

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE HOSPITAL OUTPATIENT PAYMENT EQUALITY "HOPE" ACT

HON. RICK LAZIO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. LAZIO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation to provide needed relief for our Nation's hospitals seeking redress from the Balanced Budget Act (BBA). My legislation, the Medicare Hospital Outpatient Payment Equality (HOPE) Act, addresses the Health Care Financing Administration's (HCFA) proposal to implement the Medicare Outpatient Prospective Payment System (PPS). HCFA's proposal will affect a hospital's ability to deliver outpatient services through reimbursement reductions up to 30 to 40 percent.

Under the PPS, in my home State of New York, hospitals from every corner of the State would see major reductions in their outpatient payments. Hospitals in my district on Long Island would be harmed. Hospitals in northern New York rural areas, such as the Adirondack Medical Center in Lake Placid will realize reductions totaling 16.9 percent in one year. Urban hospitals in New York's major cities, like their rural counterparts, will witness similar reductions. Mt. Sinai Medical Center, one of America's premier teaching hospitals, will see their outpatient payments cut by 37.6 percent in just one year. In fact, New York's urban hospitals are among the most severely hurt by the proposed PPS in the Nation. According to HCFA's own analysis, 19 of the top 100 hospitals in the Nation that are hurt by the proposed PPS are in New York State.

Most importantly, the HCFA proposal could harm seniors. For example, a Medicare beneficiary living in the most underserved parts of New York City receive routine, preventive health services from a local clinic. Clinics provide cost-efficient, low-cost, quality care. This patient's health care needs, under my bill, would be preserved because the clinic would be able to stay open to serve seniors.

Another example of who my bill helps is the senior living in any small town in northern New York. Under the HCFA PPS, that senior's care will be jeopardized because of inadequate reimbursements to the local emergency room and they may end up having to close their doors because of financial reasons. The closest ER, then, may be 100–150 miles away. Emergency rooms are not a profitable part of the hospital and require adequate reimbursement to care for seniors with emergency needs. If this patient needs immediate attention for a heart condition, requiring them to travel hours to the nearest emergency room is not a good way to provide care. The ERs need to be there. My bill would ensure that these ER services are available to seniors.

The outpatient reductions are due to go into effect in early 2000. I introduce this legislation today because we must take steps to ensure seniors' access to care. We must address the

inadequacies in the Medicare outpatient payment system by restoring funds to all hospitals so they can take care of our seniors. My legislation would do so through several changes.

First, the Medicare HOPE Act would implement a three-year transition to limit losses as a result of HCFA's PPS. Any new payment system must include a transition mechanism to enable hospitals to gradually adjust to the new PPS.

Second, the Medicare HOPE Act would increase payments for emergency room and clinic visits. One of the ways to help many of the essential city, suburban, and rural safety net hospitals with large losses due to the PPS is to increase payments for emergency room and clinic services. Emergency rooms provide life-saving care that is not available to Medicare beneficiaries in any other setting. These services are provided without consideration of one's ability to pay and it is essential that Medicare adequately reimburse hospitals for its share of emergency room services. Also, clinics provide many preventative and inexpensive services that monitor and manage the health status of Medicare beneficiaries. This results in lower utilization of more expensive health care services. Hospitals that have the highest share of clinic visits also treat the highest percentage of poor patients. For this reason, my legislation addresses the specific, unique needs of these hospitals.

Finally, the Medicare HOPE Act would rescind the annual 1 percent reduction in the outpatient PPS "inflation" update factor. Without this restoration, payments for outpatient services would be reduced by an additional 3 percent.

By introducing this bill today, I join many of my colleagues that have introduced or co-sponsored legislation which recognizes that America's hospitals are heavily burdened by the unintended consequences of the BBA.

My legislation helps all types of hospitals across this country because HCFA's outpatient PPS hurts many hospitals across the country. The legislation offers a solution for my colleagues seeking relief for hospitals. This legislation is endorsed by the American Hospital Association and several State hospital associations including the Healthcare Association of New York State.

I urge all of my colleagues to join me in co-sponsoring the Medicare HOPE Act.

RECOGNIZING THE 16TH ANNUAL CIRCLE CITY CLASSIC

HON. JULIA CARSON

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Ms. CARSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bestow recognition on a wonderful event in my home town of Indianapolis. This weekend, the 16th annual Circle City Classic football game will be played in Indianapolis.

