

better approach would be to totally eliminate earmarks, well, maybe we will get there. Maybe Members will see that this can work and it will work.

And so, Mr. Speaker, again, the opportunity to be here on the floor to talk to my colleagues, I'm sure I would have some other speakers if it were not for the fact that we had our last vote an hour and a half ago and Members needed to get home to their district, and work hard, and I understand that. But there are a lot of Members that feel very strongly about this.

We have, I think, 25 cosponsors of the legislation, again, H.R. 3738, the Earmark Reform Act of 2007. It's an issue, Mr. Speaker, that's not going away. And I wouldn't be a bit surprised if next week and the next week and the next week we don't hear about more and more Members whose action in regard to earmarks is a little questionable. And, you know, when you start connecting the dots, in some cases it can become very, very questionable.

So let's try to do the right thing. I'm going to appeal to Members on both sides of the aisle to be a cosponsor of H.R. 3738, which immediately cuts the total amount of earmark spending in half, and it makes sure that no one Member, no matter what party, majority or minority, no matter what committee, committee chairman or ranking member, no matter how threatened a Member might be politically that you want to shore up with these little trinkets of goodies, that's not right, that's not the right way. And if we can't do it the right way, then I would join Mr. FLAKE in saying, Let's get rid of all earmarks.

In the meantime, I think this is not a baby step, as I pointed out, indeed, a giant step in the right direction. And if we can't do it right with that, then the next step should be, I think, total elimination.

I thank the Speaker and I thank my leadership for giving me this opportunity to do this hour. I thank my colleagues for listening, for being here, and to try to understand that this is a Member who is not overly partisan, who has friends on both sides of the aisle, that wants to help all of the Members, but ultimately to get back to helping the American taxpayer and to restore fiscal responsibility in this place.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

30-SOMETHING WORKING GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honor to address the House one more time.

As you know, the 30-something Working Group, we come to share with the Members fact, not fiction. I'm so

glad my good friend from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY), we came into the Congress together, Dr. GINGREY, good friend, I want to borrow that chart from him because it shows how earmarks were cut in half when the Democrats took over. But that's another story. But I'm glad that he has the accurate numbers there, and I'm glad that we're going to have an opportunity to talk about that a little bit more in the future.

□ 1645

Mr. Speaker, we came to the floor yesterday, or last night, and talked about the issue of the President's veto of the SCHIP bill. We, the 30-something Working Group, received a lot of e-mails on that, and we received a lot of phone calls. There were a number of Members that even had questions like, "Is it true that 41 days of what we spend in Iraq could pay for a full year of health care for children? Is it true, 3½ months of what we spend in Iraq, which will come out to almost \$35 billion, will pay for children's health care for 5 years?" On both of those questions I would say, "Yes. Absolutely. The numbers are there." I am going to have my charts here that I had last night hopefully join me here on the floor pretty soon.

It is very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that there are people that are focusing on the President. As far as I am concerned, the President said he was going to veto the SCHIP bill, the children's health care bill, and he did. Now it is up to Members of Congress. Yesterday we voted to set the date for the time that we are going to take up the SCHIP bill again to override the President's veto. I think between now and then, Members are going to have to reflect on if they are on the side of the President, of a bad decision that was a bipartisan bill, Mr. Speaker, that Democrats and Republicans voted in a bipartisan way to send that bill to the President, or are they with the uninsured children of this country.

Like I said last night, there are a number of provisions in the bill that some Members may not agree with. I have been in elected service now going on 14 years, Mr. Speaker. There has always been a provision in a bill that I didn't agree with. But for the greater good, especially when you are talking about health care for children, I saw past that one line or that one provision or that one piece that was not in there. I just want to say that this health care, and let me just share this because I want to make sure that the Members understand, that 10 million low-income children would have had health care in this country. Now, that is in every State. That is in my State of Florida. That is in Ohio. That is in California. That is in New York. That is in Texas. That is in Wyoming. All over. I think it is important that we shed light on that and we continue to talk about that in the face of wasteful spending in the past.

Another thing about this children's health care bill that wouldn't have

been a reality in the 109th Congress, the Congress before this Congress, is the fact that it is paid for. Now, I am going to illustrate in a few minutes how things used to operate here on this House floor. The American people want to move in a new direction. At my house, if we are going to do something, we have to figure out how we are going to pay for it. We are not going to say, We will put it on a credit card and get it on some unforeseen date somewhere down in the future that is not necessarily lined out or identified yet, but we will figure it out somehow. We are going to end up in foreclosure or we are going to end up in a financial situation we can't get ourselves out of.

That is the position we find ourselves in now, Mr. Speaker. That is the reason why, in the majority, this House and the Senate agreed in the pay-as-you-go principles to make sure that if we say we are going to spend something, we are going to pay for it. So that is very, very important. When we look at some of the issues that the other side may bring up as it relates to fiscal responsibility, you have to look at, you just have to look at the irresponsibility, or the lack of responsibility, that the Republican side had when they were in control of this House.

