

From my hometown of San Diego, CA, alone more than 120 people organized by the Children's Advocacy Institute at the University of San Diego will be attending this event.

The Stand for Children will address the critical issues facing America's children, including drugs, violence, and poverty.

Ironically, children in America are also under attack by the very institution that should be protecting them from these evils, the U.S. Congress. This 104th Congress is waging a stand against children.

The Republican majority, with the so-called pro-family agenda, has pretended to extend its protective hand toward America's youth, when in reality it has not given our children a fair shake. This majority has voted repeatedly to slash funding for children's programs, including education, student loans, child nutrition, health care for children, child protection services such as foster care, and aid for disabled children.

This agenda threatens not only the education and well-being of our Nation's children, it puts the future of America at risk. If our children do not receive a quality education, proper nutrition, and a nurtured upbringing, then American businesses will not be able to compete in the global economy.

Congressional Democrats have worked with President Clinton to fend off the onslaught of these cuts. This year we successfully restored most of the education cuts proposed by Republicans in their 1996 budget, and the President vetoed many damaging cuts in children's programs contained in the so-called welfare reform and budget reconciliation pills.

I would have hoped that Republicans learned a lesson from their failure to cut children's programs in this year's budget but, sadly, they have not. Their proposal for fiscal year 1997 would cut many of the same programs that were on the chopping block last year. This month 221 House Republicans voted for the 1997 budget resolution which would cut funding for education and training programs by 22 percent over the next 6 years.

Here are the specifics of what the majority whip called the pro-choice or the pro-education or the pro-child Congress:

A 6-year freeze in title I funding for aid to local schools, resulting in a 20 percent cut by the year 2002.

A 6-year freeze for Head Start, resulting in a 20 percent cut by 2002.

Elimination of the Goals 2000 public schools reform which currently helps 5 million students in more than 8,000 schools across the country raise their academic achievement.

Their proposal eliminates all Federal funding for bilingual and immigrant education.

It eliminates new funding for Perkins student loans which provide low-interest financial assistance to thousands of college students, and eliminates the di-

rect loan program which helps 2.5 million students receive college loans more quickly and less expensively than traditional loans.

It eliminates AmeriCorps, the national service program that gives 200,000 young people the chance to serve their communities while earning money for college.

And it cuts 20 percent in funding for our Nation's libraries.

This is what the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DELAY] called the pro-children's Congress. Republican cuts in other programs would also threaten the well-being of our children.

By cutting Medicaid by \$72 billion over 6 years, they jeopardize the Federal guarantee of coverage to thousands of low-income children. And by allowing the wealthy to opt out of the health care system through the use of medical savings accounts, they risk causing a further decline in coverage and services for poor families and children.

The Republican budget would also cut spending for school lunches, foster care, aid to disabled children and youth crime prevention programs.

It is time for Republicans to realize that the American people will not tolerate massive, irresponsible cuts that failed earlier this year. Our children deserve better. We must give our children the assistance and support they need for a successful future.

Mr. Speaker, let us all stand for children.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. FILNER. I yield to the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. VENTO. I thank the gentleman for yielding. I want to commend him for his statement. I also want to point out that under the rubric of welfare reform the Republican proposals cut SSI, programs that go to children with various types of disabilities such as cystic fibrosis and multiple sclerosis, actually cutting those benefits by 25 percent. This is all under the rubric of welfare reform.

This welfare reform is a good bumper sticker slogan, but when we peel off that bumper sticker and look at what is behind it, we have got cuts in school lunches, we have got cuts in terms of various types of nutrition programs. We have got cuts in terms of child care. This, mind you, all under the rubric of welfare reform.

Of course under welfare reform we all know the proposals that have been put forth for a teenage parent that has another child. That child would get no support. Some help in terms of a child-friendly Congress, taking it out on the child that is born to a teenage mother.

Mr. FILNER. Let us all, again, stand for children.

