

breaks. As we repair the Medicare program, and attempt to slow its growth, we must do so in the broader context of health care reform to ensure that older Americans—and indeed all Americans—have access to quality, affordable health care.

TOP TEN

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, from the home office in Scottsdale, AZ, the President's top 10 excuses for not offering a credible balanced budget alternative: Ten, pollsters told me not to; nine, don't worry, be happy; eight, the flowers are blooming, the sun is shining—who can think about budgets in the spring; seven, what's a couple trillion dollars between friends?; six, distracted by the start of the baseball season; five, I've fallen and I can't get up; four, contract-fatigue; three, those darn Republicans have taken all the good ideas; two, when the going gets tough, stick your head in the sand.

And the President's No. 1 excuse for not offering his own credible balanced budget alternative: The dog ate my budget.

CALL A CUT A CUT

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

Mr. BROWN of California. Mr. Speaker, I am not sure whether to call this room the Hall of the House or the Casino of the Capitol because right now, the Republicans are playing a billion dollar shell game with Medicare.

The Republicans say they are increasing funding for Medicare over the next 7 years. What they really do is cut the amount needed to maintain the current level of services by \$282 billion. That does not sound like much of an increase to me.

What this really means for the average senior citizen is that they will have to pay more out of their own pocket for health care. In fact, they will have to pay over \$3,500 more out of their own pockets over the next 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the Republicans to come clean. They have prided themselves on opening up government and being honest with the American people. If that is true, then they should be honest enough to call a cut a cut.

The American people, especially our senior citizens, will remember this act of dishonesty on November 5, 1996—election day.

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WE MUST ACT NOW ON MEDICARE AND THE BUDGET

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

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, in the coming months we face two extraordinary battles—the battle to protect the future of our Nation's seniors and the battle to preserve the future of America's children.

We cannot fail in either of these battles. Our opponents will do everything they can to distort what we are trying to do. They will use fear tactics to scare innocent Americans into a false sense of security about the status quo.

The status quo is the enemy. If we do nothing Medicare will be bankrupt in 7 years. What would the Democrats have our seniors do then? By acting now we can save the Medicare system and offer security to our seniors.

If we do nothing about the budget, our children will pay more than \$187,000 over the course of their lives just to pay for interest on the national debt. We must balance the budget now if we want to protect the American dream for our children.

Mr. Speaker, we must stand firm and deliver. The stakes are too high to do nothing.

REPUBLICANS AND MEDICARE

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. Speaker, to say that the Republicans are saving Medicare is like saying Colonel Sanders is saving the lives of chickens. Republicans are cutting Medicare with their budget today. They are lowering the amount of money available. They know there will not be enough as the population grows of seniors needing Medicare and health care costs go up.

So as they talk about more money for Medicare, sure, they are tossing a 25-foot rope to someone 30-feet offshore drowning. They say that is compassion.

So why are the Republicans cutting Medicare and Social Security in their budget? It is simple. To give tax breaks to wealthy Americans. It is a tax break plan that even 100 Republicans wrote their leadership and said, please do not do this; it is unfair. But Speaker GINGRICH pushed it through, and now with this ironclad discipline, the Republicans will be voting for it today.

I hope America tunes into this debate. What is at stake is not only health care for seniors and their out-of-pocket costs, but for a lot of working families with senior parents and grandparents this debate gets right to your pocketbook.

A HISTORIC DAY

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, here we are. This is it. We are on the brink. For the first time since 1969, the U.S. House of Representatives will be passing a balanced budget amendment.

This is a historic moment. This is significant. This is real.

We spend almost \$20 billion each month on the interest alone on the national debt. It is the third largest item, third largest expenditure in our annual budget. In 2 years it will exceed all of military spending. This has got to be brought under control.

As my Democrat friend, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. PETE GEREN, said, who benefits from balancing the budget? Senior citizens, children, students, the disabled. If you want to do something for them, you have got to give them a tomorrow. If you are going to give them a tomorrow, you have to spend your money properly today.

This is not time for partisan rhetoric. This is not time for grandstanding. There are a lot of things you can criticize in this balanced budget amendment, but offer your own. This is the time to do it. This is a crucial crossroads for the United States of America.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET

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

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, country and western singer Jerry Reed must have had the Republican budget in mind when he sang, "She got the gold mine and I got the shaft."

The proposed budget which the Congress will vote on today will give the gold mine to wealthy special interests while America's elderly who depend upon Medicare and depend upon Social Security get the shaft.

The Republican budget cuts Medicare by \$283 billion over 7 years, slashing Medicare spending by 25 percent. Out-of-pocket costs for seniors will increase by over \$1,000 in 2002 and \$3,500 over 7 years.

My constituents have not been asking me to raise the cost of their health care to provide tax breaks for the wealthy and to escalate cold war spending. The budget also cuts Medicaid by \$180 billion over 7 years and cuts Social Security benefits by \$24 billion between 1999 and 2002, all to pay for tax cuts for the rich.

Mr. Speaker, why are Republicans cutting Medicare to pay for tax cuts for the privileged few?

FISCAL YEAR 1996 BUDGET

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

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, we are at a point where we are about to make history. We will soon vote on the budget resolution that contains a strong moral message. That message is that the status quo is unacceptable. A \$4.7 trillion debt is unacceptable. Annual deficits close to \$200

billion are unacceptable. And continuing to saddle our children with a mountain of debt they cannot afford to pay is unacceptable.

