

# RECOGNIZING THAT GREATER SPENDING DOES NOT GUAR- ANTEE QUALITY HEALTH CARE

## HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, in these waning days of the 106th Congress, we are considering a bill that will give back nearly \$30 billion to managed care organizations, hospitals, and health care providers. These groups argue that without spending increases, quality of health care will suffer. The assumption: more money means better care. Of course adequate funding is necessary to effectively run hospitals, health plans, and clinics—but is that all it takes to ensure quality?

In fact, greater spending does not always guarantee better quality.

I would like to call my colleagues' attention to a recent report published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* entitled, "Quality of Medical Care Delivered to Medicare Beneficiaries: A Profile at State and National Levels." This report, compiled by researchers at the Health Care Financing Administration, ranks states according to percentage of Medicare Free-for-Service beneficiaries receiving appropriate care. The researchers looked at a range of health problems, including strokes, heart failure, diabetes, pneumonia, heart attacks, and breast cancer. There is remarkable consensus in the medical community about what constitute appropriate care for these conditions. For example, health professionals agree that conducting mammograms at least every 2 years can save countless lives in the fight against breast cancer. They also agree that heart attack victims should be given aspirin within 24 hours of being admitted to a hospital.

If the claims of the managed care, hospital, and provider groups are accurate, states receiving the most Medicare spending should implement more of these scientifically validated practices. So I compared state performance rankings with Medicare payment estimates (per beneficiary). The results do not support this view. In fact, the 10 best performing states received 17 percent less in Medicare payments per enrollee than the 10 worst performers. Clearly, more money does not automatically translate into better health care nor does less money mean poor health care.

Furthermore, according to this JAMA report, all states could do a better job of implementing quality care. On average, only 69 percent of patients received appropriate care in the typical state. This figure dropped as low as 11 percent for certain practices, such as immunization screenings for pneumonia patients prior to discharge. A clear trend also emerged—less populous states and those in the Northeast performed better than more populous states and those in the Southeast.

What accounts for these differences in performance? JAMA authors suggested that, "system changes are more effective than either provider or patient education in improving provision of services." Perhaps this is why states that have instituted health care reform, such as Vermont and Oregon, demonstrated relatively high levels of performance at lower cost.

Authors of the JAMA article further suggested that it is necessary to hold all stakeholders accountable, not just health care providers and health plans. This includes, "purchasers, whether Medicare or Medicaid, . . . because they are making continual and important decisions that potentially balance quality against expenditures."

I call upon my colleagues to recognize that we too are accountable. Medical experts agree on best practices. So we must do more than just authorize spending, we must recognize what constitutes quality care and expect providers, hospitals, and health plans to deliver. Medicare beneficiaries across the United States deserve the best care available and this cannot be achieved through greater spending alone. We are fooling ourselves if we believe that more money will automatically translate to better care.

## COMMENDING WOODROW WILSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, today I highlight the Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, in my hometown of Corona, as a model of co-operation between local governments and private home builders—a partnership which will become more important as California will need more than 2,000 new schools in the next 20 years.

As a former active realtor, I was pleased to dedicate, on September 29, this first permanent, developer-built school in California. Thanks go to: Lt. Governor Cruz Bustamante; President Jose Lakas and the Corona-Norco School Board Members; Mayor Jeff Bennett and the City Council; and, finally, my good friend, Jim Previti for helping to make this school possible.

The Census Bureau reports that state and local governments spent \$40 billion in 1999 on construction, modernization, and renovation of public education facilities in the United States—up 54 percent from 1995. In addition, elementary schools typically take 30 to 48 months to complete. However, Turn Key Schools of America and Forecast Homes, who designed and constructed this school, along with the Corona-Norco Unified School District, raised the bar. They were able to complete this school in just 13 months and well below the average construction cost of an elementary school thereby saving taxpayers millions of dollars. This partnership demonstrates what local communities and private businesses can accomplish when they work together.

Our 28th President, Woodrow Wilson was a lawyer, author, educator, administrator, Governor, and President. Education played an important role in his life. Prior to the Presidency, Woodrow Wilson's progressive programs and innovations were fostered as President of Princeton University. Finding new and better ways to meet the educational needs of our children, which is what was accomplished with the construction of this school, is an idea that would have fit nicely with Woodrow Wilson's school of thought.

