

and the Federal Government has to borrow more money and go further in debt to try to make up for the shortfall.

Last week, I held two Social Security town hall forums in different parts of the State. First, I talked with senior citizens in Smithville, just outside of Atlantic City, and next I visited with more than 70 college students in Brookdale, at Brookdale Community College in Monmouth County. Here too the forum was open to all members of the college's political science and history club. I would assume some of the participants were Republicans, but that does not really matter.

The bottom line is that as Members of Congress, Senators, and senior organizations hold forums around the country and explain the President's privatization plan, there is more and more opposition to it. While the President still seems to think his privatization plan is catching on, Congressional Republicans brave enough to have town hall forums heard an earful from supporters of the current Social Security System.

Mr. Speaker, let me just give some examples. From the February 23 edition of the Philadelphia Inquirer: "At two stops, morning at Drexel University; afternoon at Widener University, the Pennsylvania Republican Senator SANTORUM encountered skepticism and hostility as he voiced his support for the White House plan to allow privatization of personal accounts using payroll taxes. He was heckled by protesters, called a liar, and told that his views were unconscionable. Those sentiments ranged across the spectrum."

That is from the Philadelphia Inquirer. From the February 22 Washington Post: "At every stop, Representative PAUL RYAN faced skeptics. Nancy McDonald, 66, who sells securities and insurance, complained in Darien that health care for the uninsured needs to be addressed before Social Security. 'Slow down! Slow down!' She scolded the lawmaker at one point."

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I take a quote from the February 22 Savannah Morning News. "At Armstrong Atlantic State University, the subject of Social Security caused a crowd of 200 to become rowdy. Questions were shouted out. The congressman," Congressman KINGSTON, "was interrupted. And one of Congressman KINGSTON's assistants was booed when she announced an end to the hour-long discussion."

These are just examples. In meeting after meeting Republicans got a chilly reception to the President's Social Security plan. Maybe that is why we heard today that Senate majority leader BILL FRIST thinks the Senate may not be able to take up the President's Social Security privatization plan until next year.

Mr. Speaker, many of my constituents are concerned about the President's plan. Unfortunately, they will not have the opportunity to voice

those concerns to the President this Friday morning in Westfield, New Jersey. But we are going to be heard anyway. I have chartered a bus, and I am taking several dozen of my constituents to join people from all over New Jersey at a rally in support of truly strengthening Social Security.

We are going to go with the bus to Westfield, New Jersey, where the President is going to be, and maybe the President will send some of his staffers over so they can really hear from us how their plan is being received outside the White House. It is not being received well, because Americans are finally waking up to the fact that the President's privatization plan is bad for them, bad for Social Security, and bad for America.

TRIBUTE TO MS. CLARA JENKINS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of an extraordinary member of my community, Clara Jenkins. In the 1950s, Clara helped advance the Civil Rights movement in Georgia by breaking down color barriers at a local hospital.

On August 20, 1951, Clara was hired as the first black nurse at Kennestone Hospital in Cobb County. Now, 1951 was not an easy time to be a black nurse among all-white colleagues. The Brown v. Board of Education ruling, that mandated separate but equal was inherently unequal, was still 3 years away. In 1951, Kennestone Hospital was segregated by floor and ward. Black patients and white patients received their care separately and in unequal surroundings.

But Clara did not let segregation deter her goal of providing care for the sick and the needy. Through her determination and talent, she proved to her colleagues that skill, not skin color, was what mattered most.

Despite having earned a nursing degree right here in Washington, D.C., Clara was not initially allowed to work with white patients. However, over time, doctors and nurses noticed her skill, especially her ability to insert IVs into patients with thin or hard-to-find veins. Clara said her work on parents with darker skin made her adept at finding veins by touch, not sight, a skill the other nurses lacked. Increasingly, white doctors and nurses began asking for Clara's help.

