

## READ THE REPORT ON MEDICARE

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge Americans to read a report that was filed by the trustees of the Social Security trust fund and the Medicare trust fund. It is a short report. It is only 14 pages.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is our duty to urge senior citizens and Americans of all ages who care about Medicare for themselves but also for their children and their grandchildren, as we care about it for our parents and our grandparents, that they read this report. They can receive the report. It is 14 pages. It is a 14-page summary of the annual report to the American citizens. They can receive it by calling 202-224-3121. Ask to be connected to your Representative's office. At that number, 202-224-3121, ask for a summary of the annual report of the Medicare trustees.

It is factual. It is nonpoliticized. It is something, frankly, that many Members of the other side of the aisle do not want you to read, but it explains very clearly what is going on with Medicare.

## MEDICARE AND MEDICAID IN FLORIDA

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

Mr. JOHNSTON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address the House today about a very serious problem that will occur in my native State, the State of Florida. I am a fifth generation Floridian, and I dearly love my State, but they are confronted with a problem dealing with Medicare.

If the current bill that is proposed is passed, it will be a \$1 billion cut over the next 5 years that will hit my constituents and all senior citizens in Florida. In my congressional district alone, they will be hit over \$50 million.

To compound that, if Medicaid is block granted, we will have a catastrophic fiscal problem in Florida. Medicaid block grant will not even equal inflation. If does not even come close to the increase in growth that this State experiences, between 8 and 12 percent.

I call upon my 13 Republican colleagues from Florida to reconsider their position dealing with Medicare and Medicaid, not for political reasons but for the reason that I think they are devoted to this State as well as I.

## SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. HEFLEY. Mr. Speaker, the American people are hearing a lot these days from the liberal Democrats. They have heard terms "tax cuts from the rich" and "mean spirited," and all the usual class warfare terminology.

But there is something the American people will not hear from the liberal Democrats. The American people will not hear the liberals talk about the report from the President's Medicare trustees. They will not hear quotes from this report saying that "concerted action must be taken promptly to address" the critical problems with Medicare.

There is something else the Democrats will not be talking about.

They will not be talking about the millions of Americans who would be left out in the cold if Medicare were to go bankrupt. They will not talk about the seniors who would be unable to meet their health care needs.

Mr. Speaker, the liberals should acknowledge this report and work with Republicans to save Medicare.

## SUPPORT MEDICARE

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

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Medicare's 30th anniversary. It was approved by this great legislative body on July 27, 1965.

We sometimes take for granted Medicare and the impact Medicare has had on our seniors. Prior to Medicare, only 46 percent of our seniors had any health insurance. While those over 65 suffered the highest poverty rate, with almost a third living in poverty, today virtually every senior has health insurance. Medicare has been enormously successful in ameliorating the suffering of our seniors while providing them with the dignity of knowing that health care will be there when they need it.

As a freshman, I was somewhat perplexed and surprised by my Republican colleagues' attack on this program without offering real reform. I have recently studied the history of Medicare enactment. President Harry Truman first introduced Medicare legislation in 1952.

For 13 years until its signing in law by President Johnson, Republicans voted overwhelmingly and consistently against Medicare. Republican antipathy on Medicare remains. They continue to try to dismantle this very successful program. This Congress should work to preserve what has been successful in improving the lives of our seniors.

On Sunday, let us celebrate a happy 30th birthday to Medicare and pledge to our seniors our support in protecting this successful program.

## STRENGTHEN MEDICARE

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

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, 30 years ago Sunday, President Johnson signed Medicare into law. There are 37 million

Americans who depend upon Medicare, including my own mom and my in-laws.

According to a recent report by the Medicare trustees, the Medicare trust fund starts going bankrupt in 1996. The new congressional majority is committed to preserving, protecting, and strengthening Medicare. We need to take the best ideas from the private sector because they do a much better job at health care than the government-run system.

We should also explore other options like medical savings accounts. We need to root out the fraud and the abuse that cheats the beneficiaries out of their money. It drains the reserves of the Medicare trust fund.

Finally, we need to keep partisan politics out of the discussion of Medicare. We need to put aside our differences and all of us work together to provide the strengthening of Medicare.

## STRENGTHEN MEDICARE, DO NOT GUT IT

(Mrs. MALONEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, in defending their indefensible cuts to Medicare, my Republican colleagues say we are increasing spending on Medicare. Only in Washington, DC can a cut be called an increase. This argument ignores the real-world implications of their so-called increases.

I challenge my colleagues to talk to real seniors who are struggling financially. They, not us, are the real experts on Medicare.

Ask them whether paying \$1,000 more a year for health care is, A, an increase, or, B, a cut. Ask them if being forced into HMO's, which will limit their choice of doctors, is, A, an increase, or, B, a cut.

They will answer that they are having to pay more for less. They may have to compromise food and shelter to pay more for health care. We must hold firm on Medicare. We must strengthen it, not gut it. Medicare is the real contract with the people of America.

## SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. SCARBOROUGH. Mr. Speaker, good Lord, the spin control is going so crazy here, I think I am going to fall down. I mean, I cannot stand up much more with this.

We hear somebody saying as a freshman I was perplexed that the Republicans had disdain for Medicare. I am a freshman, and I am perplexed that a report comes out 2 months ago saying Medicare is going bankrupt and the Democrats are not going to do anything about it.

That is perplexing to me. Then we talked about Washington speak, and we have got the Democrats saying that a

spending increase from \$4,500 this year to \$6,800 7 years from now is a spending cut. Again, more spin control.

