

I am fortunate to serve as a representative of a major East Coast port city, and I am well aware of the importance of continued reliable financing of our Nation's harbors and waterways. Every year, hundreds of billions of dollars of goods enter and are moved through this country by means of our water system offering a cost-effective and environmentally friendly alternative to other means of transportation.

As our economy increasingly moves toward globalization, we will face a corresponding need for safe, efficient, and modern port facilities and waterways to sustain such growth. Expanded use of larger shipping vessels and increased ship traffic at many of our Nation's ports will require a significant investment in increased channel depth and capacity.

The export provision of the Harbor Maintenance Tax (HMT), the system that currently provides financial resources for this maintenance, was deemed unconstitutional in a 1998 Supreme Court decision and the European Union has since challenged the import provision as an unfair trade practice and is considering bringing a complaint to the World Trade Organization regarding the tax.

This is why we are introducing the SHIP Act today—to provide an alternative funding source to maintain our Nation's harbors and waterways. This legislation repeals the HMT and restores the 200-year Federal obligation to adequately fund operation and maintenance of the Nation's harbors with funding from the general revenues of the Treasury.

It is only appropriate to fund the construction and maintenance of our Nation's harbors and waterways through the general revenues in light of the nationwide benefit that comes from a safe and efficient port system. To that same end, GAO reported that \$22 billion in these general revenues are a direct result of our ports and navigation system. It is evident that we must return this responsibility back to the federal government.

The existing Harbor Maintenance Tax puts our maritime industry at a competitively disadvantage. The tax increases the price of goods sold in the U.S. and diverts cargo Canada, which does not have a similar tax. At a time we should be working to attract new commerce to our U.S. ports, and take advantage of our waterways to relieve congestion, we are hindering their ability to remain competitive, attract business and aid in relieving congestion. The time to repeal this unfair and detrimental tax is now!

Mr. Speaker, it is important to provide our ports with safe, efficient, and modern port facilities and waterways. We must work to return this responsibility to the federal government as it was for over 200 years. The SHIP Act collaborates the support of groups as diverse as the American Association of Port Authorities, the American Waterways Operators, the National Grain and Feed Association, and others.

I want to thank the bill's current cosponsors and supporters and urge all Member to support this important piece of legislation.

CURRENT CRISIS IN HOME HEALTH CARE SERVICES

HON. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call to your attention an issue of great concern to me and the constituents throughout my southeastern Massachusetts congressional district—the current crisis in home health care services.

As you are well aware, in 1997 Congress approved the “Balanced Budget” Act (BBA). This legislation sought to slash Medicare benefits by \$115 billion—the largest reduction in Medicare payment rates in the program's 35 year history.

I opposed this “reform” bill because I thought it recklessly threatened the quality and dependability of health care for Medicare recipients. Regrettably, it has fulfilled these fears—resulting in \$240 billion of cuts, \$124 billion more than originally intended.

The BBA has resulted in a 53% drop in federal reimbursements for home health services in Massachusetts—well over \$350 million in lost Medicare revenue. 31 Massachusetts home care agencies have closed—and other on the South Shore and the Cape & Islands have limited services to homebound patients.

It is clear that the “unintended” consequences of BBA has had and continues to have a devastating impact on our health care system. And now Congress is backpedaling, trying to address the immediate consequences of the BBA, while searching for comprehensive approaches to the long-term solvency of the overall Medicare program.

In this light, I would like to share with my colleagues an editorial from the Cape Codder newspaper that followed a month-long series of articles outlining critical steps in addressing the challenges in home health care. And I hope this will serve as a useful source of guidance as we continue these deliberations.

[From the Cape Codder, July 6, 2001]

ASSURING HOME HEALTH CARE

For a month, Jennifer Brockway has been reporting on one of the more frightening prospects facing an increasingly older Cape Cod population: the specter of rising health needs and the drastic decrease in home health care aides.

This gap between supply and demand will threaten thousands of us who want to grow old in as independent a fashion as possible. We want to avoid hospitals, nursing homes and assisted living facilities. That's why so many retirees are moving here in the first place.

Those struggling to right a sinking ship offer a wide array of solutions. But, as Brockway reported, remedies will require action by both state and federal governments, as well as the health care industry itself.

Our month-long series identified the following steps as crucial:

The long-term community—home health care and nursing and rehabilitation homes—must form a united front.

Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement rates must be increased to reverse damage caused by the 1997 Balanced Budget Act and compensate for rising health care delivery costs.

