

I am a cosponsor of that bill and I am very proud to do so, because after all, if it is good for America, it really should not matter whether it is a Democratic or Republican idea. I am proud to say that every single Democratic Member of Congress took the same patriotic approach to Medicare subvention. They supported bringing Medicare subvention to the floor for a vote, even though the bill's sponsor is a Republican.

Why then, I ask the people on this side of the room, did every single Republican vote against it? Why did the 98 Republicans who cosponsored Medicare subvention vote against bringing it to the floor for a vote, despite a plea from the Retired Officers Association?

I will read a letter sent to me by the Retired Officers Association:

Dear Representative Taylor: Based on discussions with you, we understand that you intend to make a motion to defeat the previous question, and if successful, to offer an amendment to H.R. 2015, the Budget Reconciliation Act, to allow Medicare to reimburse the Department of Defense for care provided to Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries in the Military Health Services System, a concept we refer to as Medicare subvention. The Retired Officers Association strongly supports this initiative.

Medicare subvention is critical to help honor the lifetime health care commitment. Servicemembers were promised lifetime health care in return for the extraordinary sacrifices of a 20- to 30-year career in uniform. Now, after several rounds of base closures, massive personnel reductions, and the advent of Tricare Prime, most Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries have lost access to military facilities.

Servicemembers did not equivocate when called upon to serve this Nation during years of armed conflict. This Nation should not equivocate on its commitment to provide them lifetime access to military facilities.

This is the list, and I want to submit it for the RECORD, of the 98 Members, Republican Members of Congress, who cosponsored this measure, who will go home and tell their constituents they are for this, they want to help the military retirees, but when the chance comes, the once-in-a-year chance comes to put it into action, voted against it:

HEFLEY, WATTS, NORWOOD, ENSIGN, BONILLA, BARTLETT of Maryland, RAMSTAD, GOODLATTE, LEWIS of Kentucky, BALENGER, BEREUTER, CUNNINGHAM, HERGER, STEARNS, DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado, MORELLA, YOUNG of Alaska, DAVIS of Virginia, MCHUGH, SENSENBRENNER, REGULA, JONES, SKEEN, SCARBOROUGH, RIGGS, STUMP, MCCOLLUM, CHRISTENSEN, HAYWORTH, WOLF, MCKEON, HUNTER, BAKER, SAXTON, PETRI, SAM JOHNSON of Texas, SHAW, KIM, CALVERT, BATEMAN, SOLOMON, who voted against it in Committee on Rules and on the floor; SHADEGG, MCCREY, TIAHRT, FOLEY, PORTER, BILBRAY, PRYCE of Ohio, who voted against it in the Committee on Rules and on the floor; RILEY, POMBO, GRAHAM, BONO, CANADY, WELDON of Florida, PARKER, METCALF, WAMP.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit the remainder for the RECORD.

CAMPBELL, KELLY, HASTINGS, WA, SMITH, NJ, SMITH, TX, WICKER, CALLAHAN, KOLBE, BARTON, TX, LINDA SMITH, WA, GRANGER, LAHOOD, COLLINS, PAXON, DOOLITTLE, HANSEN, LINDER, HUTCHINSON, ROHRBACHER, HOSTETTLER, EMERSON, NETHERCUTT, DIAZ-BALART, EVERETT, WELLER, NEY, COMBEST, PACKARD, TALENT, MCINNIS, TAYLOR, NC, BOB SCHAFER, CO, GALLEGLY, SHIMKUS, HORN, CHAMBLISS, CHENOWETH, FOX, PA, and GIBBONS.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind people that this is the only chance we are going to get to vote on Medicare subvention. Do not go home for the Fourth of July parades and tell the veterans you are with them because they now know, and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD will reflect, that when given the opportunity to do something for them, or do something for NEWT GINGRICH, you voted for NEWT GINGRICH and against our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the material referred to earlier during my special order.

THE RETIRED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, June 25, 1997.

Hon. GENE TAYLOR,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Based on discussions with you, we understand that you intend to make a motion to defeat the previous question, and if successful, to offer an amendment to HR 2015, the Budget Reconciliation Act, to allow Medicare to reimburse the Department of Defense for care provided to Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries in the Military Health Services System—a concept we refer to as Medicare subvention. The Retired Officers Association strongly supports this initiative.

