

who depend on the airline industry. Anyone who closely examines the bill will find that the Republican House leadership has chosen to protect airline industry "fat cats" and ignore the voice of the American people.

Rewarding the same private screening companies that have continuously failed to protect the American public is outrageous. The Republican leadership can not pretend to have the interests of the American people in mind when airport baggage companies are poised to make millions of dollars through new contracts. The GOP bill does not mirror the language in the Oberstar amendment which federalizes airport screeners and transfers their day to day oversight from the Transportation Department to the Justice Department. The Democratic alternative takes a stand the Republican leadership refuses to take; we provide strong oversight and place the responsibility for the safety of the American people firmly in the hands of the federal government.

MEDICARE OUTPATIENT COPAYMENT REDUCTION ACT OF 2001

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today, I am introducing legislation to reduce the coinsurance amounts that Medicare beneficiaries are required to pay for hospital outpatient services. For most Medicare services, beneficiaries are required to pay 20 percent of the allowed payment amount, and Medicare pays 80 percent. However, for hospital outpatient services, Medicare beneficiaries are required to pay much higher copayments—up to 90 percent for some services.

These higher coinsurance levels are based on an historical artifact of the Medicare method of paying for hospital outpatient services. Prior to implementation of the hospital outpatient prospective payment system (HO-PPS) just last year, Medicare paid for hospital outpatient services based on a hospital's "costs" for those services. However, coinsurance amounts were based on 20 percent of the hospital's "charges" for those services, which were much higher than its "costs". Therefore, over time, coinsurance levels for hospital outpatient services grew until they now average almost 50 percent, and are more than 90 percent for some services.

The Balanced Budget Act (BBA) of 1997, which mandated the implementation of the hospital outpatient prospective payment system, would have reduced coinsurance levels to 20 percent over time; however, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission (MedPAC) estimated that this reduction would have occurred over 30 to 40 years for most services, and up to 60 years for some services. The Balanced Budget Refinement Act (BBRA) limited the highest coinsurance levels to the dollar amount of the hospital inpatient deductible in any year (\$792 in 2001); this limit affected coinsurance amounts for about 20 services.

The Beneficiary Improvement and Protection Act (BIPA) of 2000 accelerated the reduction in beneficiary coinsurance levels by reducing coinsurance in increments of 5 percent each year until it reaches 40 percent in 2006.

MedPAC estimates that without further legislation, it would take an additional 23 years after 2006 to reduce beneficiary coinsurance levels to 20 percent for all hospital outpatient services. In its March 2001 report to Congress, MedPAC recommended that the Congress continue to reduce beneficiary coinsurance in increments of 5 percent each year to achieve a coinsurance level of 20 percent in 2010.

Mr. Speaker, my bill would implement the MedPAC recommendation. It would reduce beneficiary coinsurance rates in increments of 5 percent each year beginning in 2007 until the coinsurance rate for all hospital outpatient services is 20 percent in 2010.

Mr. Speaker, high coinsurance rates are particularly devastating for Medicare beneficiaries who have no supplemental insurance. MedPAC estimates that in 1998, 14.4 percent of Medicare beneficiaries had no supplemental insurance. Most of those individuals were "near poor"—with incomes too high to qualify for Medicaid or the Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) program, but with incomes too low to be able to afford supplemental insurance. Thus, almost 6 million Medicare beneficiaries have no supplemental insurance and must pay cost sharing amounts out-of-pocket. MedPAC reports that the number and percentage of Medicare beneficiaries without supplemental insurance grows each year as premiums for such insurance increases, and a recent report by the American Academy of Actuaries estimated that one-fourth of recent increases in Medigap premiums are due to the costs of outpatient coinsurance.

MedPAC also reports that coinsurance amounts are much higher for certain services than others. Those with the highest coinsurance are the "high tech" services, such as radiology services and cancer chemotherapy services. Thus, high coinsurance greatly limits access to these services for "near poor" Medicare beneficiaries, and MedPAC analyses confirm that use of these services is much lower for "near poor" beneficiaries than for beneficiaries with supplemental insurance.

Mr. Speaker, it is wrong to limit Medicare services to the "near poor" simply because they are not poor enough to qualify for Medicaid, nor wealthy enough to be able to purchase supplemental insurance. I urge the Congress to accept the MedPAC recommendation and enact legislation to reduce coinsurance for hospital outpatient services to 20 percent by 2010.

MILWAUKEE KIWANIANS CELEBRATE 85 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on Wednesday, November 14, 2001, the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee will commemorate 85 years of dedicated and altruistic service provided to the people of our community.

