

and by cuts in Medicare, in school lunches, and in student loans.

#### INTRODUCTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION OPPOSING REPEAL OF GUN CONTROL LAWS

(Mr. SKAGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SKAGGS. Mr. Speaker, the Oklahoma City bombing has left Americans looking for ways to prevent other terrorist assaults on innocent victims. One thing Congress can do is refuse to let the gun lobby blow away the landmark gun control laws passed during the 103d Congress.

Today I am introducing a resolution expressing the sense of Congress that the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban, and the juvenile handgun ban should not be repealed. These laws are balanced efforts to control crime that are proving effective in keeping guns out of the wrong hands, while respecting the rights of law-abiding Americans to own firearms. To let these laws be tossed aside as a political favor to a special interest would be a national tragedy.

At the beginning of this Congress, the gun lobby announced its plan to get these laws taken off the books. They have paused in their effort in the wake of the Oklahoma tragedy. But rest assured, it is only a tactical pause, and it will not last long.

Oklahoma City is chilling evidence that a few individuals with extremist views can use weapons of enormous power to kill and maim. Tragically, the toll inflicted each day with handguns and military-style assault weapons is almost as great.

Our commitment to fighting domestic terrorism should start with keeping the Brady bill, the assault weapons ban and the juvenile handgun ban in effect. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

□ 1415

#### HAPPY TALK ON MEDICARE

(Mr. BONIOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, don't be fooled by all the Republican happy talk on Medicare.

They're not cutting Medicare in order to fix the system.

The Republicans are cutting Medicare for one reason and one reason only: to pay for their tax cuts for the wealthy.

You see, the Republicans made an amazing discovery.

To pay for their tax cuts, they cannot just cut student loans and child nutrition programs and cops on the beat.

Even though they are cutting each and every one of those things it still leaves them about \$300 billion short.

So, now they're targeting Medicare.

And what is this going to mean to the average senior citizen?

It is going to mean higher copayments, higher premiums, less choice of doctors and it is going to cut into Social Security COLA's.

And this isn't just going to affect senior citizens.

Where is the average working family going to come up with the extra money to care for their parents and grandparents?

Mr. Speaker, Medicare is not a cash cow for tax cuts.

It is a sacred trust between the Government and the people.

It is time we keep that promise.

#### REPUBLICANS AND MEDICARE

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are having a hard time explaining to 35 million Americans who rely on Medicare that their benefits will be cut to pay for a \$350 billion tax break for the wealthy.

Now, Republican leaders are attacking the President because he refuses to join them in slashing Medicare to pay for their unjust tax break. Republicans also fail to mention that the President has in fact extended the life of the Medicare fund in legislation that Republicans voted against last year.

The truth is that Republican cuts to Medicare would make the average Medicare recipient cough up \$900 more each year out of their own pockets.

In my State of New Mexico alone, 200,000 Americans will be forced to reduce their food budget or their heating costs to pay for this unfair tax cut.

Mr. Speaker, the President is right. We should favor Medicare reform that protects benefits for Americans, but cuts in Medicare should not pay for a tax break for the wealthy. The American people will not be fooled.

#### MEDICARE AND VETERANS

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, as we all celebrate V-E Day and the wonderful generation that saved Europe from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, what are we doing to them? Well, the Republicans are trying to take their Medicare and slash it away. What a way to salute them. This is the generation that saved the world. This is the generation that paid for the Marshall plan to rebuild the world, and now we are telling them they have also got to pay for the deficit so that the fat cats can have more tax cuts.

That is not fair. That is not the America they fought for. I hope that all this Medicare scare goes away.

#### MORE ON MEDICARE

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Medicare should not become a political football because millions of our seniors in America depend so heavily on it for their health care.

In today's edition of the Houston Chronicle that I picked up before I left home this morning, it talks about the Republicans laying plans to slash billions from the budget. The Republican majority should come up with a plan to reform the Medicare system but not cut \$250 billion, \$300 billion, \$400 billion out of it.

I spoke and met with many seniors yesterday in my district, and they want the fraud and abuse out of Medicare. But they do not want less health care than they have today.

The Medicare system was made solvent for 3 more years in 1993 without one Republican vote. Now the Republican majority is planning to cut it in the name of reform. The savings should be used to increase the benefits for seniors and increase the reimbursement rates and not just to pay for tax cuts. I cannot support billions in Medicare cuts when they would not help the system become more solvent in 7 years.

Medicare should be reformed but not to save \$380 billion and help pay for tax cuts for the rich U.S. citizens.

#### SLASHING MEDICARE

(Mr. WARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Republican proposal to slash Medicare spending over the next 5 years. I am reminded of the riddle, the riddle is, what is the difference between the Contract With America and a contract with the devil? The riddle is, what is the difference between the Contract With America and the contract with the devil?

The devil's contract still provides for our seniors and our children.

The fact that such cuts will devastate our hospitals across the country forcing many rural hospitals who rely on Medicare benefits to close sums up the problem.

This is not the way to provide the money that is needed to make the tax cuts that have been promised in this contract.

#### REPUBLICANS WANT TO REFORM MEDICARE

(Mr. BOEHNER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, here we go, once again, down the path of spreading fear, fear that we are going to slash this and slash that.

The American people know instinctively that a government cannot continue to spend money that it does not have. Only one time in the last 50 years has Congress actually balanced the budget.

