

preexisting conditions, which Republicans passed. The President instead proposed a complex federally controlled health care system complete with guarantees, comprehensive coverage, Federal price controls and other proscriptive rules regarding how employers and health care providers should all behave in the marketplace. This of course would mean waiting lines for all Americans, one-size-fits-all, dictated by bureaucrats.

Remarkably, the President again is talking about commissions, entitlements, and government mandates which of course can only lead to price controls.

First, entitlements. Mr. Speaker, Congress passed some very important legislation recently which gives the portability and preexisting conditions that we needed. And while the President proudly signed this piece of legislation, his campaign was eager to propose an additional initiative under which children and young adults would all be mandated with comprehensive health care by the government.

While all agree that children are a most valuable resource, the President's proposal is merely the first installment towards a nationalized socialized health care system under which the government pays for all and provides health care to all Americans.

A proposal has already been submitted to Congress to mandate that employers provide coverage to workers between the ages of 55 and 65, just prior to eligibility for Medicare. From here, it would only take a few steps to create an entitlement for the rest of the population. We should not be surprised that Senator KENNEDY argues that socialized national health care system is the ultimate goal.

Again, although the notion of federally mandated benefits was rejected during the Clinton health care reform debate, the President has already endorsed mandating a minimum length of stays in hospitals. Mandating the length of stay for illnesses such as flu. Mr. Speaker, what is next? Mandating the length of stay for cosmetic surgery?

Following the years of double-digit increases in health care spending, the cost of health care spending has finally begun to decline. Health plan premiums paid by large employers increased, on average, by a record-low 1.5 percent last year, while the premiums of certain types of managed care plans actually declined.

So here we are. We cannot guarantee that everybody gets all the benefits and all the coverages without putting in some kind of price controls. And that, of course, Mr. Speaker, is what President Clinton will propose next. Price controls, as we all know, just do not work. Quality of care will suffer as investment research and innovation declines. Jobs will be lost. Services will be rationed, and choices will decline. Eventually the government will have to take over the entire health care de-

livery system. Just think, government mandated, operated, and controlled health care with government doctors and nurses.

Mr. Speaker, President Clinton has deliberately begun to reconstruct our health care system. It is *deja vu* all over again.

VIOLENCE IN THE HOME

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I am here today, first of all, to say that over the weekend I was very pleased to hear the Speaker say he had no problem with reporting to the floor the bill that I have been pushing for a very long time. That is a bill that takes the Brady bill and says, if you are also found guilty of domestic violence abuse, you should be denied the purchase of a gun. I think all of us understand how terribly critical that is.

This bill passed unanimously in the other body, the Senate. Unanimously. Not one vote against it. The President has promised he would sign this bill if we could get it to him. He restated that promise on the train as he was coming to the convention. So, I would hope that this body would at least get that bill up there, now that the speaker has said he had no problem with it. He is the last remaining roadblock in getting that forward.

So I hope everybody joins me in sending a letter or speaking to the Speaker and getting it here before we go home. If you know the history of violence in the home, there is a tremendous number of incidents every single year where a weapon brings this to a terrible conclusion.

Furthermore, the taxpayer funds most of the damage done by those weapons because people end up in the emergency wards in America. Very often 80 percent of those costs are funded by the taxpayer. This is one of the real drivers of high health care insurance or high health care costs in this country, the fact that we have not gotten weapons brought down under control.

Mr. Speaker, while the Brady bill was originally terribly controversial, people now, I think, are in total agreement it should not be rolled back. It is proven and has stopped all sorts of people with criminal records from getting a gun. I think every American feels that criminals should not be able to go buy a gun, so that makes sense.

Our biggest problem is many States have not lifted domestic violence convictions to the level of a felony. They consider them a misdemeanor. Other States have allowed people, even though it is considered a felony, to plead guilty to a lesser crime. Therefore, when they do the checks for whether or not you should be able to buy the gun, an awful lot of people who

have been convicted of domestic violence problems are able to escape.

