

can strengthen, preserve, and protect Medicare.

We have heard disturbing news, however, that Medicare, as strong as it has been, as much good as it has done, could be in trouble unless we make some changes. Currently the Medicare board of trustees has reported in a bipartisan fashion to the Clinton administration that in fact, if Medicare is not preserved, protected, and improved within 7 years' time, the Medicare funds will be depleted. In fact, the hospital insurance trust fund, which pays beneficiaries' bills, begins to run a deficit in the near future. Only 2 years following the initial problems we will find there to be \$126 billion in the hole.

Republicans and some reform-minded Democrats in the House of Representatives recognize the gravity of the situation, Mr. Speaker, we know that Medicare must be protected for the sake of current and future generations. To do this, we have determined that there are six basic principles which will guide our efforts to strengthen, preserve and protect the Medicare Program.

First, we must act immediately to preserve Medicare for current retirees and to protect the system for the next generation of beneficiaries. The President's trustees have reported that the Medicare Part A Trust Fund will be bankrupt in 7 years. Medicare must be preserved and prompt, decisive action—at once—is imperative.

Second, Medicare spending will increase at a controlled rate. Under the proposed new budget, spending per beneficiary would increase at least from \$4,800 this year to \$6,700 over the next 7 years, and that includes adjustment for new beneficiaries.

Third, senior citizens deserve the same choices available to other Americans. Medicare currently gives seniors only one choice—an outdated, bureaucratic fee-for-service program that is rife with waste, fraud and abuse. Our seniors, like all Americans, deserve to choose a plan that best fits their personal needs.

Fourth, Government must not interfere in the relationship between patients and their doctors. Medicare currently dictates to doctors how to treat patients, limits patient options and worse, it has buried both the patient and the doctor under an avalanche of duplicative regulations. To succeed in reforming the system, we need to ease this burden by reducing regulation and needless paperwork.

Fifth, senior citizens should be rewarded for helping to root out waste, fraud and abuse in the system. Seniors have proven themselves to be fine stewards of public funds by frequently calling attention to fraud and abuse in the Medicare system. We need to reward their efforts to make the system more efficient. According to the Government Accounting Office [GAO], there already exists \$44 billion in fraud, waste and abuse in the Medicare/Medicaid systems.

Sixth, strengthening Medicare is too important to be left to "politics as

usual." All Americans see how important it is for Medicare to be saved. They expect Republicans and Democrats to work together to get the job done and that is exactly what we will do, Mr. Speaker.

To help find the best solutions on a local level, many of us have formed local Medicare preservation task forces, as I have in the 13th District of Pennsylvania. Our task force has taken public testimony from doctors, health care professionals, senior citizens, insurance companies, and health care consumers to suggest a course of action that we should take to preserve and protect Medicare. The task force has had four hearings, heard from dozens of witnesses and has read volumes of materials regarding possible solutions. They are drafting a report which has been prepared for my inspection on September 5 when I will have a public meeting in the district at a town meeting at Montgomery County Community College at 7 p.m. the day after Labor Day. I will present the task force report to the people of the 13th District, and thereafter, Mr. Speaker, I will transmit back to this House those suggestions so that we may make the kinds of legislative initiatives that will preserve, protect, and preserve Medicare as the outstanding health care program for our seniors which it has been.

Saving Medicare will make the 30th birthday of Medicare a happy occasion after all. By working together, Republicans and Democrats, we can save Medicare for the beneficiary of today and tomorrow, and by doing so we will insure that Medicare will have a bright future and many happy returns.

THE FAILURE TO ENFORCE ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk tonight briefly about what happened with regard to the VA, HUD, and EPA appropriations bill, and specifically the amendment sponsored by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. STOKES] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. BOEHLERT] on a bipartisan basis which was in effect turned around tonight.

Mr. Speaker, I think many people do not realize in the House of Representatives you can vote once in what we call the Committee of the Whole, which is what happened with this bill last week, and have a vote one way, but again, when the bill comes to the full House, as it did tonight, you can have the same amendment or provision, and the bill can go another way, and what happened essentially, Mr. Speaker, is that over the weekend the Republican leadership spent a lot of time trying to convince Members and get Members back here so that in fact today, when this amendment came up again, the vote went the other way, and what I

consider a very good amendment that was sponsored on a bipartisan basis by both Democrats and Republicans was defeated. The appropriations bill that we took up today essentially does great damage to the environment by including something like 17 riders, as we call them, that would prohibit expenditures of funds for enforcement of environmental protection.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected to the House of Representatives back in 1988, I believe the main reason I was elected was because I said I would come down here and try to protect the oceans and try and protect the environment. We had gone through a summer in New Jersey where we had medical waste wash up on the beaches. Our beaches were closed. People were very concerned about what the Federal Government was doing to protect the environment, particularly clean water, and we passed some major legislation over the last 7 or 8 years that increases protection of the environment not only with clean water, but clean air and a lot of other areas, and the most important aspect of that is enforcement because, if you think about it, you can pass all the environmental bills you want, you can have every environmental agency that you can possibly have, but if you do not have the money to hire people to go out and enforce the law, you might as well not have the laws on the books, and that is what we were facing here today, a bill, an appropriations bill, that cut back by one-third the amount of money that was available to the Environmental Protection Agency to enforce the law and riders, if you can call them, or provisions that were put into this appropriations bill that made it difficult, if not impossible, for the EPA to enforce environmental laws.