Then we get somebody coming in from my home State, Florida, saying I want to protect the senior citizens in Florida. Yet the gentleman knows it goes bankrupt 7 years from now, and every senior citizen from Florida to California is without Medicare if we follow the Democrats' path.

As a Democrat says, beam me up, Scotty, I cannot take any more. I have to hold onto this podium tight because the spin control is going crazy. Let us talk reality for a second and talk real numbers. We are willing to save Medicare, and I hope we get some help from the Democrats.

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#### REPUBLICANS NOW ENGAGED IN DAMAGE CONTROL REGARDING CUTS TO MEDICARE

(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, it is really damage control that they are engaged in. Those who are trying to cut Medicare massively are now trying to cover their tracks with deception. The majority party is now working with a group calling itself the Senior Coalition and it is passing around what they call "the Pledge to save Medicare."

Testimony from this group a few weeks ago before the Committee on Ways and Means came out in support of \$270 billion in the Republican cuts, though they did not know what was in the cuts. This pledge says: "Let's increase Medicare spending for beneficiaries, even though the \$270 billion cut would increase copayments and deductible for seniors." This so-called pledge talks about maintaining the current Medicare fee-for-service system, even though the \$270 billion in cuts would squeeze the option of fee-for-service for seniors. The majority party is on the run. There is no place to hide; surely not behind a cloud of deception.

#### NASA'S REMOTE SENSING TECHNOLOGY

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

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Speaker, earlier this month, 23,000 acres in the Scottsdale, AZ area were ravaged by terrible brush fires. The damage could have been much worse if not for a partnership between NASA and the city of Scottsdale.

Testing the applications of a new technology, called remote sensing, NASA jets flying over the blaze beamed images of the fire's hot spots via satellite to the ground. Firefighters were then able to use their limited resources

more effectively and contain the blaze days sooner than they had thought possible, thus saving property, money, and lives.

Mr. Speaker, we will vote today to continue the excellent scientific research that is being conducted at NASA, and to streamline the agency by moving mature technologies toward privatization. The way Scottsdale and NASA worked together is a wonderful example of space technology being used to improve the lives of those of us here on Earth.

#### A SORRY BIRTHDAY GREETING FOR MEDICARE ON ITS 30TH BIRTHDAY

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

Mr. DOGGETT. It is the 30th birthday of Medicare, Mr. Speaker. What we have heard again this morning are birthday greetings for Medicare recipients from our Republican colleagues. It all boils down to a single sentence: They are saying to the older Americans of this country, "If you will pay more for your health care, we will give you less health care." That is a pretty sorry birthday greeting, so they had to hire a public relations firm, and I have their report here, to tell them, "Don't talk about improving Medicare. We can't afford to raise expectations, but keep in mind that seniors are very PAC-oriented and very susceptible to being led." That is what the Republican public relations firm told them to tell older Americans.

Then they came up with a Medicare pledge from a so-called Seniors Coalition. What that pledge says is, when you read between the lines, "Raise the deductible, raise the premiums, pay more, and get less, Mr. and Mrs. Older American." That is a sorry birthday greeting for Medicare. When Lyndon Johnson signed Medicare into law, he signed a candle of hope, and we cannot have that candle extinguished by this Republican initiative.

#### THE FIRES OF MEDICARE ARE BURNING

(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, I cannot help but notice that my friend, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT], continually wants to go with budget overruns and time overruns. The fact is this: The best way to preserve Medicare is to stand now to save it, not play the old whining game of the liberals saying, "We need to spend more and more," but find a way to say "Yes, spend more money, but spend it more effectively."

My colleague, the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. SALMON], made mention of the fire in my district and the fact

that firefighters had to stand and deliver.

We have a crisis that is just as imminent as that fire. The fires of Medicare are burning. If we really want to save it, then my friends on this side, the liberals, come with us, let us work to solve the problem, and quit playing the sordid politics of the past.

#### REPUBLICAN PARTY DOTH PROTEST TOO MUCH CONCERNING MEDICARE

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

Mr. DEUTSCH. Mr. Speaker, I would say to my Republican colleagues, "Thou doth protest too much." Let me talk about specifics. I hope that the people of this country are watching and getting engaged in this debate, because the reality of the 30-year history of the Medicare system is it never had more than a 10-year actual life. In fact, at one point in time, it had a 2-year actuarial life.

The majority party has made adjustments, or the former majority party has made adjustments. In my first year in Congress in 1993, we had a \$50 billion adjustment to the Medicare system. What my colleagues on the other side of the aisle are proposing is a \$270 billion cut in Medicare, astronomical by any comparison to what had ever been done before. It was not dictated by actuarial analysis. It was dictated by their budget, and they drew that. There is no doubt they can save \$270 billion in Medicare, but the Medicare that will exist in America under the Republican plan will adversely affect 37 million people in this country. It will not be the Medicare that we know today.

#### WORKING TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. As we have heard, Mr. Speaker, the Medicare anniversary is July 30. Thirty years it has been in existence. This vital program, while it is only 30 years old, faces a very strong financial crisis. I think everybody on both sides of the aisle knows that. The Medicare board of trustees have concluded that Medicare part A, the hospital insurance trust fund, will be bankrupt in 7 years. We cannot say it any more simply. We will be unable to pay those bills for seniors.

The Republican majority will not let this happen and I am sure many of the Democrats do not want that to happen. We understand the importance of Medicare to seniors and stand ready to protect, preserve, and to strengthen this