

Now I do not believe that every member of the Democrat Party is wrong and doing scare tactics, but I would say there is a good number of you doing that, and it is kind of—I will be glad to yield to my friend from Miami who is above this and I hope would not be described by the Washington Post.

Mr. DEUTSCH. Actually could I have the last poster, please? The previous one you cite the—

Mr. KINGSTON. Reclaiming my time back, I am on this poster now, and, when we get to your plan, I will give you that poster—

Mr. DEUTSCH. Does the gentleman yield for 1 second?

Mr. KINGSTON. One second.

Mr. DEUTSCH. You know you have a quote from the trustee report up on the last poster, and would the gentleman agree with the trustee report which does not call for \$270 billion in cuts?

Mr. KINGSTON. Now let me reclaim my time. As the learned gentleman from Miami knows, that they did not stipulate it. Now you guys came up with this \$89 million kind of a late hit. I am sure—

Mr. DEUTSCH. Eighty-nine billion.

Mr. KINGSTON. Eighty-nine billion. I am sure they would hold it up and say what are we going to do? You know we got to get off the book deal on GINGRICH, come up with a plan this year. Well, you know, here is a program for us. We are going to go ahead and jump on Medicare.

You know, to my friend, the distinguished lawyer, I want you on the team. You have a lot to offer, and I am sure that with all the intelligent men and women on your side of the aisle and on our side of the aisle we could do what is right for mom and dad. We can give them that choice of physician. We can give them the plan that is going to be there tomorrow. We can let them have the same choices we have when we go into our insurance situation, and we would not have to tell them, you stay with that 1964 Blue Cross plan that we designed for you because you are not driving that 1964 Chevrolet Biscayne any more. We want to bring you into the nineties on health care.

That is what we are trying to do, and I think itself so irresponsible for us, and it is really just tacky, and it is not what we are sent here to do, is to say, oh, look what's happening. This is a tax cut for the wealthy and so forth. So I will be glad to yield to my friend when I get some time later on.

□ 2230

SENTIMENT AGAINST REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN RUNS HIGH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, if we want to deal with the war of the newspaper clippings, let me read a few headlines: "House GOP Medicare Bill Wins

Over Doctors with Hidden Enticements, Promise of Profits," "Keep Nursing Homes Standard," "GOP Medicare Bill Seems to Favor Fraud."

Washington Times, not a liberal newspaper in this town: "Ride for Doctors," "Beneath the Surface, the Health Care Plan is Offering Booms," "GOP Changes May be Worth Hundreds of Millions to Doctors and Hospitals."

Let us see what else we have here. "Bills Would Relax Federal Controls on Nursing Homes."

So, let us deal with it. There are lots of newspaper articles and lots of commentary about the Republican plan.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will vote and the Congress will vote cut \$270 billion in Medicare to pay for a \$245 billion tax cut for the wealthy. I will vote against it. I will vote against it, because the people that I represent have asked me to vote against it. My constituents have sent me petitions, they have called my office, they have written heartbreaking letters, all to tell me to vote against the Republican pay-more-get-less plan.

I want to share some of their thoughts and feelings here tonight. Let me hold up this stack of Medicare questionnaires that have been collected throughout Connecticut's third district by wonderful senior volunteers.

The question put to my constituents was, would you support a plan to cut Medicare in order to finance a tax cut? The overwhelming response was no. In fact, more than 12,000 petitions were collected by our Medicare team captains in a little over 5 weeks. That is 12,000 signatures opposing the Medicare cuts.

The sentiment against the Medicare cuts runs high. Let me read a letter from Helen Patent of New Haven, CT, because I think that she speaks for so many seniors.

She writes, and I quote, "I am very, very upset that Congress wants to put such devastating cuts in Medicare and Medicaid programs. There are so many people that rely desperately on these programs. My husband and I are both very dependent on Medicare. After raising seven children, my husband is retired. We both have had triple bypasses within the past six years and have tremendous hospital, doctor and medical bills. Without the help of Medicare, we would have lost our house and all that we have worked so hard for. Please preserve our Nation's health care system to ensure that every individual has the right to health care now and in the future."

