

The Jewish Federation of Greater Rockford is commemorating Remembrance Day by paying tribute to the "Righteous Gentiles," those non-Jews who risked death to help save the lives of Jews and others from Hitler's killing machine. These courageous people acted out of a conviction that they simply could not stand by and witness so great a crime perpetrated against fellow human beings. We are privileged to have one of those surviving Righteous Gentiles, Irene Opdyke, addressing the Jewish Federation of Greater Rockford, IL.

COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ACT

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

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, in our Nation's inner cities, minority communities are being victimized by toxic polluters, creating an environmental crisis, a health crisis, and a civil rights crisis in this country.

In my district in New York there are over 2000 industrial facilities, a radioactive storage yard and a huge sewage treatment plant. The effect of this pollution is discriminatory. The children in my district are dying of cancer, suffering from asthma, and have toxic levels of lead.

Study after study has shown that minority communities bear the brunt of toxic pollution in this country. Today I introduced the Community Environmental Equity Act, which will apply title VI of the Civil Rights Act to toxic polluters. I urge you all to cosponsor this important legislation. It is time to realize that we cannot have social justice until we first have environmental justice.

□ 1115

A CALL FOR BIPARTISAN MEDICARE REFORM

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

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, the Medicare trustees released their report last week and issued a warning that the Medicare System will be bankrupt in 4 years. When I tell seniors back in my district of that and when I tell my own mom and dad of this, they ask me, how can this be? They say, my husband and I contributed into the system every year since 1965. How could the system be going bankrupt?

Perhaps the best response would be that you should ask those who created the system why they created a system that has brought us to this point. But that aside, the answer lies in the fact that Medicare is a pay-as-you-go system. Your contributions do not go into a fund for your use. The contributions you made during your working years

go to support those who are ahead of you, those who have already retired. When you retire, money from the current workers, not money from your contributions, will pay your benefits.

So where do we go from here? We need to sit down and in a bipartisan manner decide how to reform the system and make it solvent. There is no other choice for our seniors in America today.

AN 11TH COMMANDMENT FOR CONGRESS: WE SHALL START TO WORK NOW ON ISSUES THAT ACTUALLY MATTER TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

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

Mr. BLAGOJEVICH. Mr. Speaker, recently I voted in favor of a resolution supporting the Ten Commandments. I voted in favor of a resolution to study the economy of American Samoa. I voted for a resolution banning Federal funding for physician-assisted suicide, even though assisted suicide is not legal at all. In fact, let me firmly assert, I am against Federal funding for any activities that are not yet legal.

But is it not time, Mr. Speaker, that we started working on issues that are more important to people, things like making student loans more available and affordable, or providing health care for the 10 million American children without it? We should be working to make our streets safer. And what about our crumbling schools, many of which were built before World War II? When will we address the long-term health of Medicare and Social Security?

Why does this Congress not agree to an 11th Commandment: We shall start to work now on issues that actually matter to the American people.

LET US WORK TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I was raised by my grandparents, and then by a great-aunt who lived on her Social Security. They relied upon Medicare for health care. Mr. Speaker, when I ran for Congress last year as a Republican, one of the things that was important to me in my campaign was to make sure that Medicare was preserved and protected for future generations, as well as for this generation of seniors. We Republicans campaigned to save Medicare, while our opponents accused us of trying to destroy Medicare instead of trying to save it.

Last week, the President's own Medicare Trustees came forward with a report that validated every single thing Republicans said last year about Medicare. There is one lesson I have learned, Mr. Speaker, during the cam-

paign of last year: It does not take courage to scare seniors about Medicare. It does take courage to save it for this generation of seniors and for all of those who will rely upon it in the future.

I hope now we can put the partisan nonsense and scare tactics aside, and work together to save a worthy program.

THE WIC PROGRAM IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ESTATE TAXES

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, important new research has indicated that the first 3 years of a child's life are absolutely critical. They determine his future life successes, brain development, and the likelihood of becoming a productive citizen. That is why I find it strange that my Republican colleagues would eliminate 180,000 American women and children from the WIC Program.

The WIC Program is an important nutrition program to help poor people have adequate nutrition. We are not talking about estate taxes, and no, we are not talking about capital gains taxes, we are simply talking about healthy food, milk, vegetables, fruits, the things Members would like for their family.

We as Americans ought to practice true family values, and that means putting our funds behind a program that has proven to be successful. That is the WIC Program. The WIC Program can guarantee that every young child in America gets a healthy start. That is the first step in leading a productive life.

I cannot understand why they think estate taxes are so important but do not think a healthy meal is equally important.

SUPPORT THE \$500-PER-CHILD TAX RELIEF AND OPPOSE THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN FUND

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, we just heard that the Republicans were trying to eliminate people on women and children fund. We have opposed increasing the number. Let me tell the Members the reason why. In Kansas right now, a family of four making \$28,000 a year is eligible to receive benefits from the women and children fund. This is 180,000 people who would receive about \$300 per year if they did qualify for the WIC Program.

However, if Members would just give them a little relief in their tax structure, like a \$500-per-child tax credit, they would actually get more money. Instead of getting \$600 per year for those two children, they would actually get \$1,000 per year. It would be money they could control.