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Servicemembers did not equivocate when called upon to serve this Nation during years of armed conflict. This Nation should not equivocate on its commitment to provide them lifetime access to military facilities.

Medicare subvention will help honor that commitment while saving money—a “win-win” proposition for Medicare, for taxpayers and for those who served.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. NELSON,
President.

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

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

CUTTING MEDICARE BENEFITS TO THE ELDERLY TO PAY FOR TAX CUTS FOR THE WELL OFF

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

Mr. OLIVER. Mr. Speaker, the fat is in the fire. Today this House passed, with an almost unanimous vote on the part of the Republican Members, a bill that is going to cut \$115 billion out of Medicare, which is going to end up producing lower-quality health care at higher costs for my mother, for all of the Members of this body for their mothers and grandmothers and grandfathers as well.

Tomorrow we are going to end up debating the tax bill, which the Republicans paid for today by the cuts in Medicare, and in the process of passing that bill they refused to protect, to renew, to affirm the promise that had been made to our veterans of a lifetime of health care for people who had served in the military services, and that is particularly important for the 12 million or so, or the remainder of the 12 million American veterans of the Second World War.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the more things change, the more they are the same. As Yogi Berra once said, *deja vu* all over again. That is what has happened here. Throughout the 104th Congress, the fight in this House of Representatives and in the Senate was over the massive cuts in medical care for senior citizens that were virtually equivalent to the total amount of the tax cuts that were going to be given, and here we are again, cutting Medicare, and that is rather similar, very similar to the amount of dollars that are needed to pay for the tax cut that comes next.

Mr. Speaker, the President and the Congress have made a balanced budget agreement, and there are going to be tax cuts as a part of that agreement. There will be tax cuts.

But the question that we are going to be deciding tomorrow, who is it that are going to get the tax cuts? The question is, who do Members of the Republican Party care about and defend and fight for, and who do Democrats care about and defend and fight for?

Well, the Republican plan for tax cuts and the Democratic alternative tax cut plan show clearly who Republicans and Democrats care about and fight for, and we will see that very clearly tomorrow, and in the days ahead. We will see it again and again in the days ahead.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have called their tax plan good for the middle class, and they say that their plan gives tax breaks to working families who really need it. This chart tells a somewhat different story.

The Republican plan, which is the plan that is in blue, gives almost two-thirds, 64 percent, of the tax reduction to one family out of six in America, those families, the 19 million families that already earn more than \$100,000 a year. The Republican plan gives that one family out of six 64 percent of the tax reduction. Over here, the other five out of six families get 36 percent of the tax reduction, including that great middle class who have incomes between \$25,000 and \$100,000 a year, that

great middle core of the American people, the middle class in America, and they get 36 percent of the tax cut.

The further great irony about this is Member after Member from the Republican Party has stood up tonight and talked about class warfare. Well, there is nothing that shows the class warfare better than to show that graph that shows 64 percent of the tax reduction in their plan going to one family, the wealthiest family out of every six families in the country. That is the class warfare that is involved. And the great irony is here that it goes even beyond that, because if we take this group of five out of six families over there in the blue piece on the left, the part that are going to get 36 percent of the tax reduction divided among them, it turns out that two out of those five, two families out of those five whose income is less than \$25,000 a year, they are going to get nothing from the plan. That is the extent of the class warfare which is involved in this legislation which we will take up tomorrow.

TAX RELIEF FOR AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Missouri [Mr. HULSHOF] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HULSHOF. Mr. Speaker, obviously the topic of choice is the upcoming vote. I have been sitting here patiently for about an hour and a half waiting our turn for this special order and have consistently heard on the other side of the aisle about these tax breaks which we will have a chance to visit about and hopefully get the rest of the story out there, because I think unfortunately, too much rhetoric has been spewing out and we want to set the record straight.

I want to start this time that we have, Mr. Speaker, and relate to my colleagues something that happens on a regular basis when I go back to the Ninth Congressional District of Missouri. Hardly a day goes by, when I make it back every weekend, when I am not stopped at the supermarket or at the church or at some function back in Missouri, and a constituent comes up and says, Mr. HULSHOF, I am working longer, I am working harder than ever, and yet I barely have anything left over in my checkbook at week's end. When is Washington going to give me a break?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I am happy to announce that if tomorrow goes as we hope, we want the American people to know that tomorrow is the day they get a break. Tomorrow is the day that we let the American people know that we have been listening to them. We have heard them loud and clear.