When you look at \$70 billion for the war in Iraq, \$50 billion in subsidies to oil companies, \$8 billion, these are billions, these are not millions, in loss, waste, fraud and abuse of no-bid contracts and billions for schools and roads and clinics in Iraq, but we cannot do the same for our children.

I am speaking in a very simple way here today, Mr. Speaker, because I want to make sure that Members totally understand what I am saying. I don't want to lose anyone with a whole bunch of acronyms in talking about things that are way out, pie in the sky, and some folks may not understand what is going on. The bottom line is, 10 million kids need health care for 5 years.

The other bottom line is the fact that we showed how we would pay for it, not building into an everlasting debt. Now, I am glad that this chart has made it to the floor. I think it is important. I pulled it out last night, and I have been using this chart almost for the last 3 years. We have been updating it, but I think it is important. We talk about foreign debt and we talk about the Bush administration and Republicans here in Congress what they were able to do, \$1.19 trillion in get debt over the last 6 years, and that is between 2001 and 2006. These numbers are from the Treasury Department. These are not KENDRICK MEEK numbers. Forty-two Presidents, 224 years, \$1.01 trillion. I say that to say that the days of just stacking on top of the \$1.9 trillion are over.

Now, when we start going down the line of what is important here, and what is important is making sure that domestically we look at the needs of our children and also of our country.

This is just an example, just to show you the per month. Now this is talking about college costs, but when you look at the per-year costs, that is \$120 billion. I said, four and, 3½ months. I pulled this chart just to prove a point. 3½ months, \$10 billion a month pays for the children's health care program. That is every State block grant, and the States get to apply it the way they want to. Many of them use private health insurance companies to provide that level of insurance that those kids need.

So when the President and some other folk in this Chamber in the minority, our Republican friends, they start to talk about socialized medicine, I don't know where they are getting these numbers from. I don't know where they are getting the logic from. But I can tell you what will be historic is making sure that we are able to enforce this piece of legislation.

I think it is important for Americans to weigh the kind of enthusiasm that the President has and our Republican colleagues may have or they do have on behalf of the Iraqi children. I'm sorry. I am a United States Congressman federalized by the people of the 17th Congressional District to come up and give representation to them and all Americans. I care about other kids in other parts of the world. I have been to Iraq. I have held Iraqi children in my arms. But guess what? I have held American children in my arms. It is not about my kids. I have two kids. We have health care. I thank God we have health care here in Congress. The people elected me to come up here and represent them not for me to have coverage and not for my kids to have coverage that they are not allowed to have, especially those that are financially challenged.

So I want the Members who are not thinking about overriding or who are thinking about joining in with the President and not allowing the Congress, this great democracy, the House and Senate, to override the President on this very bad decision. I also think it is important to highlight the fact that we have had a number, a number of editorials throughout the country, of papers, either it be rural America or urban America, either it be the East Coast or the West Coast or the Midwest or the Deep South or the North by the Canadian border, all throughout the country, they have called the decision that the President made a very, not only unpopular, but wrong decision.

The President is not running for reelection, but we Members of Congress have to run for election every 2 years. The reason why we have elections is to bring about accountability and to make sure that people back home in their given districts have the right people up here.

I think it is important for people to pay very close attention. Mr. Speaker, if this were about politics, I wouldn't spend the time to come down to the floor. I could be doing something else

on this Thursday evening after we took our last votes of the week. I could be somewhere on the telephone talking to constituents, or I could be in my house here in Washington enjoying some time with the kids and the family. But I decided to be here because representation is very, very important in this 2-week span. One day has already passed. We have 9 days left. I want to make sure that American people and every Member of Congress know that in another 9 days, there will be an action to override the President.

What side are they going to be on? Are they going to be on the side of the children and on behalf of the people of the United States? Or are they going to be on the side of the President and the bad decision? I am not saying the President is not for the folks, for the good people of the United States of America. All I'm saying is that 10 million children that are poor and families would have had a guaranteed health care opportunity in their State, at least 10 million of them. That is a big number.

So when I hear the President talk about our obligations to Iraq, I can't help but think about our obligations here to the kids here in the United States and families here in the United States. I am just as passionate as anyone else may be about it. I share that today because I want my Republican colleagues who did not vote, those that voted for the SCHIP bill, congratulations. Thank you on behalf of all Americans and the 10 million children that are seeking health care. But for those who did not vote for the SCHIP bill, for the children's health care bill, I am asking you to rethink your decision for two reasons; one, you have another chance to do the right thing if you missed the opportunity to do the right thing when we pass the children's health care bill here on this floor. You have an opportunity to do the right thing. The second thing, I think more Americans are focused, 72 percent of Americans in a bipartisan poll said that they agree with the version of the children's health care bill that we passed throughout this floor. So that means they could be on the right side of the issue, and they can provide health care for 10 million children that many of them reside in their own congressional districts. I said I would give you two. I gave you three. And I can go on and on and on.