Home health aides must be paid a wage allowing economic self-sufficiency. They currently earn about \$10 an hour, \$7 less than

what's needed to afford a median-priced home on the Cape.

Family health insurance must be made affordable for all direct-care workers.

Training programs for direct-care workers must be increased and expanded to the home care industry.

An active recruitment program must be instituted to capture the high school students, immigrants, and older adults re-entering the workforce.

Opportunities for career advancement in direct care must be encouraged.

Home health agencies must allow greater involvement of home health aides in agency operations and patient care decisions. Aides should be made to feel like respected stakeholders through acknowledgment of their skills and contributions.

As with most complex issues, there is no magic bullet. Solutions require crossing many jurisdictional and geographic boundaries. It means forming unique alliances.

And unless other problems facing Cape Codders—inadequate housing, childcare and transportation—are addressed simultaneously, the current challenges facing home health care indeed will become a crisis.

IN HONOR OF 17 LEXINGTON AVENUE, THE SITE OF THE FIRST FREE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 2, 2001

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize 17 Lexington Avenue, the site of the Free Academy, the first free publicly funded institution of higher education in the United States. Baruch College now carries on the proud tradition of public education at this location.

The Free Academy was approved by New York's legislature in 1847. Townsend Harris, a strong advocate of publicly funded educational opportunities, advocated a school that would “Open the door to all—let the children of the rich and poor take their seats together and know no distinction save that of industry, good conduct and intellect.”

The original building was designed by James Renwick, Jr. who went on to design St. Patrick's Cathedral. Gaslights, warm-air heating and drinking fountains made the building modern and luxurious, yet he managed to keep the final cost \$2000 under budget. In January 1849, the Free Academy held its formal opening, admitting its first class of 149 students.

The exquisite building that originally housed the Free Academy became too small for the growing business campus. In 196, using the proceeds of a \$1.5 million bond offering by the City, the college built a 16-story structure that housed a new library, science labs and accounting classrooms. Since its opening, 17 Lex has welcomed generations of talented students, students with limited means, but unlimited dreams. Scores of prominent and successful business leaders have been educated in the building, which came to represent the place where they began to achieve the American dream.

In 1866, the Free Academy became known as the College of the City of New York, popularly called CCNY or City College. When

CCNY moved its campus uptown in 1909, 17 Lex continued to house the downtown business campus. CCNY grew into City University of New York, which today educates 200,000 students on more than 18 different campuses.

In 1919, CCNY's business campus became an independent entity known as the School of Business and Civic Administration, which changed its name in 1953 to the Bernard M. Baruch College of Business and Public Administration, in honor of the economist and financier, Class of 1889, who advised six U.S. Presidents from Wilson to Truman. By 1968, Baruch College emerged as a separate senior college in the CUNY system. Today, Baruch College enrolls over 15,000 students and enjoys a national reputation for excellence in business education and public administration.

Baruch College continues to open doors for young people from all types of backgrounds. U.S. News and World Report has called Baruch College the most diverse school in the United States.

17 Lex is about to undergo its third incarnation, thanks to a \$200 million capital project approved by CUNY. The new building will, no doubt, continue the tradition of educational excellence available at this location for the past century-and-a-half.

Mr. Speaker, I salute the visionaries who believed that everyone should have an opportunity to have higher education and I ask my fellow Members of Congress to join me in celebrating a new beginning for 17 Lexington Avenue, the site of the first free public institution of higher education.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE
ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Ms. McCOLLUM. Mr. Chairman, today I will vote against the Boehlert-Markey amendment. I support increasing fuel efficiency standards for SUVs, light trucks and minivans as a way of improving our air quality and reducing our reliance on foreign oil. I also support using alternative fuels and much needed flexible fuel vehicles that can burn the home grown ethanol-based gasoline E85. This amendment asks me to make a false choice between higher fuel efficiency standards and an increasingly successful clean air program in the Twin Cities. It will stop the production of clean air vehicles at Ford Motor Company's St. Paul plant that use E85 fuel. This amendment could have done both—raise fuel efficiency standards and protect this clean air program. I will unfortunately oppose it today.

The St. Paul-Minneapolis metropolitan area has shown the nation that alternative fuels can help clean our environment and sustain our economy. E85, a fuel that is 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline, helps our cars and trucks burn cleaner, reducing air pollution

while at the same time helping Minnesota's farmers and our rural economy.

The Twin Cities leads the nation in the number of gas stations that offer E85 with over 60 fueling stations throughout the metro area. It will not matter how many stations we have if we are not manufacturing the cars and trucks that use this innovative fuel.