The difference in philosophies here is that the other side of the aisle would like to control how people run their lives and what they have to do with their money, but the Republicans trust people. They want them to have more of their own money to meet the needs that their children have, because who best would understand what a child needs, other than its parents?

So I would support the \$500 per child tax relief and oppose the women and children fund.

CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS OPPOSES A SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS BILL WHICH THROWS WOMEN AND CHILDREN OFF WIC

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

Ms. WATERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus to voice the strongest possible opposition to the supplemental appropriations bill voted out of committee last week. If passed, this bill would throw 180,000 women and their children off the vital special supplemental food program for women, infants, and children known as WIC. The WIC program is widely regarded as the single most successful social program the Federal Government runs, allowing hundreds of thousands of women and children to avoid the disaster of hunger.

The administration requested \$76 million just to maintain the current level of WIC participation for 360,000 women and children, but the Republicans cut this bare-bones minimum request in half, slashing the request to \$38 million. This is a terrible and vicious attack by the Republican majority on nearly 200,000 caring mothers and their precious children.

This supplemental appropriations bill must provide the minimum \$76 million needed to keep these families from hunger.

DEMOCRATS CONFUSED ON WIC FUNDING PROPOSAL

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it appears that the Democrats are confused again. There is nothing unusual there. But on the WIC program, I do not know if they have read the bill. Had they read the bill, they would know that WIC is fully funded at \$3.7 billion, a historic all time high for WIC, funded by the Republican majority in Congress. I will send them a copy of the bill if they want it. Where their confusion lies is that they are using 1994 census records when they say that WIC is not fully funded.

At least in my part of the country, it is 1997. We do not have 1996 records but

we do have 1995 records, and they confirm that WIC is fully funded. Democrats, there is no reason, even for political purposes, to use 1994 records.

Second, there is a \$100 million carry-over of unused WIC funds right now, \$100 million in unused funds sitting in reserve for WIC.

Third, the President of the United States has said welfare is down 15 percent. If welfare is down, why do Democrats insist on an emergency basis on increasing welfare funding? Again, Mr. Speaker, the Democrats are confused. What else is new?

HIGHER EDUCATION AND TRAINING MEAN HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT AND BETTER JOBS

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

Mr. FORD. Mr. Speaker, on April 24 the U.S. Department of Education released a study that has serious implications for the state of our economy and for the welfare of all Americans. The study found that education and training are strongly associated with higher productivity and higher paying jobs. College graduates, according to the study, earn 50 percent more than high school graduates, and twice more than that of high school dropouts.

Workers who improve their skills through job training have higher earnings, as do those who have a record of higher academic achievement. One of the more disturbing findings, Mr. Speaker, is that the leading productivity of the United States has enjoyed for decades may be slipping because we are not doing a good enough job in educating our children, we are not equipping them with the tools they need to be viable job holders in the global marketplace.

Today it is more important than ever that we provide our people with the skills they need to keep America competitive going into the next century. When "A Nation at Risk" was released in 1983, it sent a wake-up call to the Nation. At every level of government, we renewed our commitment to education to conquer the rising tide of mediocrity and education that threatened our national and economic security.

Today, Mr. Speaker, we have a choice. We can turn our backs on our human capital or invest in our future and inspire our young people for the challenges they and all people will face in this next century.

DISASTER AWAITING THE SPACE COAST

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, a medical colleague of mine, Dr. Vince Griffith, came up here with his daughter, Stacey, to testify before the

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure about a tragic accident on Florida's Highway U.S. 192 that robbed them of a wife and mother.

Dr. Griffith awoke the next day in the hospital with his daughter next to him. Stacey's intestine was ruptured and her spine was snapped. His wife had died of massive internal injuries. This brave father and daughter joined Robert Lay, who supervises Brevard County's Emergency Management Office, in telling the panel how important it was to widen U.S. 192.

Mr. Lay talked about the disaster awaiting the space coast if a major hurricane strikes and U.S. 192 is turned into a parking lot trapping tens of thousands of fleeing residents. I am grateful to all of these witnesses, but I am especially proud of Stacey Griffith, who is partially paralyzed and overcame her own fear to testify before Congress. I congratulate them and thank them for the hard work they are doing on behalf of the people of the space coast.

REDUCTION OF TOP RATE ON CAPITAL GAINS TAX

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as I listen to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle talk about very important programs designed to help those who are truly in need, I am going to mention something that actually could, I believe, do probably more than any of those things that have been talked about to help those who are truly in need; and, yes, it is a reduction of the top rate on the capital gains tax.

Now we had a study done not too long ago by the Institute on Policy Innovation, which found that if we could reduce that top rate, as H.R. 14 does, our bill that we introduced on the opening day, to 14 percent, we could, in fact, increase the average take-home pay for a family by \$1,500 a year.

Now so often people have in the past talked about this capital gains tax rate reduction as being nothing but a tax cut for the rich. But people are finally realizing that if we could allow those literally millions of American families who own mutual funds or other appreciated assets to see a reduction on that top rate, it would, in fact, improve the standard of living for all Americans.

ADOPTION PROMOTION ACT OF 1997

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 134 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 134

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XXIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the