I think it is also important for the staff here in Congress. I have a chart that my former chief of staff left with me. It is actually a picture, Mr. Speaker. It is an iceberg. It has a little tip of the iceberg up there, a little triangle just kind of showing the top, then underwater you can see a majority of the iceberg which is almost 80 or 90 percent of the iceberg. At the top it says, Member of Congress. Right under the iceberg it says, Staff, Congressional staff. I think it is important for those members of the staff that are paying attention to this debate and paying atten-

tion to what is happening right now in the country to talk to your Member or to talk to your ranking member and say that maybe you need to reconsider your vote.

Now, I am talking inside politics here under the dome. Because I don't think that this is an us-against-them kind of philosophy because we have to all be on the side of children. Like some folks say out in the neighborhood, it is what it is. And the bottom line is, 10 million children need health care and we need every person on the ground making that happen.

Also, I think that it is important, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to point out what happened recently. This is a picture of one of the first actions that we took here in this House. You remember. We all voted on it, to put benchmarks in and also timelines as relates to giving responsibility or mandating responsibility of the Iraqi Government to rise to the occasion to patrol the streets of Baghdad so we don't have to continue to watch our troops having to do door-to-door neighborhood-to-neighborhood checks. Put the Iraqi folks up front and allow them to do it, or make them do it, so that we don't have to continue to click off \$10 billion a month, some \$3,316 a second in Iraq, because every time we stay there another day, another month in a combat mode, we continue to lose out.

After that, the vote was so overwhelming to do that, or, as the majority, until that, the Speaker and Leader REID decided, let's override the President because the people wanted a new direction here in the United States. Not just Democrats, not just Republicans, but the people of the United States want it.

□ 1700

Well, here are some of my good friends that are here with the President, my Republican colleagues, not one Democrat in this crowd, outside of the White House standing with the President. Mr. President, we are going to be with you and we are not going to allow the Congress to override your veto.

Now, what happened after this event? Well, the approval rating of Congress overall went straight down. The American people wanted action, and they got more of the same.

I don't want another picture like this, Mr. Speaker, because in nine days, if we find that our Republican colleagues run back down to the White House and stand on the steps with the President and say we stand with the President and we will not allow the Congress to override his veto, I think it will be a very sad day in the United States of America when we provide health care for children abroad, and we are spending \$120 billion a year, and counting, in Iraq, and we have Members of Congress and we have a President who doesn't want to provide health care for 10 million children here in the United States.

I feel we are up here to represent especially those that are most vulnerable. I guess because the kids that will be eligible for the SCHIP program, they can't vote, they are under 18, maybe that is the reason.

But I ask, Mr. Speaker, that those of us that are adults, if you are a grandparent or granddad or you are a senior, or you are a mother or father or an aunt or an uncle, or if your kids have health care, and we talked about that last night, because my kids go to school with other kids, and if someone is in that classroom that has not received health care insurance and they have a cold or they have some sort of ailment, my kids are going to end up falling victim to that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have two of my good colleagues from Ohio, they are about an hour-and-a-half away from each other I guess by car, the Chair of the Ethics Committee and a member of the Ways and Means Committee, who I am happy to serve with on that committee, Mrs. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES, and also Mr. TIM RYAN from the great town of Youngstown, Ohio.

With that, I would like to yield to Mrs. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, this is like *deja vu*. We were right here last night talking about many of these same issues. But these issues are so very important to the people of America, to the children of America, that it just makes sense that we are back here again trying to make sure that people across America understand the importance of providing health care for children across America.

I was sitting and smiling as you were talking about your children, or someone having a child and they go to day care and they come back home and the next day they are ill. The germs just keep floating around and around. If you have children that don't have access to health care, you present a real problem for other children in day care, and for yourself as well.

It is a problem that not only will greet those who vote against this legislation in 2007 and 2008, but they will look back on these young people who are now 4, 5, 6, 10 years old, in 10 years these children will say, well, where were you when I needed some health care? Now that I am old enough to vote, I remember back in 2007 when you voted not to support children's health care across America. I remember. I might have been a better athlete. I might have been a better student. I might have been able to go to medical school. Instead, because I wasn't able to have the appropriate health care, I wasn't able to pay attention to what is going on in class, I wasn't able to have the appropriate dental care, I am doing X.

So it will not only resound throughout America in 2007 on October 18 when we vote to override the President's

veto; it will resound for years and years to come.