Mr. Speaker, I am committed to making sure that every education dollar is well spent.

This means allowing local school districts, principals and teachers to decide where and how education dollars can best be used, which includes ensuring that schools are built in a timely and cost-effective manner. I am also committed to allowing greater flexibility for the states and local governments to enter into such partnerships which allow the design of child-centered facilities and programs run by caring teachers and principals who know the names of each child.

I want every child to have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams—that could mean becoming a nurse, a teacher, an Olympic athlete, or becoming the President of the United States. All of those dreams can start becoming a reality sooner at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School because of the innovative thinking behind its construction.

Woodrow Wilson once stated, "This is the country which has lifted, to the admiration of the world, its ideals of absolutely free opportunity—where no man is supposed to be under any limitation except the limitations of his character and of his mind; where there is supposed to be no distinction of class, no distinction of blood, no distinction of social status, but where men win or lose on their merits." Our goal is to ensure that all schools afford all children the opportunity to pursue their dreams. For the students at Woodrow Wilson Elementary School, those dreams take shape in the halls and classroom.

The partnership which made this school a reality is a win-win situation for everybody—it cuts the bureaucratic redtape for the local school district, it relieves the over-crowded schools in the area, and it saves taxpayers million of dollars. However, the most important winners at Woodrow Wilson Elementary are the students who now have a brandnew, state-of-the-art school where they can begin their educational journey and realize their hopes and dreams.

I applaud all of those who had a hand in this innovation. Our community is proud of you and grateful for your vision.

## DIGITAL POSTPRODUCTION TAX CREDIT

## HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation, along with my colleagues Representatives FOLEY, BECERRA, MATSUI, RAMSTAD, ROGAN, SENSENBRENNER, ENGLISH, JOHN LEWIS, COYNE, CONDIT, BERMAN, WAXMAN, SESSIONS, MALONEY, and TUBBS-JONES, to provide for a small business tax credit for digital postproduction. These small businesses standardize film, television, music and technology products for mass consumption by electronically enhancing the master copy. Postproduction companies need help dealing with a government mandate which, without our assistance, may put many of these small, technology related businesses out of business.

On December 24, 1996, the FCC mandated a new terrestrial Digital Television standard, replacing the one that existed for 50 years. While adopting an Advanced Television Systems Committee (ATSC) standard, the FCC did not designate a single transmission format.

As a result, the postproduction industry has already invested in millions of dollars worth of equipment to be used in creating High Definition (HD) Broadcasting. Without HD broadcasting, the U.S. will be surrendering the advanced research and technological position which has sustained the preeminence of the American entertainment and information industry.

The FCC specifically chose not to mandate a single digital display format. I agree that diversity in formats is a logical way to proceed by allowing the marketplace to decide on the best format(s). However, for the postproduction process the complexities created by the requirement to support these new standards has exponentially increased the cost and complexity of their transition to digital television in the short run.

The legislation will help to keep the domestic digital postproduction industry strong. The proposed tax credit would provide for a 20 percent credit for current capital expenses incurred for digital postproduction machinery and equipment less a floor equal to their average annual gross receipts from digital postproduction services for the prior four years. The taxpayer would reduce the depreciable basis of the equipment by the credit claimed. Additionally, the credit would sunset at the effective date of the FCC mandate.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important legislation.

#### PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

#### HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to commend and congratulate the Porter family from my district for preserving the California heritage that is threatened daily by the pressures of urban sprawl.

According to the California Department of Conservation nearly 70,000 acres of open space was devoured by development in my state between 1996 and 1998.

Soaring land values and the incessant demand for new homes and stores often make it hard for rural families to say no when developers want to buy their land.

But the Porters already have their minds made up. Bernice H. Porter's estate recently bequeathed the family's 684-acre Circle P Ranch in the Pajaro Valley to the Land Trust of Santa Cruz County. The family's perpetual agricultural conservation easement is a major coup for the land trust, a small local non-profit group. It is the land trust's largest easement of this kind, ever.

Under the terms of the easement, the ranch can only be used for grazing and irrigated agriculture. It cannot be subdivided or developed now or by any future owner.

The parcel stretches for miles east of the city of Watsonville, with farming and ranching operations side by side. The rolling hills at the base of the Santa Cruz Mountains are green or gold depending on the season.

Bernice's daughter Diane Porter Cooley said recently that the hills help to define the local climate and "form the scenic and historic backdrop for the valley." They should be preserved, she added, not only for the sake of

agriculture, not only for the rare habitats they contain, but also because they are simply beautiful to behold.

There are deer, coyotes, bobcats and a wide variety of birds. For decades, the Porter family has invited school and church groups, history buffs and birding enthusiasts to tour the ranch.

The Porters and others who bequeath their land in a conservation easement often receive some tax incentives. With today's soaring land values in California, estate taxes can often be a real burden, and conservation easements can provide some relief.

But the Porters' decision went far beyond good business sense. Increasingly in California, we are dependent upon farmers and ranchers to act as stewards for our rapidly vanishing farm land and open space.

And the Porters have clearly risen to the occasion. This family embodies what is best about our California heritage—deep reverence for our shared past and great concern for our destiny.

These actions should serve as a model for land owners in California. Land assets should be used to preserve the heritage of our great state and our families, for the benefit of all who ever live among us. I encourage others to follow the Porters' example.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF MR. PAUL H. KRALMAN

#### HON. DAVID D. PHELPS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. PHELPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize one of my district's leaders in veterans affairs, Mr. Paul H. Kralman. A lifelong resident of Effingham, IL, Mr. Kralman first served his country in World War II. Since that time he has been a member of the Effingham American Legion Post No. 120, and he has held many offices within the post including Department Vice-Commander of the Fifth Division of Illinois. Mr. Kralman also served as the Veterans Service Officer with the state of Illinois for many years. His most recent efforts have been with the Effingham County Veterans Assistance Commission where he resides as superintendent. At the end of this year Mr. Kralman will retire at the age of 82.

Mr. Kralman has helped numerous veterans in my district receive their benefits. He was awarded the site for a Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic which has helped numerous veterans receive medical help close to home. Through his dedication and hard work, the Veterans Affairs Outpatient Clinic is a great success.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say congratulations to Mr. Paul Kralman on his excellent accomplishment. Due to his dedication to his fellow veterans, it is clear that Mr. Kralman is an asset to our country and the people who fought for it.

#### EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH ACHIEVES NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK STATUS

#### HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, today I inform my colleagues that Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Pittsburgh, PA, was recently designated a National Historic Landmark.

In order to be designated at National Historic Landmark, a structure must be determined to be "historically, architecturally, or technologically important to the nation as a whole." Emmanuel Episcopal Church certainly meets this standard.

Emmanuel Episcopal Church is the last church designated by the famous American architect, Richard Henry Hobson Richardson. It is an enduring example of his widely acclaimed "Richardson Romanesque" style. Emmanuel Episcopal Church is the only Richardson-designed church in Pennsylvania, and it is one of three striking buildings in Pittsburgh that Mr. Richardson designed. Emmanuel Episcopal Church is often referred to as Richardson's "small masterpiece" because it was built on a lot measuring only 50 feet by 100 feet in size. Since Emmanuel Episcopal Church was the last church that Mr. Richardson designed, it can legitimately claim to be one of the most advanced examples of this distinguished architect's singular vision. Mr. Richardson himself claimed that his Pittsburgh buildings—Emmanuel Episcopal Church, the Allegheny Courthouse, and the Allegheny County Jail—were his best work.

The church was dedicated in 1886 and cost only \$12,000 to build, but it is characterized by intricate brickwork, a steep slate roof, well-proportioned windows and doors, and a plain rounded apse. All of the buildings' original features—with the exception of its wrought iron gas chandeliers, which have been replaced with electric lights—have been faithfully preserved.

I should note that this important accomplishment was primarily the result of the efforts of one long-term Pittsburgh resident, Mary Ellen Leigh, with the support of Emmanuel's Vicar, the Reverend Don C. Youse, Jr., and the church's congregation. I commend her for all of her hard work and her dedication to this important project.

I am pleased that Emmanuel Episcopal Church has been designated a National Historic Landmark. It is my hope that this designation will help in efforts to preserve this important architectural treasure and help to promote the cause of historic preservation in Allegheny County and across the country.

#### HONORING THE ATHLETES OF SANTA CLARITA VALLEY AND THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY

#### HON. HOWARD P. "BUCK" MCKEON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 18, 2000*

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the athletes from the Santa Clarita Valley and the greater San Fernando Valley for