

they have done a marvelous job of exhibiting their athletic prowess as well as their intellect and their academic prowess. So I thank Dr. White for being with us today.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 one minutes on each side.

DOE IGNORES SCIENCE AT YUCCA
MOUNTAIN

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

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, just two days ago this chamber approved, unfortunately, \$352 million for the continued development of a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain, just north of Las Vegas, Nevada.

On that very same day, a public hearing on that project was held in Las Vegas, and at this hearing numerous experts testified that the Department of Energy's draft impact report ignored completely the basic principles of sound science. And, just to make matters worse, the Energy Department's impact report failed to follow the law requiring them to consider alternatives to Yucca Mountain for storing high level nuclear waste. And, by the way, it did not consider the dangers of transporting the high level nuclear waste across America to Yucca Mountain.

But these issues, by necessity, deal with sound science. Obviously the Energy Department is not interested in sound science.

It does not take a scientist, Mr. Speaker, to know that funding a nuclear waste storage project which lacks a sound scientific rationale is not only wasteful, but dangerous.

I yield back the trace of all nuclear waste across this country and the green garbage it leaves behind.

DERAILING HMO REFORM

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

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, after years of fighting for HMO reform, we are at the doorstep of passing meaningful patient protections. But now, just before we enact the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights, the Republican leadership is trying to derail HMO reform.

The Republican leadership has offered a plan that fails to guarantee patients the right to make medical decisions with their doctors, decisions that are free from insurance company bureaucrats. Their plan also fails to hold HMOs accountable for wrong or improper decisions, and, sadly, the only reason this plan is even being offered is

to prevent meaningful HMO reform from being passed.

The bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights is a good bill. It has broad support. If we pass this bill, then all HMO patients can have the ability to choose their own doctors, guaranteed access to emergency and specialty care, the right to make health decisions with doctors only, freedom from gag rules to prevent doctors from offering care, and the ability to hold their HMOs accountable.

Let us do the right thing. We have an historic opportunity in the next couple of weeks. Let us pass the bipartisan Patients' Bill of Rights.

A CHALLENGE TO DEMOCRATS

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

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to issue a challenge to my Democratic colleagues on the other side of the aisle. I would like for someone to explain to me whether it is your view that Republicans are extremists for wanting to limit spending and exercise fiscal responsibility or is it your view that Republicans are irresponsible for not exercising this fiscal responsibility?

Fiscally irresponsible or extreme. Which is it? I have heard both charges repeatedly in the recent weeks; and I am curious to know, for those in the party that has been dedicated to expanding government for the past 40 years to tell me what is their idea of fiscal responsibility?

I am also a bit curious to know when they think the American taxpayer should get some tax relief. After all, if one cannot make the case for tax cuts now in the face of \$3 trillion budget surpluses over the next 10 years, just what would it take to convince you that tax relief is possible?

I think it is clear that the party that wishes to limit the size of the Federal Government and the party which is careful with the taxpayers' money is the real party of fiscal responsibility. So which is it? Are Republicans extreme or fiscally responsible in our desire to limit Washington spending?

PREVENTING REAL HMO REFORM

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

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, once again our friends in the majority continue to ignore the will of the majority of Americans who have spoken out in support of a real Patients' Bill of Rights. Instead of heeding this call, the majority has again drafted their own cynical health care bill in a last minute attempt to prevent the people's bill, the bipartisan Norwood-Dingell bill, from passing.

The Republican health care bill unveiled yesterday is not real HMO re-

form, and do not believe for one second that it expands health care coverage for uninsured Americans.

The Dingell-Norwood bill, by contrast, will put doctors and their patients back in charge of health care, increase access by making sure the insured can get the medical care they need, and makes managed care plans accountable when they decide to deny care.

We must not let the opponents of the reform all our constituents asked for succeed. Support the Dingell-Norwood consensus managed care reform act.

RAIDING THE SOCIAL SECURITY
TRUST FUND

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, the President wants to raise taxes and raid the Social Security trust fund to pay for new government spending. Do not just take my word for it, look at the facts. The Congressional Budget Office scored the President's budget as a net tax increase and House Democrats support that budget and the President wants to increase spending by billions of dollars, which the Congressional Budget Office also confirms breaks the very budget caps the President agreed to and took credit for in our budget agreement.

For the past 32 years Congress has raided the Social Security trust fund to pay for more government. Republicans want to put an end to that. It is time for this Congress to stop playing by the rules established by liberal Democrats in the 1960's. Seniors in my district are surprised to hear that Congress has been routinely operating in this manner. They do not understand why politicians in Washington use retirement money for anything other than retirement. It just does not seem right. It is not right. We must stop the President's raid on Social Security.

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN AMERICA
IS NOT GETTING PASSING GRADES

(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, a new report says that 75 percent of American students cannot write a simple essay. It also says many students cannot even change a dollar bill, and many of them cannot read.

But, what is even worse, the report says these uneducated students continue to graduate. And all the experts are now looking at Congress and asking, what is Congress going to do about this?

Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. This is not about Congress; this is about parents. In the old days, kids knew their ABCs before they went to school.

I yield back all the well-intended billions of taxpayer dollars that are not

reaching home without the help of parents.