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

[Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear

hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

NOMINATING LEONEL MOREJON ALMAGRO FOR NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. DIAZ-BALART] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow morning approximately 60 members of this House, including the Speaker, will be sending a letter to the Nobel Committee of the Norwegian Parliament, the entity that designates the winners of the Nobel Peace Prize, to nominate Leonel Morejon Almagro, the National Delegate of the Concilio Cubano, the Cuban Council, an umbrella of over 140 pro-democracy groups in Cuba, for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mr. Morejon Almagro is at this time a political prisoner at the State security prison at Villa Marista in Havana. Mr. Morejon Almagro is a 31-year-old attorney who was dismissed from his position as a lawyer because of his defense of numerous political prisoners in court. In 1986 he founded NaturPaz, Nature Peace, a peaceful environmental group that was prohibited by the Cuban dictatorship. Shortly after its founding, NaturPaz supported a ban on all nuclear weapons testing in the world. In 1991 he was detained by Cuban State Security for organizing a peaceful demonstration in front of the UNESCO office in Havana to protest the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the environmental destruction that it caused.

In 1986 and 1987, Mr. Morejon Almagro, at great personal risk, taught ecology and pacifism to students in school and criticized Cuban involvement in the Angolan and Ethiopian conflicts.

He played a decisive role this year in the formation of Concilio Cubano, as I stated, a coalition of over 140 peaceful pro-democracy organizations in Cuba. And he was elected a National Delegate of Concilio Cubano on February 10, 1996. He was arrested 5 days later, charged with resisting authority, and sentenced to 6 months in prison. He began a hunger strike after his arrest and his mother told independent journalists in Cuba that she feared for his life and believed that he was being subjected to psychiatric torture, including electroshocks. Upon appealing his sentence, Mr. Morejon Almagro was resented to 15 months instead of 6 months imprisonment. He has been declared a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. The National Vice-Delegates of Concilio Cubano also remain in prison to this day, Lazaro Gonzalez and Mercedes Parada Antunez, the latter in a hospital. The regime stated that she would be subjected to surgery and has not specified what it has meant by that.

Just as Aung San Suu Kyi, the Burmese dissident leader, received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991, and before

that, Desmond Tutu in 1984 and Lech Walesa in 1983 and Andrei Sakharov in 1975 and Martin Luther King in 1964, Mr. Morejon Almagro at this time deserves the Nobel Peace Prize. He represents, Mr. Speaker, an entire new generation of Cubans which is fighting from within the totalitarian nation to achieve freedom and the reestablishment of democracy. That is why Castro fears Leonel so much.

By awarding him the Nobel Peace Prize, not only would the great work of Mr. Morejon Almagro be duly recognized, in this way hopefully contributing to his physical protection at this extraordinarily difficult time of political imprisonment, but also the important work of the entire internal opposition in Cuba would be honored. The importance of all who risk their lives by being members of Concilio Cubano as well as the rest of the internal opposition and the independent journalists in Cuba would all be recognized by the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Leonel Morejon Almagro.

With regard to the independent press, Mr. Speaker, just a few days ago, perhaps the most well known independent journalist in Cuba, Rafael Solana, was put on an airplane and expelled, sent to Madrid where he very reluctantly arrived, vowing to continue his work and of course to return as soon as Cuba is free.

Olanse Nogreras, another well-known independent journalist, was picked up just hours ago by State Security. The repression is intensifying in an extraordinary manner within Cuba.

We must fight and with this nomination of Leonel Morejon Almagro for the Nobel Peace Prize, we are fighting against the great conspiracy of silence that exists in the international community against the Cuban tragedy, Mr. Speaker. This conspiracy of silence will be grasped in all its magnitude only when Castro is history and all the political prisons are opened.

The true story of the Cuban tragedy is really not being focused upon. Humberto Real, a Cuban patriot, has been sentenced to death by the dictatorship in the last weeks but the Cuban people continue to struggle.

That is why I am proud of my colleagues who joined me in signing this letter today in nomination of Mr. Morejon Almagro for the Nobel Peace Prize, and of course our struggle will continue because it is very just and necessary.