The amendment sponsored by the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. STOKES] and the gentleman from New York [Mr. BOEHLERT] would have changed all that and taken out these riders, and, as I said, it did pass last week, but over the weekend a lot of pressure was put on this Congress, particularly the Republican Members, to try to make sure that that bill, that amendment failed today, and it did in fact fail today.

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To give you an idea of some of the provisions that are in this bill now, without that amendment having passed, the spending package includes more than 17 substantive riders which will gut key environmental provisions by prohibiting spending for implementation and enforcement.

Mr. Speaker, let us talk about the Clean Water Act, which is so important to my district and to coastal states. Basically, the bill would bring enforcement of the existing law to a halt. It stops enforcement of wetlands protection programs. It blocks the Great Lakes water quality initiative. It bars effluent guidelines and water quality

standards. It freezes storm water permits and it also stops enforcement of sewer overflow permits. If you think of those things collectively, they add up to gutting the Clean Water Act.

With regard to the Clean Air Act, it makes the clean air operating permit program voluntary. It exempts refineries from air toxic standards. It allows full credit for ineffective auto emission inspection and maintenance programs. It exempts the oil and gas industry from accident prevention programs. It provides special treatment for cement kilns and exempts those kilns that burn hazardous waste from air toxic regulation, and it forbids trip reduction strategies in state clean air plans.

Mr. Speaker, some of these things I am providing are from an analysis put together by the Natural Resources Defense Council.

On the Safe Drinking Water Act, which is so important to so many communities in this country, the bill prohibits, on EPA's issuance of tap water standards for arsenic, a known human carcinogen, it prohibits the EPA's issuance of a tap water standard for radon and other radionuclides. Other environmental protection programs are gutted. There is a threat, essentially, to the community right to know program. It is gutted. There are major cuts in the energy efficiency program. It also revokes the Delaney clause.

Mr. Speaker, the bill essentially repeals the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act's prohibition on the use of cancer causing pesticides in foods when the pesticides concentrate in processed foods, such as in the making of apple sauce. All in all, this is a very bad piece of legislation. It is really a shame tonight that we saw the reversal on the Stokes-Boehlert amendment.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today and the balance of the week, on account of medical reasons.

Mrs. THURMAN (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today, on account of illness in the family.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mrs. SCHROEDER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MILLER of California, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MARTINEZ, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. OWENS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MONTGOMERY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SKAGGS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HUNTER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at his own request) to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. McKEON, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SENSENBRENNER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. WELLER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, on August 1.

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania, for 5 minutes, on August 1.

(The following Member to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. FURSE) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mrs. SCHROEDER.

Mr. RAHALL.

Mr. STARK.

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois.

Mr. DIXON.

Mr. HILLIARD.

Mrs. MALONEY.

Mrs. MINK of Hawaii.

Mr. BORSKI.

Mr. STOKES.

Mr. DINGELL and to include extraneous matter on H.R. 2099 in the Committee of the Whole today on the Dingell-Brown amendment.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and to include extraneous matter:)

Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut.

Mr. BAKER of California.

Mr. SCHIFF.

Mr. ALLARD.

Mr. HORN.

Mr. WAXMAN, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$3,497.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 18 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Tuesday, August 1, 1995, at 9 a.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 2 of rule XXIV, executive communications were taken from

the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

1281. A letter from the Assistant Legal Adviser for Treaty Affairs, Department of State, transmitting copies of international agreements, other than treaties, entered into by the United States, pursuant to 1 U.S.C. 112b(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

1282. A letter from the Administrator, Agency for International Development, transmitting the quarterly update report on development assistant program allocations as of March 31, 1995, pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 2413(a); to the Committee on International Relations.

1283. A letter from the Administrator, Federal Aviation Administration, transmitting the administration's final environmental impact statement [FEIS] on the effects of the implementation of the expanded east coast plan over the State of New Jersey, pursuant to Public Law 101-508, section 9119(c) (104 Stat. 1388-369); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Under clause 2 of rule XIII, reports of committees were delivered to the Clerk for printing and reference to the proper calendar, as follows:

Mr. ROBERTS: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 701. A bill to authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to convey lands to the city of Rolla, MO; with an amendment (Rept. 104-215). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. ROBERTS: Committee on Agriculture. H.R. 1874. A bill to modify the boundaries of the Talladega National Forest, Alabama; with an amendment (Rept. 104-216). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. SHUSTER: Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. H.R. 2017. A bill to authorize an increased Federal share of the costs of certain transportation projects in the District of Columbia for fiscal years 1995 and 1996, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 104-217 Pt. 1). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska: Committee on Resources. H.R. 1675. A bill to amend the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 to improve the management of the National Wildlife Refuge System, and for other purposes; with an amendment (Rept. 104-218). Referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

SUBSEQUENT ACTION ON A REPORTED BILL

Under clause 5 of rule X, the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 2017. The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight discharged.

H.R. 2017 referred to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.

TIME LIMITATION OF REFERRED BILL

Pursuant to clause 5 of rule X the following action was taken by the Speaker:

H.R. 2017. Referral to the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight extended for a period ending not later than July 31, 1995.