You know what the wonderful thing I have to say to Mr. RYAN and Mr. MEEK is? That today I have been going around the floor of the House talking to some of my colleagues who voted to support the SCHIP bill several weeks ago and asking them are they going to hold up their vote; are they going to vote with us when the time comes up on October 18. And I haven't run into anybody yet, except for one who has got an issue about something else, that said they won't be with us again on October 18 when it is time to override the President's veto of the State Children's Health Insurance Program.

This program has been so valuable. It has been so useful. It has been a hallmark for children, 6 million children in the United States of America; and it is time for us to extend it to another 4 million and to every child in these United States who needs to have great health care, some of the greatest health care that is given to all the rest of the people.

The funny thing is, I happened to be over in the United Arab Emirates, and I was seated at the table of one of the higher-ups of this country, and he said, you know, my father just came back from Cleveland getting health care services. I said, he did? And I got the information.

I am not mad at him. He can come here, we have the greatest health care in the world, and he can get it. But how is it that children right here in America can't get that same health care? That is the problem, and we got to fix it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Real quick, reclaiming my time, that is a perfect example of what we were talking about. I mean, you weren't drinking any "Haterade" or anything like that. You were just like, wow, I have constituents that would love to get the same health care.

Mr. Speaker, that is what I was talking about just 10 minutes ago, kids abroad having opportunities that American kids don't have, and then we have a President to speak passionately about our responsibilities in Iraq and Iraqi children. But, better yet, we have children here in the United States, Mr. Speaker.

I can tell you, it is so wrong, the veto that the President carried out. I mean, it is so wrong. I don't know how, Mr. Speaker, to be honest with you, I don't know how Members cannot vote to override the President. Because, Mr. RYAN, you know, and we said several times on this floor, that you have Members now, and you served with them too, Madam Chairman, that are watching us now and reading about the Congress, that was once upon a time, Mr. Speaker, a Member of Congress. They make bad decisions. Republicans, Democrats and independents said, guess what, we are going to send somebody up there that can make good decisions.

I am going to share with you, and if this was about politics, I wouldn't say this, and thank you for yielding, some of the new Republican Members that are on the other side can very well be reading the paper and watching Congress on television after next November if they vote against a chance for 10 million children to receive health care.

Mr. Speaker, I don't care who you are, I don't care where you came from, if you're a stone-cold conservative, Republican, what have you, we are talking about something that is paid for. It's not going into the debt. We are talking about something that provides health care for the most vulnerable children in the United States of America, and we are talking about doing the right thing as it relates to good government. The same individuals vote for subsidies for oil companies but they don't want to vote on behalf of the kids.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. This is about making our country more competitive, period. This is a moral issue. This is an issue that needs to be handled, and needs to be addressed. But as our friend from Cleveland was saying, this is about those kids in Cleveland and Youngstown and Miami becoming more competitive because they are healthier, they go to school healthier, they are not getting all the other kids sick, and therefore everyone in the classroom is at a better starting point to learn.

When you talk about competing with China, you talk about competing with India, 1.3 billion people in each country, and we only have 300 million, we need to get everybody on a level playing field. That is what this Children's Health Care Program does.

Mr. Speaker, look at what the President would do by not signing this bill. Our bill will cover all of these kids. It is a bipartisan bill, the congressional bill that passed; 3.8 million additional kids. Now if the President gets his way, in his budget 840,000 children will lose their SCHIP coverage, because health care costs are going up, more kids are going into the system, the poverty rate is going up. So this is about making us more competitive by making sure that the poor kids, middle-class kids in our country, have an opportunity to get a little bit of health care.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Yesterday, again, we had an opportunity to have this discussion. The interesting thing is that we are not alone in the position that we have taken about SCHIP. We are not alone, because newspapers across this country, across the country the newspapers have said that this President is wrong.

The Washington Post: "Children's Health Check."

The Austin American Statesman: "For many kids, the doctor is not in."

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution: "Kids lose out to politics."

The Chicago Tribune: "A sound children's health bill," talking about SCHIP.

The New York Times: "Overcoming a veto and helping children."

The Daily News: "Presidential malpractice," the veto on SCHIP is "Presidential malpractice."

The Sacramento Bee: "The SCHIPs are down."

The Akron Beacon Journal: "SCHIP at the brink."

The USA Today: "Plan to protect kids' health spawns needless veto fight."

The Charlotte Observer: "Vote for healthy kids."

The Des Moines Register: "Don't abandon kids needing health care."

Charleston Gazette: "Child health—override the President."

The Houston Chronicle: "Wrong priorities—Presidential veto of SCHIP expansion would place ideology over children's health."

The Republican: "Bush abandons kids on health insurance."

And the Connecticut Post: "Insurance change to help children."

Do you know what I heard the President say today? "I am willing to negotiate."