I want to take these few minutes that we have, and some other colleagues in the Republican freshman class, and others to talk about some of the specifics. It is easy to paint pic-

tures with a broad paintbrush. I think we need to talk about more specifics in this tax package and why it is good for middle America, why it is good for small business, why it is good for family farms.

For too long, Mr. Speaker, Washington has continued to spend and waste billions of dollars of Americans' tax money. From midnight basketball to dance lessons for convicts to \$500 toilet seats for the Pentagon, Washington's spending has been out of control for too long. It is time for us here in Washington to spend less and to tax less. That is right. It is time for Washington to give hardworking Americans some much-needed tax relief.

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Mr. Speaker, we have over a dozen colleges and universities in the Ninth District, and a lot of times, Mr. Speaker, I am invited to address or speak to some of the political science classes at the universities; in fact, some of the middle schools, elementary schools, and high schools that I have had the great opportunity to address.

One simple question that I get, oftentimes, is what is the difference between the two parties? What is the difference between the Democrats and the Republicans? I think the answer is somewhat simple. I have been here almost 6 months, and I tell those young people, soon to be voters, that both parties believe very passionately in democracy. Both parties, I believe, honestly are trying to achieve a better America.

I just think oftentimes, though, our vision on what will get us to a better America, that is what is the difference. Probably the single greatest difference between the two parties is the fact that we Republicans deeply believe that America is an overtaxed Nation. We believe it is a matter of principle that hard-working men and women in this country should be able to keep more of what they earn. We believe it is time for Americans who happen to be tuning in tonight, that they should not have to work so hard for the government to spend so much. We believe in tax relief for every stage of one's life.

For instance, do the American people really understand that they pay more in taxes than they do for food, clothing, and shelter combined? Do the American people understand that almost half of their income goes to a government tax of some kind?

Think about that, just for a minute. In your normal daily activities, when you wake up in the morning, grab that quick cup of coffee on the way to work, you have paid a sales tax on that cup of coffee. When you drive to work, you pay a gas tax. When you are at work, you are paying an income tax. Flip on a light and you are paying an electricity tax. Flush the toilet, there is a water tax. Get home at night, you pay a property tax. If you turn on television, sometimes you are going to pay a cable tax. When you die, many of us are going to have to face a death tax.

It is just too much, and it has to stop. If we have this vote tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, we will have a much-needed step in the right direction.

Why is it, when anybody talks about allowing working families to keep more of their money—in fact, earlier tonight colleagues on the other side of the aisle said, when we were talking about keeping more of their money, they talk about ballooning the deficit, or wrecking the economy. Why is it that we never hear "It just can't be done" when it comes here in Washington to spending less of Americans' tax money? Why is it always unwise or risky if you want to keep what is rightfully yours, but it is never unwise or risky if Washington wants to spend more?

That is, Mr. Speaker, what I think we have accomplished today, and what we are going to accomplish tomorrow in this much-needed tax relief package.

I see that some of my colleagues are here, especially my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS], who has been a champion particularly as it relates to tax relief for those who are trying to make a go of it in their homes, particularly with the home office deduction. I am not sure if that is specifically what he wants to talk about tonight, but I am happy to yield to my friend, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAPPAS].

Mr. PAPPAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and for focusing on this special order and focusing on such a fundamental issue for the people of our country.

No, I want to talk about the death tax. Why I want to talk about the death tax, Mr. Speaker, is yesterday I received almost 30 letters from farmers in the Twelfth District of New Jersey, central New Jersey. Some of them, as Members can see, Mr. Speaker, were handwritten, some of them were typed, some of them obviously used laser printers, some used rather old typewriters.

But I would like to just briefly read a few of the sentences from some of them, without using any names, but I think really it describes very, very vividly what so many people in our country are feeling about their hope for the future of their farm and the opportunities that their children would have to continue the tradition of the family farm in the United States.

This is addressed to me:

Dear Congressman Pappas: My wife and I own a farm in Hopewell Township. We were originally a dairy farm, but now raise crops such as wheat, corn, and hay. Seventy years ago I was born on this farm and have been working on it all my life. It has been in our family for almost 100 years, and is our major source of inheritance to give our children.

Please repeal the Federal estate tax so all our hard work of keeping this farm will not be in vain. We want our children to have a better life without worry than we have had, because when we inherited the farm we had to pay heavy estate taxes. This should not be taxed again.

Another letter states: