authorizes chiropractors to be commissioned as officers in the Armed Forces.

Mr. Speaker, as a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, I admire the dedication of my fellow health care professionals and their contribution to the enhancement of the quality of life for so many Americans. As members of the chiropractic profession gather in Nevada's First Congressional District on March 18, I would like to extend a warm welcome to these doctors. I join my colleagues in the House of Representatives and my fellow Nevadans in congratulating them and their profession's many achievements over the last century.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NICHOLLS STATE UNIVERSITY

HON. W.J. (BILLY) TAUZIN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. TAUZIN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to congratulate a college basketball program in my district that, for the first time ever, has been invited to the NCAA tournament. Nicholls State University with a record of 24-5 drew a No. 13 seed and will play Virginia today.

After winning 17 of 18 conference games, the Colonels swept the Southland Conference Tournament beating Northeast Louisiana in the final game 98 to 87. Senior Reggie Jackson was named tournament most valuable player, and Coach Ricky Broussard was named conference coach of the year.

Of the Colonels 5 losses throughout the season, 3 were to teams also invited to the NCAA tournament. This shows just how much they deserved a bid. This opportunity will do wonders not only for this outstanding basketball program, but also the great university they represent.

I want to congratulate Coach Broussard and all his coaching and support staff on a magnificent season. And to all the young men on that team, congratulations.

Now it's on to the tournament to face the Cavalier. I and my staff wish the Colonels all the very best. Good luck—go Colonels.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF SPRINGFIELD CHAPTER OF THE DAR

HON. RAY LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, on August 8, 1890, in Washington, DC, a national organization of women descended from patriots of the American Revolution organized the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution. Four years later, on June 14, 1894, a chapter was formed in Springfield, IL, in what is now my congressional district. Throughout this past year, the Springfield chapter of the DAR has celebrated this centennial year of service to the community, culminating with a luncheon in February. The contributions made by this chapter to the community of Springfield, the State of Illinois, and the Nation as a whole have been tremendous, and I wanted to take this time today to salute their membership and to congratulate them on 100 years of dedicated service.

PROMOTING NEW AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

HON. NORMAN D. DICKS

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the Landfill Technical Improvement Act of 1995. This is the same legislation that my former colleague Al Swift and I introduced late in the last session of Congress.

I am introducing the legislation again this year because the ill-advised and outmoded regulation which prompted this bill still exists at the expense of small domestic companies who seek to compete in the growing national and international environmental technology markets.

Of course, Congress did not intend this result when we passed the Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments in 1984—over one decade ago. This act required the Environmental Protection Agency [EPA] to issue regulations restricting the disposal of organic sorbents in hazardous waste landfills.

Since that time, natural absorbents made from reclaimed/recycled materials have been developed which actually outperform traditional sorbents produced from fossil fuels and chemicals. As well, normal landfill conditions are anaerobic, and studies show that no biodegradation occurs in this anaerobic environment of RCRA landfills.

A small company in my State is among those companies who produce this type of material. They take a local paper mill's sludge, garbage, and produce useful, organic sorbents. This disposition issue, however, continues to threaten the existence of these American companies and the new technologies they have developed. As it now stands, this regulation effectively shuts out these new technologies from landfill disposition.

The administration has repeatedly stated its support for American manufacturers of new environmental technologies as they attempt to compete in the world marketplace. This regulation, however, is highly detrimental to these stated goals. This bill would reverse this injustice by allowing this new technology to be utilized to its fullest extent, thus providing American jobs while advancing our national environmental goals.

TRIBUTE HONORING KATHY COLE

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 16, 1995

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding citizen and patriot, Kathy Cole. Kathy is the Ladies Auxiliary district president of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2873 in Grover Hill, OH.

America is blessed by the number of her citizens who choose to devote their time to the service of others. Through the years, Kathy has worked tirelessly on behalf of veterans and their families. She joined the Ladies Auxiliary to the Veterans of Foreign Wars as a member of Wauseon Auxiliary 7424 in 1981 under the sponsorship of her brother, Franklin