I say thank you kindly to Helen Patent for her letter. Helen and seniors like her all across this country depend on Medicare. They know that it works, and they do not want this Congress to destroy Medicare.

It is time for Congress to put the public interests before the special interests. Read the headline on this article.

But that is not what we have seen in this body when it comes to Medicare.

In fact, in the last week, two groups came to Washington because they had concerns about the GOP Medicare bill. Members of one group were treated to a closed-door meeting with the Speaker; and members of the other group, they got arrested.

The first group was the American Medical Association. The AMA got a back-room deal worth billions of dollars.

The second group was the National Council for Senior Citizens. The National Council and the 15 seniors got a trip to jail. They closed the light in the hearing room, they put handcuffs on these senior citizens, they put them in the car, in the wagon, and they took them downtown to be arrested, and they held them for 2 hours. Yes, indeed, they did.

What was the crime of these seniors? They came to the people's House. That is where we are. We are in the people's House. They came here to ask questions about a Medicare bill that affects their lives every single day. They wanted to participate in our democracy.

Mr. Speaker, we serve at their pleasure. That is what we do, is to bring their voices here. They wanted to see the details of a proposal that has such a deep impact on their life.

Medicare cuts are not an abstract issue to American seniors, and these cuts mean pain for our Nations seniors.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2425, MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT OF 1995

Mr. LINDER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 104-282) on the resolution (H. Res. 238) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2425) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to preserve and reform the Medicare Program, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

DEMOCRATS' FAIRY TALES REQUIRE A RESPONSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. LINDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I really did not come intending to speak on this, but I have heard so many fairy tales in the last 20 minutes that I thought it was worth responding.

Mr. Speaker, those poor seniors that came to the Committee on Commerce seeking information, only seeking information, made a phone call before they came to the police department in Washington DC and said, what must we do to get arrested? They did it, and they were arrested. They were immediately released. That is a fact, and they were sent on their way because they in fact did disrupt a committee hearing.

We have heard a lot about doctors' hidden enticements in favor of fraud.

Indeed, we even saw a previous speaker who had an ad up, or an editorial up that headlined, Bribes for Doctors. I happen to be the only person in this room tonight that was actually in the room when that discussion was held.

Doctors are given back, over 7 years in prospective revenue to doctors, \$26.1 billion. The original conversion factor that the House provided for them which I believe is \$24.60 was changed to the Senate conversion factor of \$35.42, and that difference is \$300 million. The House decided to agree with the Senate in terms of the conversion factor.

That is what they call a bribe. That is hardly what the National Council of Senior Citizens would argue that they got, those very seniors who came seeking information, which was 70-some million dollars.

Ninety percent of their entire operating budget comes from the taxpayer to come and lobby the taxpayer. In point of fact, the Republican proposal for saving Medicare has no cuts to beneficiaries. None. Every single beneficiary can choose to stay in the same system at the same service, at their same doctors.

Mr. Speaker, we do reduce revenues to providers, both hospitals and physicians, although we reduce it less than the Clinton proposal and the Democrat proposal. We do provide major, major fraud, bribery, kickback, false filing, false swearing, major fraud provisions, and we believe that between the provider reductions, the hospital reductions and the fraud provisions, plus those seniors who choose to opt out of current Medicare and into a Medisave account, into a high deductible and private insurance account with a medical savings account, we think, and the Congressional Budget Office believes, that 25 percent will opt out.

The Congressional Budget Office tells us that with those opting out and the savings to providers and fraud, we will save \$270 billion. We are delighted with that. None of that constitutes a reduction of a single dime in terms of a provider benefit.

On part B there are some things that are slightly different. Part B is the doctor portion to pay for doctor visits. Currently the law says they pay \$46 per month. It is a tax, really, off their Social Security benefit of \$46 a month for part B. That constitutes them paying, our seniors paying roughly 31.5 percent of the cost of their part B. We propose to keep it there.