Mr. President, don't negotiate with our children. Give them health care. Forget the negotiation, forget the political stuff you're trying to do on SCHIP, and all your Republican and Democratic colleagues in the House. Override the veto.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the President said the other day, these kids can go to the emergency room.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Have you ever been to the emergency room?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Yes.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. What's it like?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. If you can get in. For many of the kids, you sit there and wait for hours and hours and hours, if you can even get in; and the cost, and this is the point that we are trying to make, we are trying to save the taxpayers money. There is a reimbursement that goes back to these emergency rooms when they cover charity care when people go in without health insurance.

Mr. Speaker, now, many of us can go, and you talk to the CEO who runs a hospital, and I have one in mind in my district that I talk to all the time, where he tells me at every meeting we are at, whether we are talking about giving money to build another hospital or expand their facilities, or anything else, he always brings this up. I would rather give these kids a prescription for \$20 or \$30 than to see them two or three weeks later come into the emergency room with pneumonia, and it costs \$20,000 or \$30,000.

This is what this bill does. This saves us money, not to mention the fact that the kid will miss school, the kid will go to school and get other kids sick. But to have a President of the United States in 2007 lack the sensitivity of what these families go through who do not have health care, to say, well, you can go to the emergency room.

Mr. Speaker, the President doesn't have to go to the emergency room

when he goes to a fancy Navy hospital. Many of us, we don't have to go to the emergency room. Many families who have health insurance, they don't have to go. But there is a segment of our population that is forced as a last resort to end up in an emergency room because they have nowhere else to go.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Then the President says, if the gentleman will yield, that everybody in America can get health care because they can go to the emergency room. Could you imagine if the 4 million children who don't have any health care coverage lined up in emergency rooms all across America, what a dilemma we would be in. It's just outrageous.

Mr. Speaker, the other important thing we have to think about is the fact that when families have children who are sick in them, that means parents have to stay off work, that means they aren't able to function or pay attention on the job, that means they are dysfunctional at their job if they go there because they are going to have to leave and pick up their children. I mean, it goes on and on and on.

Health care for children is good for America, it's good for American business, it's good for American families. George Bush needs a wake-up call.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. How about the fact, before I go to my friend, my good friend, how about the fact that we want to help these kids before it's an emergency. You're saying to go to the emergency room. Mr. President, we don't want to wait. Mr. Speaker, we don't want to wait for it to be an emergency, for God's sake.

□ 1715

Now, we understand that the way things have been run by this executive branch over the past 6 years, everything does seem to turn into an emergency. There is always a crisis going on with these guys. But this is about preventive care, saving the taxpayers money, and making very smart, prudent investments with the hard-earned money that people send here.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Before I say something here as it relates what you just said, Mr. RYAN, I think it is important for us to at least look at the argument that the President has not been able to make. He hasn't been able to make that Democrats on Capitol Hill are trying to do something that the American people should not do. We can't say that because 18 Republicans in the Senate supported the bill along with the Democrats. It is bipartisan. And 43 Governors, including 16 Republicans, are in support of the SCHIP bill and children's health care, and 270 organizations representing millions of Americans are in support. And a strong majority of the American people are in support. I have the quotes here, and I hope to put it on the 30-something Web site about what Republicans have said about the veto and even prior to the veto.

I think it is also important to point out, Mr. RYAN and Mrs. TUBBS JONES, I

think it is important for us not just to focus on the action of the President. We do have the opportunity to override. The President, like I said last night, he can't run for reelection again because he is term limited out. So the only way the American people can stand in judgment of him is when someone calls their home and asks how they feel about how the President is running the country, and those numbers are very, very low as to whether the President is doing a good job.

But when you look at this issue of health care, I think there this is a gut check for many Members of Congress. There are some numbers, and I heard Congresswoman STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES asking Members on the floor today that voted in the affirmative for the bill: Are you going to vote with us to override the President? Out of two conversations I heard, it was "yes." But I think it is important that each Member of Congress start to use their relationships with other Members of Congress, especially with the other side of the aisle. My conversation with some of my colleagues today have been, Please, I kind of like you. I think you are a nice guy. I don't know if you want to make a career decision to be with the President because that is what is going to happen. The President is talking about negotiating on children's health care when, and I am looking at a quote here, and quotes and past statements by the President, I don't think they hold any great value as to what he is going to do if it has nothing to do with Iraq.

He said at the Republican National Convention in 2004: "In a new term, we will lead in an aggressive effort to enroll millions of children who are eligible but not yet signed up for government health care insurance programs. We will not allow the lack of attention or information to stand between these children and health care that they need."

Well, I can tell you, based on his veto, he is standing in the schoolhouse door as it relates to children receiving health care. I have been talking to my colleagues in the halls and saying, Listen you need to be on the side of the children. Not with the Democrats, not with some group, either liberal or conservative, moderate, you have to be on the side of the children.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Lest you think it is only Democrats saying SCHIP is a good bill, let me read the statements of some of my Republican colleagues. Senator PAT ROBERTS of Kansas said: "The administration is threatening to veto this bill because of 'excessive spending' and their belief that this bill is a step towards federalization of health care. I am not for excessive spending and strongly oppose the federalization of health care, and if the administration's concerns with this bill were accurate, I would support a veto. But bluntly put, they are not." That is Senator PAT ROBERTS of Kansas.