Chartered in November, 1916 as the 73rd club under Kiwanis International, the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee began as a service organization of 158 businessmen. Since its humble beginnings, the Milwaukee branch has established itself firmly within Southeastern Wisconsin while providing untethered leadership and generosity for those in need.

Committed to eliminating the devastating effects of iodine deficiency disorders (IDD), Kiwanis International launched its first Worldwide Service Project in 1994 pledging to raise \$75 million in partnership with UNICEF to eradicate this very debilitating but preventable condition. The Milwaukee Club's commitment to raise over \$60,000 for the Worldwide Service Project insured that 1.5 million individuals will not suffer from disorders including stillbirths and cretinism. This gift will also allow future generations to grow up healthy and confident that their children will reach their full physical and mental potential free of IDD.

The Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee also actively reaches out a hand to help its fellow neighbors. By working with Milwaukee Public Schools and YMCA Holton Youth Center, the Milwaukee Club has made an commitment to improve the lives of numerous youth by volunteering their time to tutor in an inner city Milwaukee school and by providing mentors, organizing book drives, and donating computers to Holton Youth Center's library to help the young participants to continually achieve success in their own lives.

Dedicated to expanding the horizons of all citizens, the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee, along with Curative Care Network of Milwaukee, worked to form the fifth Aktion Club in the world. This innovative program gives developmentally handicapped adults the opportunity to actively provide community service throughout their neighborhood. This year the Milwaukee Kiwanis Club and Aktion Club are joining together in the annual Milwaukee River Cleanup and the holiday season's bell-ringing campaign.

Through their contributions and service projects, the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee has established itself as an important resource for thousands of individuals. It is with great pleasure that I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Kiwanis Club of Milwaukee as they commemorate this milestone, and extend best wishes for continued success in their next 85 years.

A TRIBUTE TO LETITIA HOADLEY WHITE

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to pay tribute to Letitia Hoadley White, a congressional staff member who has spent two decades representing the highest values we in Congress want to provide to our constituents: courtesy, commitment and a dedication to public service.

Letitia Hoadley joined my staff on November 9, 1981, as a receptionist. She quickly showed a sensitivity toward constituents, and an eagerness to help them solve their problems. It wasn't long before people began calling our office looking specifically for "that young lady who was so nice on the phone."

Her intelligence and willingness to go the extra mile led to her promotion to executive secretary after just a month, and to legislative correspondent in less than a year. Letitia wasn't sure she wanted the second promotion—it paid more and had more responsibility, but she worried she would miss the

chance to talk to and help the people who called and came in our front door. Happily, she agreed to take the new job, and did it so well we promoted her to legislative assistant four months later.

Letitia has always been someone I could turn to for the most difficult jobs. When it appeared we would never convince Congress in 1983 to pay for a flood control project that would protect more than a million Southern California residents, she helped convince colleagues from four counties to work together—and got the project started in our district.

She has also shared with me a desire to encourage innovation and small business. Years ago, I asked Letitia to help me make sure the Pentagon provided increased funding for rapid development of a radical new technology—unmanned aerial vehicles. Through her work, we managed to move up testing and evaluation of the Predator UAV program by two years. Now, of course, it is one of the most highly touted new weapons in our war against terrorism.

After years of toiling in the legislative trenches and solving problems for my constituents and district, Letitia became an appropriations associate in 1986, and now works directly with the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. Since taking that job, she has taken the dedication to constituent service to a new level.

Appropriations staff members have a special role in Congress, helping to ensure that our government spending meets the needs of the public and stays within our budget. At the same time, they must help us to win the support of a majority of Congress, since these spending bills must pass every year. New staff members working on appropriations would do well to learn from Letitia, who has made an art of providing “constituent” service to other House members and the agencies we oversee.

She is the epitome of what we mean when we speak of dwelling on the positive. She looks for the good in people, and really works at building on their strengths. At the same time, she uses every bit of her energy to help them succeed in what they need. The members of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee, on both sides of the aisle, will attest to Letitia’s intelligence, hard work, courtesy and optimism. She is one of the primary reasons we are able to pass a \$300 billion spending bill with almost no debate or rancor.

Twenty years after she took her first call as a receptionist, Letitia still jumps to answer the telephone when she is in the front office. She will still spend 15 minutes talking to constituents who are in town for a visit, and then take on the most technical meetings with generals and assistant cabinet secretaries. She will undertake any job and work nights, weekends and through her vacation to get it done. And she lives by a rule I often quote: It’s amazing what we can accomplish if we don’t worry about who gets the credit.