And that is the problem I have with this amendment. Currently, our St. Paul Ford plant receives a credit for producing Flexible Fuel Vehicles that can use a combination of gasoline or another hybrid fuel like E85. Manufacturers like Ford use this credit as an incentive to produce these types of cars and trucks. The Boehlert-Markey amendment would shift the credit from the number of vehicles produced to the actual consumption of the alternative fuel, whether it's E85 or something else.

I agree with the amendment's authors about CAFE standards. However, it is equally important for us to provide incentives for people to consume home grown fuels. Because so little E85 and other alternative fuels like it are consumed nationwide, would we be reintroducing the age-old chicken and the egg conundrum? Do we need the cars to encourage the use of the fuel, or do we need the fuel before the cars? Would this be a disincentive to car and truck manufacturers to make automobiles that run on multiple fuels? Would we be providing a disincentive to car and truck manufacturers to make consumption of alternative fuels, and do not provide incentives for manufacturers to make these cars and trucks, we will be left without both.

What's more the Ford Motor Company plant in St. Paul has been a leader in manufacturing trucks that run on E85 and other innovative fuels. Ford, the Minnesota Corn Growers, American Lung Association of Minnesota, the U.S. Department of Energy, and Minnesota Department of Agriculture and others on the E85 Team have been instrumental in our area in promoting these clean-air vehicles and the alternative fuels that run them.

Mr. Chairman, this isn't an easy decision for me. We need to increase the fuel efficiency standards of all our cars and trucks and continue to work on improving our air quality. We put ourselves on the moon. Surely we can raise the efficiency of our automobiles. However, I know what the negative impact could be on the production of clean air vehicles and clean air in St. Paul. I unfortunately have to oppose this amendment today.

SECURING AMERICA'S FUTURE
ENERGY ACT OF 2001

SPEECH OF

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2001

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 4) to enhance energy conservation, research and development and to provide for security and diversity in the energy supply for the American people, and for other purposes.

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Chairman, we must reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil. And while I believe our nation needs a comprehensive energy policy as a matter of na-

tional security, we also have an obligation to ensure that this need is met in a manner that does not jeopardize our financial security. This bill takes a balanced approach to meeting our nation's energy security needs. But, it fails to pay for any of these proposals which have a cost of \$34 billion.

H.R. 4 contains numerous provisions that I have supported in the past and will continue to support in the future under fiscally responsible circumstances. In fact, H.R. 4 includes a provision based upon a bill that I introduced during both the 106th and 107th Congresses that would extend the section 29 tax credit for the production of unconventional fuels such as coalbed methane. My version of this legislation [H.R. 794] was modified slightly and included in the Ways and Means portion of H.R. 4. I have worked for months to ensure H.R. 794's inclusion in a comprehensive energy measure. And while I would like to be able to vote for this provision, I cannot in good conscience support final passage of a bill that includes \$34 billion in tax expenditures that are not offset with comparable spending reductions. This is fiscally irresponsible. Such action threatens to spend money from both the Social Security and Medicare Trust funds on which the seniors in my district rely.

Further, as a member of the House Renewable Energy Caucus, I have supported measures to encourage and increase the use of renewable and alternative energy sources. This bill includes tax incentives for energy efficiency programs and renewable energy sources such as wind and solar production that I would like to vote for, and I would support if these incentives were paid for and handled in a fiscally responsible manner. As well, H.R. 4 contains tax incentives for domestic production from marginal wells that I have supported in the past and that would increase our national energy supply.

Last month I supported funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program [LIHEAP]. I would like to support the LIHEAP reauthorization included in H.R. 4. I made a promise to senior citizens and other people in my district that I would not spend Social Security and Medicare Trust funds. That's a promise I intend to keep.

Two months ago, we were hailing surpluses "as far as the eye can see." There was even concern that we not pay down our national debt too quickly. Today, we are watching these surpluses disappear before our very eyes.

Two days ago, the House passed an appropriations bill that spent \$1.3 billion more than the budget resolution. I voted against the bill because in order to do this, we will have to borrow from other priority programs or from the Medicare and Social Security surplus funds.

If Congress adopts this new policy of borrow and spend it not only endangers the Medicare and Social Security surpluses, it places us back on the road to deficit spending. We must not travel down this road again.

It's time we made some tough choices. This Congress made a commitment to the American people that we would not vote to spend one single penny of the Medicare and Social Security Trust Funds. We must honor that commitment. Spending restraint, fiscal responsibility, and honoring our commitments do not come about by good intentions, but by resolute actions.