The Circle City Classic is the second largest college bowl game played between two histori-

cally black colleges. It features the Hampton Pirates and the Southern Jaguars this year.

Fans attending the game enjoy not only a competitive football game, but also a highly spirited and energetic battle of the school bands at half time.

Before the game, a parade through the streets of downtown Indianapolis further delights the thousands of people who line the parade route. With the sounds of music echoing throughout the community, the atmosphere in Indianapolis during the Classic weekend is truly exciting, memorable and a true classic.

The Circle City Classic is one of Indianapolis' treasures, and is a testament to the spirit, vision, and commitment of The Indiana Sports Corporation and Indiana Black Expo.

Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to come to Indianapolis to experience the wonderful Circle City Classic.

TRIBUTE TO FRANK G. LUMPKIN, JR.

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, Fort Benning, in Columbus, GA, is an important Army base associated with many distinguished individuals over time. It has received immemorable citations for its outstanding achievements. It is the home of the U.S. Army Infantry School and the U.S. Army School of the Americas. Some call it the biggest military school in the world, because it trains over 60,000 soldiers each year. Every infantry officer, enlisted man, and non-commissioned officer in the U.S. Army trains there at least once in his career. With a military population of 21,000, Ft. Benning is the home of the 75th Ranger Regiment, 3rd Brigade—3rd Infantry Division, the 29th Infantry Regiment, as well as an Infantry Training Brigade and a Basic Combat Training Brigade.

The base is associated with many famous soldiers. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Gen. George C. Marshall, Gen. Omar Bradley, Gen. George Patton and Gen. Colin Powell served there.

However, one individual whose name has become part of the post's heritage actually had a short career as a soldier. His name, Frank G. Lumpkin, Jr., is interwoven with Ft. Benning's history. Mr. Lumpkin's name was there at the Fort's founding, and will be there into the future, for it graces the road that runs through the main post. Frank G. Lumpkin Jr. was only 10 years old when he accompanied his father to Washington in 1916. His father persuaded Congress to place a military base on the Chattahoochee. Two years later, Fort Benning was founded in connection with the Lumpkins, and that relationship remains until the present day.

Twenty-four years after that trip, Mr. Lumpkin himself served at Ft. Benning. It was

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World War II, and he was a captain in Gen. Patton's 2nd Armored division. Cpt. Lumpkin served from 1940 to 1946, but although his service in the army ended, his service to Ft. Benning did not.

In 1993, at the age of 90, Mr. Lumpkin heard the fort needed money to restore seven WW II-era buildings. Otherwise, they were slated for destruction. Mr. Lumpkin wrote a personal check for \$100,000 to save the buildings. He told the commanding general at the time, Maj. Gen. John Hendrix, that the check was bad—he didn't have the money to make it good. Yet, he did make it good over time, by helping to raise money and resources to restore the structures.

Mr. Lumpkin and his family have consistently dedicated themselves to the preservation and betterment of Ft. Benning. They are a true inspiration to the rest of us. By their faithful efforts, they have made a significant contribution to this county and to its history. I would like to enter into the record this commendation of an old soldier who may have stacked arms in 1946, but has never, in the following half century, stopped fighting to preserve Ft. Benning and its heritage.

I salute you, Mr. Lumpkin, and I thank you for your contributions.

RECOGNIZING ST. BRIDGET'S ELEMENTARY, REED ELEMENTARY, AND HENRY ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize St. Bridget's Elementary School, Reed Elementary School, and Henry Elementary School for being selected as state champions, for their achievements in the President's Challenge Physical Fitness Award Program.

The State Championship Award is presented to schools with the highest number of students scoring at or above the 85th percentile on the President's Challenge. The Presidential Physical Fitness Award is a prestigious accomplishment, and in the 1998-1999 school year more than two million children nationwide earn this award.

Mr. Speaker, physical activity is an important component of the health and development of our future generation, and I hope you will join me in commanding these schools for their dedication to quality physical education.

EXPRESSION OF DESIRE: TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE

HON. MAX SANDLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. SANDLIN. Mr. Speaker, today the Republicans continue their budgetary charade in an attempt to fool the American people into believing that they intend to save the Social Security surplus when they have already begun spending it. Their latest tactic has manifested itself in the form of a resolution "Expressing the Desire of the House Not to

Spend any of the Social Security Budget Surplus and to Continue to Retire the Debt of the Public."