Mr. Speaker, we often think of our congressional staff members as our “family,” and many times during the year they spend more time with us than their real families. We certainly owe a debt of gratitude to Letitia’s husband, Dick White, for being understanding when she must work long hours—and then take more work home. I ask you and my colleagues to join in thanking Letitia for her dedication to the American people, and wishing her well in the years to come.

H. RES. 264, PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2975; TO COMBAT TERRORISM

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to object to this rule in the strongest possible terms. I believe that both the path taken and the point at which we have arrived this morning are an affront to the democratic process and are stunning examples of a breakdown in the systems that have served our country and the Congress for over two hundred years.

The issues addressed in this legislation are of profound importance to the safety and security of our constituents and to the continued safety of the country as a whole. I believe that there is no more important duty undertaken by a member of this body than to protect the welfare of his or her constituents while also protecting the civil liberties for which so many Americans have given their lives. The procedural tactics employed this morning in the name of expediency, however, threaten not only to derail a legislative process that would have resulted in a widely supported bill to protect Americans, it also threatens to undermine the civil liberties enjoyed by Americans and the democratic principles enshrined in this very chamber.

The outrage of this morning is tremendously disturbing to me and many of my colleagues. Rather than allowing a widely supported bill—passed unanimously by a committee that is often viewed as one of the most partisan in the Congress—to come to the floor for debate and a vote, the leadership of this body has decided to craft an alternative bill in the dead of night without providing the membership of the body at-large sufficient time to study its contents. I cannot understand why the leadership would threaten the wonderful spirit of bipartisanship that has flourished in the Congress over the last month by resorting to these types of procedural tactics and back-room deal making.

I arrived at the Capitol this morning buoyed by the prospects that a thoughtfully deliberated and considered bill would be presented on the floor of the House for additional debate and consideration. I was monumentally disappointed to discover, however, that the bill had been pulled and replaced by an unstudied substitute, the contents of which remain largely a mystery to even many senior members of the Judiciary Committee. At nearly two hundred pages of esoteric and technical language, the bill is beyond the length that a member of this body may be reasonably assumed to have read and understood.

By opposing this unfair rule, I am standing in support of fairness and the democratic process. I fully understand the need to implement new measures that will allow law enforcement to respond to the new threats posed to the United States by those who would do us harm, but I must urge my colleagues to oppose the rule. By defeating this rule, we will allow sufficient time to pass so that we may, in good conscience, examine this new bill and cast our votes confident that we understand its contents and its implications for law enforcement and democracy.

TRIBUTE TO KIM GREGURICH

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Pleasant Hill, Illinois, as well as all Americans who have given their support to the cause of bringing home our POWs.

Like thousands of other Americans, Kim is the owner of a POW/MIA bracelet—a copper band inscribed with the name of a soldier who was either listed as missing in action or as a prisoner of war during our time in Vietnam. The name on Kim’s bracelet is Lieutenant Commander Robert Shumaker, a pilot shot down in 1965. She has had the bracelet for over thirty years; she bought it to show her support of our armed forces, and promised never to take it off unless her POW was released. These bracelets were a method of putting public pressure on the Vietnamese government to send our soldiers home.

It worked. Lieutenant Commander Shumaker was released on the Flight to Freedom in 1975 in part, he says, because the Vietnamese knew how closely the American people were watching them. Ms. Gregurich heard that happy report on the radio and was finally able to take off her bracelet.

Now, twenty-six years later, she has decided to go one step further—she has taken the initiative to locate Mr. Shumaker and send him the copper band. “I wasn’t sure if it would be a bad memory,” she said, “but I just wanted him to know that there was one more person thinking about him while he was gone.”

But Mr. Speaker, while Ms. Gregurich’s tale is heartwarming, it is also a sad reminder—many Americans have not yet been able to take off their bracelets. There are 1,948 Americans that are still missing and unaccounted for from the Vietnam War; there are another 58,000 whose fate we know all too well. These men and women will never come home; so, like Ms. Gregurich, I will hold a bracelet for each of them in my heart.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Gregurich and others who put their hearts into this support deserve our thanks; and them men and women who fought and died for our country deserve our eternal gratitude. May God bless them, and may God bless the United States of America.

COMMENDING THE WORK OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 13, 2001

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I want to note the vital contribution the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) has made to the daunting clean up task at the World Trade Center’s “Red Zone,” better known as “Ground Zero.” The IUOE’s National Hazardous Materials (Hazmat) Program is based in Beaver, West Virginia. I am proud to represent them in Congress as part of the Third Congressional District of West Virginia.

Don Carson, the Director of IUOE’s Hazmat program, and a team of workers from the Beaver facility were among the first out-of-state