

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Mr. Speaker, today we have the opportunity to explain to my colleagues some legislation that we introduced earlier today. It builds on legislation which we introduced in the last Congress. It is called the Hoekstra-Hutchinson Voice on Term Limits. It is the Term Limits Act of 1995.

What this legislation does, it provides for a nonbinding national advisory referendum on congressional term limits during the November 1996 general election. As this legislation moves through the House and the Senate, this legislation would provide the first time in the history of this country where the American people would actually have the opportunity to advise Congress on a particular issue.

As the Members of this body are well aware, we had a vote earlier this year on term limits. While we did win a majority, we did not receive the necessary number of votes to move this legislation through the House and to the Senate and move it to the American people and to the States for its confirmation as an amendment to the Constitution.

What we are proposing with this legislation is enhancing the process and allowing the American people the opportunity to influence this Congress.

The process would work in this way: During the spring, summer, and early fall of 1996, we would envision a national debate on the pros and cons of term limits. Then in November of 1996, on every ballot across this country, there would be a very simple question: Should Congress approve a constitutional amendment to limit the number of terms that a Member of the United States House of Representatives and the United States Senate can serve in their office? Yes or no?

As the results from this national referendum would be tabulated and reported, the next Congress would come back in January of 1997. A commitment has been made that as Republicans would still maintain the majority in the House, that the first piece of legislation that we would consider would be another vote on term limits. So we would see an opportunity to have a national debate, a national referendum, and then a vote on term limits.

Really, what we are talking about is what I think this institution needs, is we need more direct input from the American people advising and influencing and providing an opportunity to set the agenda here in Washington. It is an experimental process. It is an experimental process providing an opportunity to enable the American people to set the agenda, help set the agenda in Washington and more clearly advise this House on the type of direction that we should take.

This piece of legislation is part of a broader package of bills that I introduced today which also includes the opportunity for Members or for citizens to recall Members of the House and of the Senate, providing for the inclusion of "none of the above" on ballots around the country, and also providing

legislation to provide binding initiative and referendum.

The bill that I am talking about today, the National Voice on Term Limits, is only an advisory referendum. It is an experiment in improving democracy, and I am excited to begin this process and to move this legislation through the House of Representatives.

#### MEDICARE: A CONTRACT WITH OUR SENIOR CITIZENS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KIM). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago a contract with our senior citizens was created when the Medicare program was enacted, and now the Republican Congress is proposing to end Medicare as we know it and balance the budget, I am afraid, on the backs of senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican Party was against Medicare when it was enacted in 1965, and now that Republicans have regained control of Congress, one of the first things that they want to do is take \$270 billion out of the program and for senior citizens to foot the bill for a balanced budget. While I believe in a balanced budget, I feel the Republican approach is incorrect, wrong and draconian.

Medicare has had a lot of success since it was established. Poverty rates for senior citizens have declined dramatically. Medicare has given seniors universal health coverage and protected them from depleting their hard-earned resources. Without Medicare, many seniors would be forced to choose between health care, food, and shelter.

Mr. Speaker, I want to read an excerpt from testimony submitted to Congress during the Medicare debate from a concerned citizen in 1963. It is from the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD: "My mother is now 85 years old, and since she has been hospitalized before, the insurance company cancelled out her policy, and now I am paying the bill. Her sole income is a social security check for \$40 a month. I hope my children will not have the same choice to make to either pay the bills or put dad on relief." That is from the RECORD on November 21, 1963.

Mr. Speaker, the problem is that the Republicans have not discussed the specific details of how they plan to change Medicare, because they are afraid to tell seniors what will happen with this \$270 billion in Medicare cuts.