JIM RAMSTAD of Minnesota said: "We have a moral obligation to cover all our children so every child in America can grow up healthy. It is the right thing to do. It is also the cost-effective thing to do, and that is why I strongly support extending and expanding SCHIP. I also hope we can work together to provide greater access to private insurance coverage for America's children and other uninsured Americans. There is no better investment than to invest in the health and well-being of America's children." That is JIM RAMSTAD.

Mr. REGULA, one of the senior Members in the House of Representatives said: "I voted today with the majority of my colleagues in the House of Representatives to extend SCHIP to expand health care access to the children of working parents whose income is too high to qualify for Medicaid but who, for one reason or another, do not have any health insurance coverage through their employers. The program has proven to be extremely successful in covering many children who have fallen through the cracks and providing them with quality preventive and acute health care. This bill provides States with new tools to enroll more eligible low-income children with health care coverage." That's RALPH REGULA of Ohio.

VERNON EHLERS of Michigan: "I grew up with acute asthma, and I know personally how important it is for kids to have access to affordable health care. This bill will continue to provide health care coverage to millions of children who otherwise would be uninsured."

Finally, from STEVE LATOURETTE, Republican from Ohio, "The children's insurance program is too important to not support." STEVE LATOURETTE.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. One of the arguments we get from what is a shrinking minority of Members of the House that aren't helping the override proceedings is that this is socialized medicine. And Bush is saying that this is somehow socialized medicine.

When this bill passed in 1997, there was a Republican House and a Republican Senate and a Democratic President. So what you are saying is Newt Gingrich and friends during the 1990s were for socialized medicine because they started it. It is an inaccurate argument.

The government is not taking over anything. You are still going to go to your doctor and find out where you want to go, kind of like Medicare. But this is about providing children that are poor with health care. The President is trying to say that he wants to clean it up and he is trying to say that he wants to negotiate. This is different than the House bill that passed. This is the Senate version. The Senate has enough votes to override the veto. As the gentlewoman from Ohio said, there are all these Republican Senators. We have a bunch of Republican House Members. And the other day when we

were debating it, there were very few Republican House Members that even wanted to come down here and make the argument about what is going on here.

We continue today, and we will next week and the following week continue to urge the President. But we need the American people to stand up and say can't Congress at least agree on health care for children. And the only roadblock is the President's veto pen and a group of Republicans in the House.

Before I yield, I want to be sure to say that the socialized medicine argument is a red herring because the Republicans created this bill in the 1990s, signed by President Clinton, but in a Republican-controlled House.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the other interesting thing is when you have 270 organizations from all over this country signed onto a letter to the President urging him to support SCHIP, and I am going to just read the last paragraph which says, "We know you agree that our children are our Nation's most precious resource, and that investments in health care for kids reap benefits that last a lifetime. We urge you to stand with our children and to put their interests ahead of the partisan rhetoric that is threatening a timely SCHIP reauthorization. We welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues with you and to work with you on this and other initiatives to be sure that all of our Nation's children have access to the health care coverage that they need."

Mr. MEEK of Florida. These are the organizations that would like, that want children to have health care. Am I correct?

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. That's correct. First Focus of Alexandria; National Association of Community Health Centers; AARP; Action for Children of North Carolina; African American Health Alliance; AIDS Alliance for Children; AIDS Institute; Alliance for Children, Youth & Families; Alliance for Children and Families; Alliance for Excellent Education; Alliance for Retired Americans; Aloha United Way; Ambulatory Pediatric Association; American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry; American Academy of Family Physicians; American Academy of Nursing; American Academy of Pediatrics; American Academy of Pediatrics of Colorado; American Academy of Pediatrics of Iowa; American Academy of Pediatrics of Pennsylvania; American Academy of Pediatrics of Rhode Island; American Association of People with Disabilities of Washington, D.C.; the American Association of University Women of Utah; American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities; American Cancer Society; American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American Counseling Association; American Dental Association; American Dental Hygienists Association; American Diabetes; American Health Quality; American Heart Association; American Hu-

mane Association; American Mental Health; American Music Therapy; American Network of Community Options and Resources. All of these organizations want SCHIP to be reauthorized. American Nurses; American Psychiatric Association; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; AMERIGROUP Corporation; Anchor House.

