



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 104th CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

Vol. 142

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1996

No. 82

House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m.

The Reverend Travis Barrick, Koinonia Christian Fellowship, El Cajon, CA, offered the following prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, there are many in this room who pray for illumination, that they might answer the sacred trust bestowed upon them. May You grant them the mercy of Your wisdom.

Dear Lord, we pray for this wonderful class of pages on their last day here, who have so faithfully served in the Halls of a government that is by, of, and for the people.

Dear God, answer the weakness of our covenant with You, that we may make the whole Earth a little more like heaven in our day, and to protect it from the hell that would be brought upon us by the adversary.

Earnestly we pray, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. DOGGETT led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, an-

nounced that the Senate had passed a bill and concurrent resolution of the following titles, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1406. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Army to convey to the city of Eufaula, Oklahoma, a parcel of land located at the Eufaula Lake project, and for other purposes; and

S. Con. Res. 63. Concurrent resolution to express the sense of Congress that the Secretary of Agriculture should dispose of all remaining commodities in the disaster reserve maintained under the Agricultural Act of 1970 to relieve the distress of livestock producers whose ability to maintain livestock is adversely affected by disaster conditions existing in certain areas of the United States, such as prolonged drought or flooding, and for other purposes.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain ten 1-minute on each side.

TRIBUTE TO THE GEORGIA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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

Mr. BARR of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, the Georgia School for the Deaf in Cave Spring, GA, this year celebrates a 150-year heritage of service and education to deaf and hard-of-hearing children from all across Georgia. This exceptional school serves children aged 3 through 21, and strives to meet the needs of deaf students through an atmosphere that reflects their self-worth, their integrity, and their ability to communicate.

The teachers and staff at Georgia School for the Deaf are among the most dedicated and caring people you will find anywhere; in any community; in any State. You only have to talk with them for a minute to feel the love they have for these young people. We

must do everything we can to foster and preserve the environment they and their predecessors have built and nurtured at this fine facility in Cave Spring, GA.

It is an honor for me to represent this community, this school, and these people, in this Congress. I salute Georgia School for the Deaf on 150 years of service to our children, and wish them well in the coming years.

To 16-year-old Erickson Young, who daily focuses his attention on this assembly, my hope is that you will stand before this body someday, supported by a solid foundation of education and encouragement found at the Georgia School for the Deaf, in Cave Spring, GA.

CHINESE-AMERICAN RELATIONS

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, China arrested American businessman William Chen. Chinese spokesmen said, "We suspect this American of illegal imports and his actions were not honorable."

Honorable, Mr. Speaker? China steals American products, China violates every trade law we have. China illegally ships guns to this country for our streets and they talk about honor?

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Is it any wonder we have a \$40 billion trade deficit with China? What is our program? When it comes to trade, China puts Americans in jail and the White House rewards China with most-favored-nation trade status. If this is the way to run a country, someone tell me what the secret plan is.

DAY 53

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



Printed on recycled paper containing 100% post consumer waste

H5937

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, small business continues to get the cold shoulder from the Clinton administration.

Recently, I introduced the Small Business OSHA Relief Act. Seventy-five of my colleagues have cosponsored the bill. The bill is entirely made up of provisions that the Clinton administration at one point or another claimed to support. And it would give some needed relief to small business from an agency which is too often unnecessarily adversarial and lacking in common sense.

I wrote the Secretary of Labor on April 15 asking for his comments on the bill. I hoped that he would support it, since it is entirely taken from his and the President's statements of relief they claimed to support for small business.

Well, here we are on June 5 and we still have not even received a response from the Secretary of Labor. I realize that relief for small business from OSHA's excesses does not rank very high on the priority list of the Secretary of Labor. In fact, I don't think that small business concerns are on his priority list at all.

But I guess I shouldn't be surprised that the Secretary of Labor shows no interest and support for legislation to help small business. After all, this administration talks a good line, but does not back up its words with action.

INCREASED OUT-OF-POCKET LIABILITY FOR SENIORS

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to point out that the Republican Medicare plan would drastically increase out of pocket costs for seniors citizens. Basically, it is the same thing we had last year. Last year the Medicare bill the Republicans passed doubled the Medicare part B premium from \$46.10 in 1995 to about \$89 in 2002. It would have increased the Medicare premium by \$440 per couple per year. Well, that did not work so now the Republican leadership comes up with another proposal.