□ 2230

ECONOMIC SECURITY FOR FAMILIES

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, as has been mentioned earlier by our colleagues, on Saturday, the Children's Defense Fund will hold a Stand for Children event where people from all over the country will be traveling to Washington to participate. I, myself, am proud to say that from San Fran-

cisco and from all over California, indeed, we will have a very large contingent participating.

That stand for children is one that we must make every day of the year in the Congress of the United States. As a member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Health, Human Services and Education, I have been actually bowled over by the size of the cuts in the budget for children's initiatives that had been put forth both last year and which we anticipate because of the budget resolution allocations to come down this year.

I rise tonight, Mr. Speaker, to talk not just about children, but the families that they live in, because when we talk about children, we not only talk about their health, education, and well-being, but we also talk about the economic security of their families. We talked about this last week when we made the fight successfully to increase the minimum wage, dragging this House kicking and screaming to a place where we could hold our head up a littler higher to pay fair wages to the American worker.

But also part of the economic security of American families are the issues of Medicare and Medicaid, which once again take severe cuts in the budget proposal that passed the House tonight. That is why our colleague, the gentleman from Minnesota, Mr. MARTIN SABO, put forth a motion to instruct. His motion to instruct was for us to instruct conferees to accept the higher discretionary levels in the Senate bill in order to avoid another government shutdown; to accept the higher levels in the Senate bill. He is talking about the Domenici numbers, Republican numbers in the Senate side. Even the Senate Republicans reject the severe cuts that are being proposed on the House side.

Another part of the Sabo motion to instruct was to retain protection for seniors against excess charges by health care providers in Medicare and also to retain Federal standards for nursing homes. Of course, and sadly, our Republican colleagues voted down this motion to instruct to agree to the Republican Senate numbers and, instead, to retain the House severe cuts.

The budget resolution allocations have created the same basic conflict that led to two Government shutdowns and 13 continuing resolutions in the battle over 1996 spending. Why would we want to do that again?

In regard to protecting health care for seniors, the House version of the budget resolution retains essentially the same Medicare policies that were vetoed by President Clinton in the reconciliation bill. Further, the House budget resolution does not protect seniors from the draconian Medicaid policies that were passed in the House last year.

I would like to review, Mr. Speaker, some of the provisions that we are fighting. The Republican record on senior citizens in the 104th Congress in-

cludes eliminating doctor and hospital choice by forcing seniors into Medicare managed-care plans. The GOP plan would allow doctors to charge extra out-of-pocket costs to seniors who remain in Medicare fee-for-service. The GOP plan would severely cut Medicare and Medicaid hospital funding, forcing many to close their doors on seniors. And the Republican plan would eliminate coverage guaranteed for over 4 million elderly Americans who need nursing home care. The Republican plan further erodes Medicare solvency by creating wealth-healthy plans, leaving many seniors with higher costs and less care.

Does this sound familiar? We fought this fight last year. The Democrats in the Congress and the President of the United States stood firm against this assault on the economic and personal security of America's seniors and, therefore, America's families.

The Democrats prevented the Republicans last year from doubling Medicare part B premiums, from attempting to eliminate doctor choice, from cutting Medicare premium assistance for low-income seniors, from repealing Federal nursing home quality standards and putting homes and family farms of elderly couples at risk for nursing home care, and we kept them from forcing adult children to be financially liable for their parents' nursing home bills.

This is important because all of the seniors that we talk about have contributed to the strength and the success of our country. How many times have we seen our colleagues come to the floor, including this evening, sing the praises and the contributions that have been made by various senior citizens in their districts and turn right around and cut Medicare and Medicaid to assist those seniors in their older years?

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to pay close attention and the American people to pay close attention to these cuts which will affect their lives very directly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MILLER] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

WELFARE BILL THEATRICALS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the theatrics in which the majority leader engaged in the few minutes before the closing of this Congress tonight again provide America an indication of what is wrong with this Congress.