One plan, though, that the Republicans are floating is a voucher plan, which basically limits the health care coverage of senior citizens. This voucher plan would basically give seniors substandard health care unless they have a lot of money and can afford their own health coverage. Essentially, a senior will be told that once he has used up the voucher, that he will have to pay for health care insurance out of

his own pocket, and I am afraid, Mr. Speaker, the Republicans do not realize that most seniors are on a fixed income and simply will not be able to afford the extra cost that will be entailed under this proposed voucher program.

There are other Republican plans that have been discussed that will either force senior citizens into HMO's or the managed care systems that are like HMO's, and essentially what that does is to tell the seniors which doctors they can and they cannot see.

I have talked to a lot of senior citizens over the last few months about some of these alternate plans that Republicans have come up with, and most of the senior citizens I represent are very happy with their doctors and do not want to be told which doctors that are going to serve them. They are very afraid of the fact they will not be able to choose their own doctor.

Nobody really knows exactly what the Republicans are going to do, because they have not put specific proposals forward.

But their proposed Medicare cuts are so large, I am convinced it is only going to hurt senior citizens. I am afraid the Republicans will end Medicare as we know it, without telling the American public the true story of what these \$270 billion in cuts are ultimately going to mean to them.

Some estimates figure that seniors will have an additional \$1,000 per month of out-of-pocket costs to maintain the same health coverage that they are currently receiving, and if health costs rise faster than the growth in Medicare to seniors, then seniors are either going to get less services or pay more money. It is that simple.

Mr. Speaker, finally, during the last few nights, I have heard Republicans state that they are really concerned about saving Medicare and that is why they are putting forth these cuts in the program and the changes that we are hearing about. But I would maintain that if Republicans are truly concerned about saving Medicare and reforming it, then they should not be approaching it in the backward way that they are approaching it. Republicans are starting with \$270 billion in cuts, the largest amount of cuts in the history of the Medicare program. Then, after they make these cuts, they want to gut Medicare to achieve the cost savings.

The American public should not be fooled by these Republican plans. Senior citizens should watch closely over the next few months to see what the Republicans do to the existing Medicare program, and the Republicans should not be allowed to break Medicare's contract with America's seniors.

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

[Mr. CHRYSLER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### PRESERVING AND PROTECTING SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

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

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise for two purposes tonight, first, in response to the last gentleman who spoke.

I think it is important the House note that it was the Republican Congress that led the way to roll back the unfair 1993 tax on senior citizens' Social Security, and it is the same Republican-held Congress that has also called for increases in income eligibility for senior citizens who now are capped at \$11,380 a year. Under the Republican legislation, they will be able to make up to \$30,000 a year without deductions from Social Security.

We will work in a bipartisan fashion to make sure we preserve and protect Social Security and Medicare. What we will do with Medicare is to make sure, through our preservation task force, to come up with options to make sure we eliminate the fraud, abuse, and waste which exists in the system. That is the core of the problem.

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I also rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to pay tribute to a Norristown community leader from my district, Frances Joyner, someone who gave so much for her community. She died at the age of 53, and this has certainly shortened the life of someone who was a great American, a great community volunteer.

Mr. Speaker, she contributed much in her time, much more so than you might expect for someone of such young years. She was an outstanding employee at the Norristown State hospital, an active employee at the U.S. Post Office. But more important than her regular job was what she did in her community.

She was active in her church, she was active in civic organizations, and she helped start many youth programs in her community in Pennsylvania. She was a member of the board of directors and treasurer of the Norristown Jaycettes, and she was active with the Montgomery County Junior Miss Pageant. She was the founder of the Miss Essence of Ebony Pageant.

She was on the board of directors of the YMCA. She was director of the Foster Parents of the Children's Aid Society. She was a member of the Montgomery County Opportunities Industrialization Center as a director, a judge of elections for Norristown's Eighth Ward. She received the award of the Chapel Four Chaplains at Temple

University in Philadelphia, PA. She was a member of Ebenezer A.U.M.P. Church for more than 40 years.

She was a Sunday school teacher, and one of the organizers of the Junior Missionaries. She was a Past Matron of the Eastern Star, and the list goes on, Mr. Speaker.