Again, when we look at the record, there is absolutely no reason that we should allow this to happen. So I really hope that everybody joins with me and we get that done before going home.

Mr. Speaker, we heard yesterday from both candidates a lot of discussion about crime and what they were going to do. I do not think we are ever going to solve totally the crime in the street and the violence in the society until we crack the culture of violence in the home.

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Imagine if you are afraid to be out on the street, if you are afraid to walk down the street; that is terrible, and we have to do everything we can so that Americans do not become prisoners in their home and afraid to go outdoors. But think how much worse it is, Mr. Speaker, if you are also afraid to go home because you get beat up at home, too.

I think that we have been too casual about this for much too long a time. And we have begun to make some real progress with the Violence Against Women Act, with the Brady bill, with the antiassault weapon ban, and now that we have Speaker GINGRICH saying this could go forward, I hope it does, because we need to keep making that kind of progress.

If a child sees every dispute in the home solved with violence, I cannot think of anyone who can put together a good enough conflict resolution course that they can teach in the school a couple hours a week that would change and overpower what the child learned in the home. Examples are so much more powerful.

So here is something we could do before we go home that could make a real difference. It would also save a tremendous amount of money on health care because of the costs that we see every year in our emergency rooms. I am not quite sure what we are doing here. I mean last week we hardly had any votes. September 30 is coming. That means the whole government gets shut down again.

I see us doing all sorts of namby-pamby things. Why do we not do some of these things that apparently we now have agreement?

The other thing I hope that we would be able to do after the Speaker's appearance on television this week is get the report out. He said he did not have problems with that. I would hope that we could get that done before we go home, to have issues that have been floating around this House for 2 years, that is settled, I think needs to be settled before we go home.

PREVENT GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWNS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HANCOCK). Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GEKAS]

is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, if you want to see a shutdown of Government occur again, then please ignore what I have to say for the next 5 minutes. I have been struggling for a long time now to convince the Congress that we ought to engage in a proposal which would end the prospect of Government shutdown forever. We can do it very easily.

Each of the proposals that I have offered to the Congress since 1989 has encompassed this concept. Mr. Speaker, that if at the end of the fiscal year, which is now looming upon us again as September 30, the appropriations bills have not been passed, then automatically the next day those appropriations bills that have not been passed shall automatically be passed, by virtue of instant replay, by adopting last year's numbers. That would mean that never again would we ever have a Government shutdown.

Now, what does this mean in practical terms? It means that the negotiators for the unfinished business of the Congress can continue to work on a full budget or to complete those appropriations bills, but in the meantime we would not have the chaos, unemployment, uncertainty, confusion, embarrassment and all the other negatives that accompany the shutdown of Government.

I believe that President Clinton should have signed the appropriations bills last time around, which would have prevented the Government shutdown, but it did not happen that way. But if you passed my legislation, neither the President nor the Congress would be at sword's end to force a Government shutdown.

Now, what happens if after the fiscal year is over and my bill comes into play and already there is a continuing appropriation, shall we say? That does not prevent even the establishment of a new temporary funding like a continuing resolution by the negotiators. So we have the best of all worlds. Nothing would be stopped by the proposal that I am setting forth here today. Only Government shutdown would be prevented.

I remember and many of us do that in the winter of 1990, in December 1990, as our young people, 500,000 strong, were amassing their strength in Saudi Arabia, poised to do battle to free Kuwait in Desert Shield, as it was then known, we had the embarrassment of the Government of the United States, the patrons of those valiant young people, the Government in back of those valiant youngsters, shut down here in Washington. They were in Saudi Arabia without a country. They technically had no Government back home because the Government had shut down.

That was solved, fortunately, in time for Desert Storm, so we were a country when we effected the assault on Kuwait later on. But is that not a historical

note that should bring shame on American citizens and especially on Members of Congress, that Government should shut down in the middle of hostilities?