After the 1954 Brown versus Board ruling desegregated Kennestone Hospital, Clara was assigned to several special hospital units. She was asked to head up Kennestone's very first IV team, and later became the only black nurse on the hospital's first coronary team. These were amazing feats for a woman who only a few years earlier had not been allowed to even care for white patients.

As a physician, I had the privilege of working with Clara at Kennestone Hos-

pital. And let me tell you, she is just as respected and beloved now as she was then. In fact, she was one of my favorite nurses. And working with her on the floor, and later when she was a supervisor, always gave me confidence in her ability, her compassion, and her leadership.

I am inspired by Clara Jenkins' ability to prove herself in the face of segregation and discrimination. Clara had a sense of determination and courage that should serve as an inspiration for us all. By asking others to judge her based on skill, not race, she helped break down color barriers for black professionals in Cobb County.

Clara also opened doors for other black nurses. She was once offered a position as head pediatric nurse at Kennestone. But when she turned down the job, another black nurse was selected to head that unit. She brought a greater equality to our hospital.

Clara Jenkins is a skilled nurse and an important member of the Cobb community. Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me in honoring her legacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time of the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Michigan?

There was no objection.

PRESIDENT'S PROPOSAL FOR PRIVATIZATION OF SOCIAL SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. KILPATRICK of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, March is Women's History Month, and we are proud to celebrate the contributions that women have made to American society. As mothers, as caregivers, as teachers, as providers, we honor the women in America this month of March.

While home last week, I had an opportunity to hold two town hall meetings. My first meeting was in Wyandotte, Lincoln Park, River Rouge, and Ecorse communities, where we had hundreds of people who came out to hear about the Social Security proposals. My first point to them was that we have no bill. What we are hearing are discussion points, and right now we have no legislation that has come to the House or the Senate. What we are

hearing are proposals being made by the President. Mr. Speaker, that calmed a lot of people down, many of whom were women.

As we went on to discuss the problem of Social Security, I advised them that the Social Security trustees have said now that the trust fund is good until the year 2042 at least.

□ 2030

I also told them that per the Congressional Budget Office, the Social Security fund is good until at least 2052, so to calm down, make sure you are okay and do not send anyone the \$1 or the \$2 that they ask you to save your Social Security. Your Social Security is good.

At our town hall meetings, first in the communities that I mentioned, and then moving on to Detroit, hundreds of citizens, many women, because 24 million women in America right now receive Social Security. Of that number, 7.5 million women disabled receive Social Security. And over 2.7 million children under 18, many of them receive Social Security, and many 18 and under are women. So when we talk about the Social Security issue in our town hall meetings, which were very successful, not combative, giving information, using some of the professors at Wayne State University, such as Professor Dankowski, a professor of gerontology and the aged at the university, we exchanged information.

What my constituents found out at our town hall meetings was that more than 85 percent of Social Security funds that come into Social Security go right back out to beneficiaries. Over 85 percent, and that 14-plus percent is set aside for the trust fund. If we set up private accounts as being proposed by the President and take money out of Social Security, then those people who are current beneficiaries who have paid into the system will have their benefits cut, or we will have to borrow money to make that up.

At a time when we are in deficit spending in this country, it is not the time to borrow. As we discussed Social Security and what is happening with it, good until the year 2042 if you use the Social Security trustees' projections, or 2052 if we use the Congressional Budget Office, we calmed them down and were able to exchange information.

Social Security is the most successful program this country has seen since 1935 when President Roosevelt signed the bill. In 1936, payroll deductions began to be made, and in 1940 the first checks went out to beneficiaries who had been paying into the system. As we know now, many disabled, widowers, and survivors also use their Social Security.

Mr. Speaker, town hall meetings, we have to get out into America. We found that is the best way of communicating to give them the facts so they have the information they need. Without Social Security, women in particular would be living in poverty.