We, as Republicans, believe that balancing the budget is our contract with our children, because we cannot continue to spend money that we do not have, giving our children and theirs the bill.

When it comes to Medicare, we are going to protect, preserve, and improve Medicare. We are going to spend hundreds of billions of dollars more over the next 7 years as we balance the budget. Medicare spending is going to increase from \$4,700 per enrollee to \$6,400 at the end of 7 years.

So when you hear people talking about cutting Medicare, they are wrong. We are going to increase spending for Medicare and protect this program that is so vital to our seniors.

#### THE HEALTH CARE DEBATE

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, nobody was home on the other side of the aisle last year when the President pressed health care reform as the only way to contain runaway costs. Suddenly Republicans have discovered the cost side of his equation, but it will not balance without health care reform.

Tax cuts for the rich just passed by the House make this a mass problem with no possible solution. In the Senate some Republicans are trying to dodge the bullet by disowning the tax cuts while other Republicans over there would rather die than give them up.

This is no way to celebrate May, which is Older Americans Month. Their equation is already out of balance with 20 percent of their income going for out-of-pocket health care expenses.

The only way to relieve them and cut costs at the same time is to mop up all the inefficiency in health care with across-the-board reform.

Medicare is not out of control. The health care system is. Tax cuts for the rich make a bad situation worse.

#### MORE ON REPUBLICANS AND MEDICARE

(Mr. WISE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, I could not let the last Republican speaker pass unchallenged who says we are really going to increase Medicare. Well, I guess it is sort of like Medicare, you are going to get the same level of services, but we are going to cut you back a significant percent.

If it is going to then be increased, why it is so many senior citizens understand that they are going to lose on

the average \$900 a year? The real concern I have is, why is this being done?

Is it being done to help Medicare? It is not being done to help Medicare. It is being done to pay for the tax cut. That is right, the tax cut for the wealthiest individuals in this country where 51 percent of the benefits of that tax cut go to those earning over \$100,000. The only problem is, if you are going to balance the budget, you have to make up for the over \$300 billion of lost revenue that is going to come because of that tax cut.

Where does it come from? Out of the hide of Medicare, out of the hide of senior citizens and out of the hide of health care.

#### DON'T MAKE SENIORS PAY FOR TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle: Do not cut Medicare to pay for tax cuts for the rich.

Under some Republican plans, seniors—37 million seniors—will pay an additional \$900 each year for health care. These cuts will be used to pay for tax cuts for the rich. For people who earn more than \$230,000.

That is not right. That is not fair.

Medicare is the lifeline for many of our seniors.

It is time to be frank and honest with the American people. Tell them what you are doing and why. Lay all your cards on the table, face up.

Do not take health care from our senior citizens to pay for tax cuts for the rich. That is not Medicare reform. And our senior citizens will not be fooled.

#### CUTTING MEDICARE NO WAY TO HONOR WORLD WAR II VETERANS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II, we honor the brave American soldiers who put their lives on the line to secure our freedom.

But, we owe World War II veterans more than parades down Main Street, medal ceremonies, and memorials. We owe them the security of a decent and dignified retirement. Medicare is central to that promise. By cutting Medicare for seniors, Republicans break that promise.

Under the Republican budget proposal, 37 million seniors will lose \$900 a year, while 1.1 million wealthy Americans get a \$20,000 windfall. A side by side comparison, reveals the painful tradeoff: \$305 billion in Medicare cuts will pay for a \$345 billion tax cut for the wealthy.

This budget debate is all about priorities. All of us agree that we need to cut spending, but the question is where do you start. The wrong place to start is by cutting health care for seniors. If we truly want to honor the men and women who secured our future 50 years ago, let us secure their futures today, let's protect Medicare.

#### BANKRUPTCY IN AMERICA

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, while everybody is celebrating V-E Day, victory in Europe, I would like to talk about B-A Day, Bankruptcy in America Day. Think about it. For 50 years America has given trillions, trillions of dollars to Europe and Japan. And in return Japan keeps ripping us off with illegal trade. And as we speak, Russia is now concluding a deal to build nuclear reactors in Iran.

Beam me up. With friends like this, my colleagues, why does America have to worry about any enemies? I say let us stop this cash giveaway to Europe and Japan, start investing that money in America. Then we would not have to tinker with Medicare.

Wake up, Congress. Our policies are so misdirected, if you threw at the ground they would probably miss.

#### TRADE WITH JAPAN

(Mr. LEVIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, in this box is a part. It is a universal joint. I bought it on Main Street America yesterday, Main Street, Royal Oak, MI. It costs \$11.47. In Japan, this part would cost over \$100.

What does it mean, this differential? It means fewer jobs here in the United States because our products are locked out in Japan. It means fewer jobs and smaller profits for our industry which could be invested.

It also means the Japanese consumers are overcharged, and it also means that Japanese companies use profits from their sheltered markets to gain market share here to invest in the rest of Asia and elsewhere with an unfair advantage.

It is long overdue that Japan open up their automotive sector to parts and to cars. Talk has not worked. Action is necessary. We support the administration's efforts.

□ 1430

#### REPUBLICANS WILL SAVE, PROTECT, PRESERVE, AND IMPROVE THE MEDICARE SYSTEM

(Mr. TATE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1