That is just one example. Add to that the chaos in which Federal employees were put, the impossibility of getting a passport, of having national parks shut down, 100 other ills that have been brought to the floor of the House in anecdote after anecdote by both Republicans and Democrats as they followed the effects of the Government shutdown.

We have now introduced, I am ready to introduce the newest version, the latest version of my bill which we called the Government Shutdown Prevention Act. This one has several cosponsors. It follows the track of all the legislation that I have heretofore introduced. All of them, this one included, would prevent Government shutdown forever. I cannot say it enough. That is so important.

This has the added feature of saying that when the appropriations cycle ends and there is no new appropriations, then it would revert to last year's lowest number or the House-passed version or the Senate-passed version, and then you take only 75 percent of that. So 75 percent of those levels would pass automatically into law, continuing the flow of Government and allowing the appropriators and the negotiators to deal with the continuing appropriations and the balance of the budget.

I urge consideration by every Member of this legislation and invite their cosponsorship. Prevent Government shutdown.

JUNETEENTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Michigan [Miss COLLINS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Miss COLLINS of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a bill that will recognize the significance of the oldest black celebration in American history, June 19—known affectionately as "Juneteenth." This bill would recognize Juneteenth as the day of celebrating the end of slavery in the United States and as the true day of independence for African-Americans in this country.

Juneteenth is the traditional celebration of the day on which the last slaves in America were freed. Although slavery was officially abolished in 1863, news of freedom did not spread to all slaves for another 2½ years—June 19, 1865. On that day, U.S. General Gordon Granger, along with a regiment of Union Army soldiers, rode into Galveston, TX, and announced that the State's 200,000 slaves were free. Vowing to never forget the date, the former slaves coined a nickname for their cause of celebration—a blend of the words "June" and "nineteenth."

June 19, 1865, has been traditionally associated with the end of slavery in the Southwest. However, because of the importance of the holiday, it did not take long for Juneteenth celebrations to spread beyond the States in the Southwest and into other parts of the country. Today, due in large part to the hard work and dedication of individuals, like Lula Briggs Galloway and Dr. Ronald Meyer of the National Association of Juneteenth lineage, who have fought hard to revive and preserve the Juneteenth celebration, the holiday is celebrated by several million blacks and whites in more than 130 cities across the United States and Canada. In Texas and Oklahoma, Juneteenth is an official State holiday.

As we prepare to revitalize the observance of Juneteenth as the true day of independence for African-Americans, it is important that we acknowledge the historical as well as political significance of the celebration. We must acknowledge, for example, that while the slaves of Texas had cause to celebrate the news of their freedom on June 19, 1865, the truth is that at the time of General Granger's historical pronouncement, the slaves were already legally free. This is because the Emancipation Proclamation had become effective nearly 2½ years earlier—on January 1, 1863.

From a political standpoint, therefore, Juneteenth is significant because it exemplifies how harsh and cruel the consequences can be when a breakdown in communication occurs between the Government and the American people. Yes, Mr. Speaker, the dehumanizing and degrading conditions of slavery were unnecessarily prolonged for hundreds of thousands of black men, women, and children, because our American Government failed to communicate the truth.

As Juneteenth celebrations continue to spread, so does a greater appreciation of African-American history. We must revive and preserve Juneteenth not only as the end of a painful chapter in American history—but also as a reminder of the importance of preserving the lines of communication between the powerful and powerless in our society.

Juneteenth allows us to look back on the past with an increased awareness and heightened respect for the strength of the African-American men, women, and children, who endured unspeakable cruelties in bondage. Out of respect to our ancestors, upon whose blood, sweat, and tears, this great Nation was built, the bill I introduce today acknowledges that African-Americans in this country are not truly free, until the last of us are free.

The bill I introduce today, Mr. Speaker, recognizes June 19, 1865, as a day of celebrating the end of slavery in America and as the true day of independence for African-Americans in this country.

I ask all of my colleagues to cosponsor this bill.