This budget proposal represents a historic change in the direction of our country. It moves us from a government that is too intrusive, wasteful and debt ridden to a smaller, more efficient government that costs less and is responsive to State and local needs. This budget is a gateway to the future presenting a new vision of government. It moves authority out of Washington and helps empower every individual American.

It cuts taxes for America's families, seniors, and small businesses. It restores hope. It promises opportunity for the next generation. It protects Social Security. It increases spending on Medicare by over \$80 billion. And it saves it from bankruptcy. It will result in a higher net rate of savings and a higher standard of living for everyone. And should not everybody celebrate that?

Mr. Speaker, it is in the best interest that I strongly urge my House colleagues to support this resolution. It is for the children.

SAYING "NO" TO THE SOUND BITES AND PHOTO OPS

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, as you well know, posing for photo ops, listening to sound bites, and giving easy answers can be kind of addictive.

Sometimes, the sound-bite addict needs a little help in kicking the habit.

In this House, that Republican habit is to stand before the cameras and pretend that they are getting our budget in line without hurting working Americans.

That is why this House passed a rescission package that went easy on closing tax loopholes for the rich and eliminating Government bureaucracy and boondoggles.

But those rescission got tough on something.

They got tough on summer jobs and worker training, and they got tough on student loans and day care.

Well, these sound bite addicts are about to get some tough love.

It is called a veto pen.

I applaud President Clinton and his tough choice to say no to the sound bites, photo ops and easy answers that hurt our kids, hurt our students and punish working Americans.

And I encourage my friends on the other side of the aisle to kick their easy answer habit before it is too late for the American people.

THE REPUBLICANS WILL BALANCE THE BUDGET

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address

the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Democrats, scare-the-people campaign about draconian cuts by Republicans is just ridiculous. The Republican budget actually increases spending by 3 percent every year for the next 7 years, spending nearly \$12 trillion more in the next 7 years than in the past.

When I was back in Dallas, my constituents put together three notebooks full of comments about ideas for reductions in Government spending. Do you know what they say? Balance the budget. So do not try to fool the American people into thinking that balancing the budget will hurt them. They know better. They know Government spends too much, and, most importantly, they know the consequences if we continue down the path that we are going on now.

They will also know, after tomorrow, that it is the Republicans who have taken the first major step toward balancing our budget.

THIS IS PUNISHMENT, NOT A BUDGET

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, what is wrong with the truth? It seems that many people are running in the opposite direction when we simply want to tell you the truth. This is not a budget, it is simply pure punishment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to report to you on the growing sentiments of my constituents in Houston, TX. Like other Texans and Americans nationwide, they are beginning to understand what the Republican budget proposals could really mean to their lives. I have no problem with telling them the truth, and they do not like it.

To pay for the huge tax cuts for the well-to-do, leaders of the other side of the aisle want to enact a \$283 billion cut in Medicare, three times the size of the largest previous cut in history, and Medicaid will be cut approximately \$182 million.

The lives of more than 2,000,000 Medicare seniors in Texas would be dramatically impacted, and by the year 2002 each Medicare senior in Texas would be asked to pay an additional \$1,122 out-of-pocket expenses. Each would be forced to pay \$4,000 more for fiscal years 1996 through 2002 to make up for these cuts. We want the future to be free for future generations but not on the backs of seniors and those most vulnerable.

Look at this, Mr. Speaker. Here the Republicans are cutting the dollars that the Association for Retired Citizens are about to use to help seniors find jobs. We need to do something better, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, what's wrong with the truth? This is not a budget; this is punishment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to report to you on the growing sentiments of my constituents in Houston.

Like other Texans and Americans nationwide, they're beginning to understand what the Republican budget proposals could really mean to their lives, and they don't like it.

To pay for huge tax cuts for the well-to-do, leaders on the other side of the aisle want to enact a \$283 billion cut in Medicare three times the size of the largest previous cut in history. Medicaid would be cut approximately \$182 million.

The lives of more than 2-million Medicare seniors in Texas would be dramatically impacted.

By the year 2002, each Medicare senior in Texas would be asked to pay an additional \$1,222 out-of-pocket dollars per year for their health coverage.

Each would be forced to pay nearly \$4,000 dollars more, from fiscal years 1996 through 2002, to make up for GOP cuts.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues on this side believe that a balanced budget is the correct goal, we want to free future generations from the burden of today's debt. We want to shrink the size of government in a responsible manner that will not pull the rug out from under a steady, strong economy.

And we want to make government more efficient and fair without breaking long-standing promises to the Nation's seniors or vulnerable children.

Mr. Speaker, we must and can do better.

VOTE TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

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

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, let me remind my friend on the left that just spoke that punishment is saddling the future generation with the debt, if we fail to act, if we fail to pass a budget that balances over the next 5 to 7 years.

Punishment is failing to do something in the next few days that will get this country in the right direction fiscally. If we fail to act, the children of this country face \$187,000 in interest alone if they were born tomorrow. A child born tomorrow would pay \$187,000 in interest alone on this Nation's debt.

Tomorrow we have the opportunity to vote on a budget that will balance over the next 5 to 7 years. Tomorrow we have an opportunity to send this country in the right direction, to take it out of its financial abyss where the left-leaning liberals have taken it over the last 40 years.

Tomorrow we have an opportunity to take this country in the right direction. I ask my colleagues to consider very strongly where they want this country to go, a budget that is balanced or where it has been over the last 40 years.

REPUBLICAN BUSINESS AS USUAL

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