Let us not throw out a good program. Yes, it needs fixing. As a Member who spoke earlier said, there are only three or four options. Either we raise the age, raise the deduction, which is if you make up to \$90,000, your Social Security FICA comes out. If you make over \$90,000, you do not pay any. I am not advocating that at this point, but that is one of the options, raise the age, increase the limit from which we make the payroll deductions, or cut benefits.

There are not a lot of options, but we have time to do what is right for American citizens. Social Security is a good program. It was never intended to be the end all. It was a tripod: Social Security, pensions, and if you were able to save, then those three sides of the triangle would give Americans a comfortable life in their retirement.

My constituents say do not mess with our Social Security. They want it, they have paid into it, and they believe they are entitled to it. As we continue our discussion, let us remember it is the people of America who we serve who we represent and who have paid in. Keep Social Security sound. Let us tweak it and not throw it out.

HECKLING IS NOT A SOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, it has been an interesting experience to be here and listen to the debate tonight on Social Security. I found it interesting in particular to listen to the gentleman from New Jersey read accounts from town hall meetings where Republicans have been attempting to explain the problems that we are facing with Social Security and how many groups, moveon.org, AARP, and others have come to disrupt those meetings.

I do not know if liberals or the Democrats are proud of that, that their supporters are going in to heckle and boo. It seems they are. What does that contribute to the debate? Not much in my opinion. There is a saying that you are entitled to your own opinions, but not to your own facts.

If we look at the facts on Social Security, there are the following: when Social Security started in the 1930s, there were some 42 workers per retiree. In the 1950s, that went to 16 workers per retiree. Today we are down to three workers per retiree. By the time I retire, there will be probably two workers per retiree. You cannot argue with the demographics, and that is where we are headed. Those are the facts. With those facts you have to understand we have got to do something different. This pay-as-you-go system simply is not a model that is going to work with demographics like that.

Fact number two, it was just mentioned a few minutes ago there is a trust fund that is going to pay out

until the year 2042. Where is that trust fund and what does it contain? It is a couple of file cabinets in West Virginia that contain a couple of IOUs. There is no trust fund; there is no money. It is just IOUs. As soon as we start taking out more than we are paying in, we are simply going to incur more debt upon debt we already have. You can talk about the year 2042 and we do not have to worry until then, that is assuming there is money in a trust fund. If somebody knows where that money is hidden, please tell us because it simply is not there. It is a file cabinet with IOUs in it.

Fact number three, there is no easy fix. I just heard one so-called solution that we simply lift the earnings cap so people like Bill Gates who make millions of dollars every year would pay more than just Social Security on the first \$90,000 of income. That sounds good; but upon review, if we included all of the millionaires and others making more than \$90,000 a year, we asked the actuaries what it would do, and it would postpone insolvency just 6 years. So we are just talking on the margins.

Raising the payroll tax, we have done that since the 1930s 19 times. We simply cannot continue to go down that road. I would like to hear somebody seriously propose that. What do we set it at? How much more do we want to tax people?

We have to harness the power of compound interest. We need a new model. That is what the President is proposing. I think it was Albert Einstein who said the most powerful force in the universe is that of compound interest. We have to allow individuals to harness that.

I commend the President for taking the position he has taken. The difference between being a leader and a follower is when you are a leader, you recognize that the people may not be with you and you may need to persuade them and convince them and go out and tell them there is a problem.

There are formidable foes out there, the AARP and others, who will put out information and say there is no problem, there is a trust fund somehow and we do not have to deal with this issue for another 40 years or so. So there is a lot of educating that has to be done. That is what a leader does. A follower says that is where the people are, I do not have to convince them, I just have to join them, and we will just heckle and boo anybody who proposes a solution. That is not leadership, and I am glad the President is actually leading on this, and I commend my colleagues for leading on it as well.

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious issue. There is no more serious debate that we will have in this coming decade domestically than how to deal with this issue. How do we give individuals the freedom to be more secure in their own retirement. I tend to believe that in the end if you present Americans out there two politicians, one who will stand and say, yes, there is a problem,