Most of the seniors that I talk to are not proud of the fact that their grandchildren are paying 68.5 percent of their benefit, but that is something that has been established here over the last year in the formula. The Republicans intend to keep it there, at 68.5 percent subsidy of seniors part B. We know that costs go up with increasing seniors and with inflation, and so the typical senior is going to expect to raise their part B contribution, that 31.5 percent that they choose to pay is

going to raise about \$7 a month over 7 years. In fact, the Democrat plan goes up nearly as fast, but from a lower base.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for us to understand that most of America now agrees with us that Medicare is going to be bankrupt in 7 years if we do not make changes. This year, this year, for the first time, we will be giving to you to spend more money on part A than we bring in.

Now, it is true, it is true that Medicare has been said to be running out of money in the past, several times in the past, and sometimes in the past running out of money in shorter than 7 years. The Democrats' proposal was to raise taxes on our children and grandchildren 23 times in 27 years. We propose not to do that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mrs. MALONEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mrs. MALONEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN WILL DESTROY MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York [Mr. NADLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, before a Democratic Congress against almost total Republican opposition enacted Medicare into law in 1965, one out of every two senior citizens has no health care coverage at all. Today, with Medicare, 99 percent of senior citizens have health security. The drastic cuts the Republicans propose in Medicare, \$270 billion, would savage the Medicare Program.

The Republican Medicare bill will make older Americans pay more and get less, not to prevent Medicare from going bankrupt as they falsely claim, but to finance a huge tax cut, \$245 billion, for the very wealthiest Americans.

The Republican plan will, among other things, according to the Washington Times, so increase the Government's burden of proof in prosecuting Medicare fraud that the Government would lose about one-quarter of what it recovers from the crooks and the cheats today.

The Republican plan will increase out-of-pocket costs for all seniors. It will double premiums and increase deductibles. It will drastically reduce reimbursement rates to doctors and other health care providers so much so as to drive many doctors out of the Medicare system and endanger the quality of care provided to seniors. Altogether, the Republican bill would cost the average beneficiary at least \$2,825 in premium and co-payment increases over 7 years, and the average couple at least \$5,650.

Americans must know the truth, that the Republican Medicare cuts will go straight into the Republican's tax cut for the wealthiest Americans.

The Medicare trustees tell us Medicare needs \$90 billion, not \$270 billion, to remain solvent. The Republicans tell us we have ample funds to balance the budget in 7 years, and still pay for a \$245 billion tax cut. If the Republicans are not lying to the American people, if their purpose is, as they say, to save Medicare, why not simply reduce the size of their tax cut for the wealthy by \$90 billion and place the revenues saved in the Medicare Trust Fund? There is no need to force seniors to leave the doctors they know and to join unfamiliar managed care plans. There is no need to double part B premiums. There is no need to increase copayments and deductibles by thousands of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, to our Republican colleagues we say, simply take \$950 billion from your tax cut for the wealthy and put it into the Medicare Trust Fund. You will still have a \$155 billion tax cut for your wealthy friends and contributors, or is that not enough? Or is the full \$245 billion gift to the very rich so important that you must destroy Medicare in order to save it?

The New York Times recently published an article detailing some individual cases, where even with the help of Medicare, medical costs are already devastating the financial stability of many seniors. Take, for example, Susie Meade, a 78-year-old woman from Florida. The Times reports, "Out of the \$6,600 she gets in Social Security a year, she pays \$1,116 for supplemental insurance, \$553 for Medicare, and \$1,000 for prescriptions. She is left with \$328 a month to pay her rent and to live on."

How can the thousands of seniors like Mrs. Meade be free to finance a tax break for the very wealthiest Americans?

Here are just some of the many thousands of letters I have received from my constituents opposing these cuts, and there are very many stories of people who cannot possibly imagine them.

Mr. Speaker, this bill is a sneak attack on Medicare. The Republicans did not campaign last year on a platform of savaging Medicare. They did not tell the voters they would double Medicare premiums and increase copayments and cut Medicare by \$270 billion. Then they kept their bill secret until last week, in the hope that the American people will not find all of the jokers hidden in the fine print until it is too late, until the bill is passed, the deed is done, the money for the \$20,000 tax cut for people making \$300,000 a year is provided.

□ 2245

Mr. Speaker, the American people know how to react and deal with sneak attacks. We have endured sneak attacks before. Admiral Yamamoto is reported to have said on December 7, 1941, after he received the congratulations of his subordinates for the successful sneak attack on Pearl Harbor,