DEMOCRATS PUSH FOR TAX INCREASE

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

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, remember when? Remember when the Democrats controlled the White House and were in the majority in the House and Senate? Remember those days of spend and spend and spend? And what did they give us? The biggest tax hike in the history of our country. Why? Because they wanted to spend the money.

And remember when they were in control, how they raided the Social Security trust fund? Well, they are back at it again. Today in Congress Daily, what is on the front page? "Democrats push for a tax increase."

President Clinton's budget calls for a \$180 billion tax increase. Now House and Senate Democrats want even more in tax increases, and they also support President Clinton's budget, which calls for raiding Social Security, 40 percent of Social Security going for other programs.

Republicans say no. Let us put a stop to spending beyond our means. Let us stop the raid on Social Security. One hundred percent of Social Security for Social Security-Medicare. Let us stop the raid on Social Security. It is all about spending.

PASS MEANINGFUL MANAGED CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Republican leadership has unveiled yet another proposal they hope will derail the efforts for meaningful HMO reform. Just when a bipartisan majority has reached a consensus on real HMO reform with the Norwood-Dingell bill, the Republican leadership is once again proposing harmful provisions for Americans' health.

The American people want HMO reform. Instead of figuring out how to solve this, they just add poison pills to their proposed legislation.

For months, we have been hearing from the Republicans that a Patients' Bill of Rights will increase costs and open employers to lawsuits. Well, in my home State of Texas, we passed many of these patient protections; and we have not had any lawsuits against employers. In fact, the only increase that we have seen is the increase in prescription medication that other States have had to do. In fact, there has been no exodus of employers from providing healthcare in Texas under Texas law. What Texas residents have is health care protection and provisions that should be included in a na-

tional law. They eliminate gag clauses, open access to specialists for women and children, a timely appeals process, coverage for emergency care, and accountability for those decision makers in healthcare.

It is time to stop stonewalling and support a real Patients' Bill of rights.

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FISCAL DISCIPLINE IS FORGOTTEN WHENEVER DEMOCRATS HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE SPENDING

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, why is it the Democrats want to bust the budget caps that they themselves agreed to while at the same time they are opposed to giving tax relief to the taxpayers? On the one hand, they argue that we must relax our fiscal discipline and expand government. On the other hand, they argue that we must maintain fiscal discipline and therefore cannot have tax relief.

Leaving aside the many good arguments for tax fairness that the Republican tax relief proposal contains, let us consider what the Democrats are saying. New Washington spending, fine. Tax relief for the taxpayers, no way. Fiscal discipline is forgotten whenever Democrats have an opportunity to increase spending, but they are fiscal discipline's best friend whenever tax relief is on the table.

What is wrong with this picture? It is very simple. It is known as liberalism; never known, it must be said, for the rigor of its logic. Is there a liberal in the House that will step forward and defend their position?

HMO REFORM AND GUARANTEEING A PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

(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, I would like to talk today about changing the subject. We are having a discussion here in Congress about the patients' bill of rights. It is a bipartisan discussion in which both Democrats and Republicans agree that we need to protect patients' rights: access to specialists, emergency room coverage, coverage for all kinds of illnesses when it is needed. We need to have the right to sue if the HMO causes harm to someone's health. That is what we are talking about, but now the Republican leadership wants to change the subject.

All of a sudden, they want to talk about medical savings accounts and access to health care. They have several ideas. Some are good; some are bad. The point is, do not change the subject. The subject is HMO reform. The sub-

ject is guaranteeing a patients' bill of rights with real teeth in it.

We have a bipartisan agreement. We have the Dingell-Norwood bill that makes sense. We are having a good discussion. Do not change the subject. Let us stick with the patients' bill of rights. Let us pass a clean bill. Their ideas are not paid for. They should not be brought up in the context of this issue. Let us protect patients first, and then we will deal with some of these other issues.

WE MUST PROTECT THE SOCIAL SECURITY SURPLUS

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, let us be honest. President Clinton and his fellow Democrats believe in big government, the bigger the better. For years, President Clinton and the Democrats have increased taxes, squandered precious Social Security money on wasteful government spending. Now, thanks to fiscally responsible Republican policies, we have a budget surplus.

We tried to return some of it to the American people, the true owners, but President Clinton vetoed any tax relief for hard-working Americans. Instead, the President and the Democrats cannot resist the urge to take the surplus, go on a big spending spree and charge it to America's Social Security account. The President wants this funded with new taxes, of course. Americans do not want, need, or deserve new taxes.

Mr. Speaker, we must protect the Social Security surplus from the President.

REPUBLICANS SHOULD KEEP THEIR WORD AND HONOR FUNDING FOR THE WYE RIVER ACCORDS

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

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, later today the House will vote on the Conference Report on Foreign Operations Appropriations for Fiscal Year 2000. I will vote against the conference report, marking the first time in 21 years that I have opposed a foreign aid appropriations bill.

I am taking this action for one very good reason. The Republican leadership of Congress has refused to include money requested by the administration to fund the Wye River Accords between Israel and the Palestinians. This is one of the most irresponsible acts taken by the Congress in a very long time.

In August, two delegations of Members of the House traveled to Israel and met with Prime Minister Barak and Palestinian Leader Arafat. I headed the