All of these organizations want SCHIP, and the list goes on. Centene Corporation; Center for Civil Justice; Center for Community Solutions of Cleveland, Ohio; Center for Law and Social Policy; Center for Medicare Advocacy; Center for Public Policy Priorities; Central County United Way; Chicago Foundation for Women; Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative; Child and Family Policy Center; Child Care; Child Welfare; Children First for Oregon; Children Now; Children's Action Alliance; Children's Defense Fund, and the list goes on. How can this President stand up to all 270 organizations?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Those groups want it.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. They do want it. And the thing about it, they should want it and Members of Congress should want it. These are children. They don't wear \$800 suits and \$200 silk ties and all of the things that big-time folk wear here in Washington, D.C.

But I think it is important that letter that was sent to the President should be sent to Members of Congress to remind them the reason why they are up here.

Some Members say KENDRICK is not talking about me. He can't be talking about me.

□ 1730

Someone who might have read the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, said, well, he's not talking about me; yes, you too. Your children, too. Your grandchild, too. So if you're within the sound of my voice and you hear what I'm saying, your neighbor's child, too. Your child will be affected by 10 million children not having health care, will be affected by the lack of health care that that child will not have if the President and the Republican minority have their way.

Now, I commend Democrats that voted for the bill, I commend Republicans that voted for the bill, but we should make sure that we point out the fact that there are a number of Republicans in this House that will stand or say they will stand with the President. They're saying they stand with the President. They're not saying they're going to stand with the American people.

I think you're 110 percent right for sharing that with Members of Congress and letting them know, and these associations should approach their Member if they voted for it or not, just to remind them that this is very, very important.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I think the debate, too, has gotten a little bit off

track, and I quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, find this shameful.

One of the statements made by the President: Democratic Members of Congress are putting health coverage for poor children at risk so they can score political points in Washington.

Now, that's a shame that that kind of rhetoric's coming out of the White House at this point. When you look, as Mrs. JONES has stated earlier, all of the Republicans that are supporting this bill, this is a bipartisan bill. But there is a small fringe group in this House and the White House that will not allow this bill to pass.

Score political points? We're trying to provide health care for kids. This is not where we have a debate and everyone gets little debating points as we go along, and there are a lot of Republicans in this House and in the Senate that want to support children's health care, and for the executive branch to make these kinds of statements I think totally poisons the debate.

Here's another thing that some of our friends are saying on the other side, that SCHIP is incremental steps to a government-run health care program. That's just not true. These are children who are now eligible for the program but there's not enough money in it to actually cover them, we're trying to put the money in to cover them. They will go to private doctors and they will get private health care. They're not going to go to the VA, the government-run veterans hospitals. They're going to go to private docs. They're going to be involved in private health care plans.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. And the crazy thing about that statement is that if you talk to senior Americans across this country and you ask them about Medicare, they will say that Medicare is one of the finest systems of delivery of health care in this country, and they are so happy that we have Medicare and that the cost of running Medicare is equal to the cost that people pay, that it is a well-run program. So, even if we were talking about government-run health care, which we are not, let's talk about how great a program Medicare and Medicaid have been.

So I just want to close out, as I leave the two of you with the last few minutes of this, I'm calling upon everybody who can hear what I'm saying, and if you can't hear me and you're reading my lips or there's a script going under your TV, call your congressperson. Ask them, are you supporting SCHIP? If they are not, ask them why. Call your neighbor; ask your neighbor to call your congressperson.

This is down to a battle, and the battle is either for the children or against the children, and we're for the children.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. TIM and I have a good friend by the name of Charles, and Charles was saying how excited that he was about the fact that we pointed out the folks that wanted chil-

dren to be covered by health insurance. And I think it's important that even if we continue to say everything that we're saying and we say it 10 times, it's not going to hurt. It's not going to hurt the debate here.

Let me just back up. What the White House is doing now, Mr. Speaker, and I just want to kind of bring this out into the light, let's drag it out from out of the dark halls of Congress. What's happening right now, they're getting invitations to the White House: come sit down with the Vice President or the President or some major policy person, saying, you know, a little tea, a little coffee, some cookies.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Little pressure.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Little pressure in the Roosevelt Room, somewhere around there. You are with us on this stopping the oversight of the President's veto; please tell me that you're with us.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. You want a bridge to nowhere?

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Some of them are saying, well, yeah, I'm with you, you know, I'm all impressed, and they go in and take a picture with the President in the Oval Office and they go back home or they come back over here to the Capitol. That's what's happening very quietly. I just want to put that out because that's the way the White House has been successful in getting this kind of picture.

Now, I know every last Member here in this picture, and I know the conversations I've had with them one-on-one about the war in Iraq, but better yet, they're down there with the President. All I'm saying is that all of the groups, some, was it 270 and counting, are saying that we want health care for children.

And all of the Members, I want to the make sure I say it right, a number of Republicans in the Senate that voted for this measure, and over here in the House?