This year the new Republican proposal would allow doctors to overcharge seniors for standard medical procedures. According to the Physician Payment Review Commission, a non-partisan panel of experts that advises Congress, this could leave beneficiaries exposed to substantial out-of-pocket liability in the range of 40 percent of their Medicare bill.

Under the Republican plan, a senior needing major surgery, for example, could end up facing thousands of dollars in medical bills which neither Medicare nor Medigap policies would cover. So once again the Republicans are substantially increasing out-of-pocket expenses for seniors. That is what their Medicare plan is.

SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, Medicare needs to be rescued, yet the President and the Democrats prefer to save their own political futures. Millions of seniors will lose their health care benefits if the Medicare system goes bankrupt, yet Bill Clinton and the Democrats would rather scare seniors about plans to protect it.

The Medicare trustees have concluded that Medicare is going broke faster than previously thought, yet Bill Clinton has done nothing to save it. Medicare would not be around for the next generation, yet Bill Clinton runs millions of dollars of ads attacking the Republicans for trying to find ways to preserve it.

Mr. Speaker, who is being responsible when it comes to Medicare, and who is being irresponsible? The answer, to me, is obvious. The White House has taken demagoguery to a new level. They have scared seniors to secure their own political futures.

Mr. Speaker, that is wrong. I urge the White House to change their tactics and join with the Republicans in saving Medicare.

SAVE MEDICARE ONCE AGAIN

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

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, in answer to the gentleman from Texas, I would like to know why the radical Republicans under the Speakership of NEWT GINGRICH still are proposing to cut Medicare in order to give big tax breaks to the wealthy? Yes, they lost last year. The President vetoed the bill. Now they are trying again.

Look at their budget. We can see what NEWT GINGRICH says right here. He said it publicly, we are going to let it wither on the vine. We will not cut it this year, but in 7 years it is going to be gone.

Not only NEWT GINGRICH, but what about the Presidential nominee, BOB DOLE? BOB DOLE is very proud of the fact: I was there fighting the fight, voting against Medicare 1 out of 12 because we knew it would not work in 1965.

Yes, they want to get rid of Medicare. That is their whole proposal, and it is not just to get rid of it, it is to give tax breaks for the wealthy. That is where they will get their money.

I say to the American public and I say to the Members of this House, we are not going to do it this year either.

IT IS TIME FOR ACTION TO SAVE MEDICARE

(Mr. DOOLITTLE asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOOLITTLE. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Medicare Board of Trustees, made up entirely of Clinton administration appointees, reported that Medicare is going bankrupt sooner than expected, now projected to be by early in the year 2001.

Last year the Republicans led the fight to save this system with a Medicare Preservation Act. This act increased benefits, attacked waste and preserved Medicare for future generations, and it put the program in sound financial condition.

In that plan we proposed increasing per-person spending by over \$2,000 per year over the course of the next 7 years. But the President vetoed the plan.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the trustees showed yet again it is time for action to save Medicare. Let us hope that the Congress and the President will act cooperatively to save Medicare while there is still time. As the trustees write in their own report, "prompt, effective and decisive action is necessary."

IMPACT OF MEDICARE AND MEDICAID CUTS ON HOSPITALS

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

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to send a warning to my colleagues who believe that Medicare and Medicaid reductions will not reduce the availability of affordable quality health care for millions of low-income children, senior citizens and the disabled.

I would direct all of my colleagues to an article in the June 4 New York Times which illustrates the impact on private hospitals of Medicaid reductions and the explosion of managed care. The result is that many hospitals are in serious financial danger and will ultimately close.

My warning to other Members is to think about their own districts and States. If hospitals in New York can close even before the full implementation of a \$158 billion reduction in Medicare and a \$72 billion reduction in Medicaid, what are the implications for the other States? New York has always taken pride in the level of investment in health care. Can other States make the same claim?

I recognize the need to control Medicare and Medicaid spending, but the Republican budget proposal goes well beyond fiscal responsibility and will result in a reduction in health care services. We can help encourage greater efficiency in hospital operations, we can help encourage the lack of overutilization in hospitals and we can encourage savings, but New York hospitals closing should sound a warning bell to all Members of Congress.