What she was for us, Frances Ella "Sissy" Joyner was a leader of the church, a leader of the community, an inspirational humanitarian, a role model for her community. She loved children and worked to help the community become better, and I hope that those who will read and hear about Frances Ella Joyner will in fact be inspired by her life's work so that they reach out to the community and show the kind of volunteer spirit that has made America so great.

#### WELCOMING PRESIDENT KIM YONG-SAM OF KOREA

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

Mr. KIM. Mr. Speaker, as the only Korean-American in Congress, I was proud and honored today to listen to Korean President Kim Yong-Sam address a special joint session of the Congress. His insightful remarks underscored the very historic and close relationship between Korea and the United States. They were certainly well received by the Congress.

President Kim's visit and address to Congress are particularly meaningful and timely considering the fact that tomorrow Presidents Kim and Clinton will dedicate the Korean War Memorial on the Mall of Washington, DC.

This memorial reminds us that the friendship between the United States and Korea is bonded in the blood and sacrifice of each nation. It reminds us of our common quest for liberty and our shared acknowledgment that freedom is not free. While there are short-term differences that may occur between the United States and Korea from time to time, these minor disagreements can never crack the solid, long-term alliance between us. Just ask those Koreans and Americans who are immortalized by the memorial.

As President Kim pointed out in his speech, Korea's economic and democratic achievements are impressive, especially considering they have been made under the constant threat of war from the north. I am proud that the United States has unselfishly encouraged and supported Korea's advancement and this cooperation does warrant special recognition. Thus, as we reflect on today's joint session, tomorrow's dedication of the Korean War Memorial and all the other events associated with this week's state visit by President Kim, I think we all will agree that both the United States and Korea are truly fortunate to have each other as allies and partners.

#### GOP MEDICARE PLANS THREATEN WOMEN'S HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Illinois [Mrs. COLLINS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the Republican's back-to-the-future approach to legislating, the GOP Medicare-gutting plan will do nothing less than turn the table of progress on women's health in the United States and jeopardize the lives of millions of elderly women in order to foolishly subsidize massive tax cuts for corporate fat cats and rich folks. Sounds a lot like a return to the tired old, worn out, smoke-and-mirrors, trickle down, voodoo economics of a former time—and we all know how well that wreaked havoc on our Federal budget.

What in the world makes our Republican colleagues believe that a \$270 billion cut to the Medicare program is good medicine for our Nation's seniors, particularly our elderly women. Today one-quarter of all women over age 65 live at or near the poverty line. With the GOP cuts estimated to increase out-of-pocket health care expenses \$3,500 annually by the year 2002, these women will be forced to choose between essential health care services and daily food and shelter.

These Gingrich cuts will also disproportionately affect minority women who have lower retirement income, little health care coverage beyond Medicare, and greater risk of acute and chronic illness than white women, and are twice as likely to end up in poverty than their white counterparts.

Is this the contract the Newt Republicans have with their mothers and grandmothers—a promise to gut, slash, and burn the vital health care support that these women have come to trust and rely upon in their golden years? Unfortunately, it is.

Important preventive services, such as biannual mammograms for women over 65 are endangered under the Gingrich Republican budget axe, despite the fact that older women are six times more likely than younger women to develop breast cancer and eventually die from this tragic disease. Additionally, home health care beneficiaries, two-thirds of whom are women, stand to pay a new sick tax with a proposed 20-percent increase in copayments for home care services.

The facts seem pretty clear to me. American women, who live longer than men, contract disabling diseases such as arthritis and osteoporosis to a greater extent than men, and are far less likely than men to have sufficient retirement income or other economic means, will be devastated by the Republican's cruel, short-sighted, and needless attack on Medicare as a means to get tax breaks to the privileged few. Why the GOP is pushing such an agenda remains a frightening mystery to me and my constituents.