The truth is, this "expression of desire" is too little, too late. If Republicans truly believed their empty promises; if they truly intended to practice what they preach; they wouldn't be on the way to spending \$27 billion of the Social Security surplus they desire to protect. The Congressional Budget Office reports that, by late summer, the Republican majority had already committed the entire \$14.4 billion non-Social Security surplus, going so far as to end up with a budget deficit of \$16 billion. As this deficit grows, the Social Security surplus shrinks.

There is an inverse relationship here, but my Republican friends on the other side of the aisle seem content with ignoring this fiscal reality and reverting to the dream world which brought us the \$800 billion tax cut package. In light of these numbers, it would surprise anyone that there would be any money left over for massive tax cuts; yet the Republicans decided to spend their entire political collateral on spending these fictional funds while the debt continues to grow and the Social Security surplus continues to shrink. They spent all their time and energy on trying to pass this reckless tax cut package while the business of the people was completely neglected. These irresponsible actions have left us in the unnecessary, otherwise-avoidable position of having to vote for a Continuing Resolution yet again to keep the government funded because the Republicans didn't fulfill their fiscal duty to the American people.

Now that the tax cut has been rightfully vetoed by the President and the American people have voiced their opposition to spending money that doesn't exist, the Republican leadership decides to "Express Their Desire . . . Not to Spend any of the Social Security Surplus." They designate funding for a census that is mandated to occur every ten years as emergency spending, thus committing themselves to dipping into Social Security, and they continue their balance sheet gimmicks, thinking they'll get away with these tactics under the guise of false fiscal responsibility by passing today's resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to vote for this resolution because I believe in it and because I believe my actions up to this point are a reflection of my commitment to saving Social Security and paying down the debt. I cannot, however, cast this vote on the resolution in question without identifying it as what it is: yet another Republican budget gimmick.

HONORING JAPANESE AMBASSADOR KUNIHIKO SAITO FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNITED STATES-JAPANESE RELATIONS

HON. DOUG BEREUTER

OF NEBRASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, His Excellency Kunihiko Saito, the Honorable Ambassador of Japan, is returning soon to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo upon completion of his assignment here. Prior to his departure, this Member wishes to recognize Ambassador Saito's extraordinary contributions to

strengthening the friendship and alliance between the United States and Japan.

It is frequently remarked that there is no more important relationship in the world today than the relationship between the United States and Japan. Today, this relationship is stronger than ever and one of the reasons for that fact is the efforts of Ambassador Saito. During the three and a half years, he so ably represented his nation here, Ambassador Saito helped our two countries navigate a series of milestones that updated the terms of our security relationship for the post-cold war era through the new U.S.-Japan Defense Guidelines and our agreement to cooperate on research on ballistic missile defense because of the threats from North Korea. Moreover, Japan's contribution as host nation support for our armed forces stationed there remains the highest in the world.

We also have deepened our cooperation through the Common Agenda, including efforts to fight disease, control narcotics, protect endangered species, and preserve the environment. And while trade frictions will always exist even among the closest of friends, Ambassador Saito has made important contributions to bilateral negotiations aimed at opening Japan further to U.S. products through deregulation and to facilitating the kind of foreign direct investment to Japan that supports our exports.

As Chairman of the Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee, this Member extends to Ambassador Saito and to the friendly, gracious and diplomatically astute Mrs. Saito, the recognition and appreciation of the United States Congress for an important job extremely well done. We wish these two good Japanese friends continued success in all future endeavors and hope for future contact.

IN HONOR OF GLORIA KARPINSKI BATTISTI

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 30, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in tribute to Gloria Karpinski Battisti, Immediate Past President, Catholic Charities Corporation Board, as she is honored for promoting her Polish Heritage through her outstanding accomplishments by the Polonia Foundation of Ohio, Inc.

Gloria Karpinski Battisti has dedicated a substantial portion of her life to helping others through social service. As an active member of the Cleveland community, Gloria Karpinski Battisti has led a remarkable career of civic, church, and ethnic service. Gloria has been involved in the Polish-American community through her position as Director of the Polonia Foundation of Ohio. She is also a member of the Polish Women's Alliance, the Alliance of Poles, and the Polish American Congress.

Through her resolute dedication and enthusiasm for helping others, Gloria Karpinski Battisti has participated and served with various groups and organizations. Most notably, Gloria Battisti served as the past Chairman of Catholic Charities. She was the first women