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Forty-five Republicans voted in the House.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Forty-five Republicans voted with Democrats on this bill.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Sixty-eight Senators, including 18 Republicans.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I think somewhere like 18 or 20 that we would need to override. I think that number now is somewhere maybe, you know, around 15 or 16 we have to convince them to do it. I want to drag this out and put it out into the light.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I want to say that the most important point that I'd like to highlight before we leave, because I know time is running out, all of the waste over the past 6 years under this administration, with the nonsense with FEMA and trailers sitting in Arkansas somewhere that have rotted, the billions of dollars wasted in Iraq where unbid contracts, Halliburton wasting money, losing hundreds of millions of dollars in cash, the tax cuts that went primarily to the top 1 percent, cor-

porate welfare that goes to the oil companies, \$14 or \$15 billion, we are starting to rein all that in and the President picks children's health care to draw the line in the sand and say we're spending way too much money?

That is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. That is unacceptable. All of these opportunities wasted, and now you pick these people? You don't take on the oil companies. You don't take on the top 1 percent billionaires who got tax cuts. You're going to take on little kids? That's the message? That's your legacy? God bless you.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We have I guess somewhere about a minute 30 left. I yield to Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, chair of the House administration in appropriations. She's an appropriator.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank you very much, and just really briefly, I want to thank you and congratulate my colleagues for holding down the fort for the last hour and standing up for our Nation's children because it's just absolutely preposterous that the President vetoed an opportunity to expand access to health care for millions of children.

And we are going to continue to fight to our last breath in the Democratic Caucus and try to override this veto so we can make sure that we do the right thing by our children. We will be here regularly week after week to make sure we stand up for people who need the most help.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I was just told that we have four additional minutes. I was given some information that was incorrect, so if you wanted to continue.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. I mean, what we have tried to do in the 30 Something Working Group is to highlight, particularly when it comes to the domestic agenda of this caucus, what the other side, our good friends on the other side of the aisle's, decisions and the ramifications of those decisions and the impact that they will have.

And we had 45 Republicans do the right thing on this SCHIP vote on this children's health insurance bill, and what we need them to do is cast the right decision again, vote to override the President's veto, and we need about 17 Republicans to come with us to realize that they made the wrong decision in voting against it so that we can make sure that we give access to children, not those who are already covered by private health insurance.

The President has tried to spread the misperception that this program and this expansion is about taking kids off of private health insurance and putting them on government health insurance. That is totally false.

What is actually happening is we are going to expand access to health insurance for children that don't currently have it, for children whose families fall in the gap between Medicaid and private health care. That's what the children's health insurance program has

been all about, and we need to make sure that the members of this institution, of the United States House of Representatives, be the representative body that they were elected to be and do the right thing by our kids.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. I totally agree and that's the point. Every argument that has been put in front of this piece of legislation is a phony argument that doesn't stand the scrutiny of any kind of debate.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. It's just because when the facts don't meet their views, they make them up.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. It's socialized medicine and then people are going to private health care. You say that it's a Democratic ploy and we have all this Republican support. The President says he's for the program, but 840,000 kids would get knocked off of it. It just doesn't work.

So I'm glad we're here to clean it up and come do our job. So good seeing everybody.

Did I announce last night, I wanted to announce before we close that Kelly Pavlik from Youngstown won the middleweight title on Saturday and what a great kid he is.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. We're all happy for him.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. So Youngstown, Ohio, is now the home of the WBO/WBC middleweight champion of the world.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I'm pretty sure there's some tourism dollars in there somewhere.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. I just want to say, on behalf of other Members of the House of Representatives, I am so proud of this 30 Something Working Group. I'm proud to have been able to participate in this time with Mr. MEEK, under his great leadership; and Mr. RYAN, under his great leadership; and Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, under her great leadership. You're continuing to fight on behalf of the people of America, and I'm thankful to be considered 30 something.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. I just want to say that you have increased our stock. To have a chair of a full committee with us two days in a row and to have a cardinal to join us at the last minute, even though a member of the 30 Something Working Group here on the floor with Mr. RYAN and myself, I mean, in the light of other Members, they really may feel we have moved up in the world to have these two gentle ladies here with us but yet powerful.

Mr. RYAN of Wisconsin. We just hang out in the glow.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, with that we would like to thank the Speaker and the Democratic leadership for allowing us to have this hour. We would like for the Members, if they want to get a copy of the letter that Chairwoman TUBBS JONES read into the RECORD, they can go on www.speaker.gov and also all of the groups that support and the folks, the Republican Senators, of why SCHIP should be overridden or passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 2:30 p.m.

Mr. McNULTY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today after 2:30 p.m. on account of personal reasons.

Mr. VISCLOSKY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of family illness.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. WOOLSEY) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. CUMMINGS, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. WELDON of Florida) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, October 11.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, October 11.

Mr. WOLF, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Member (at her own request) to revise and extend her remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

SENATE BILLS REFERRED

A bill and a concurrent resolution of the Senate of the following titles were taken from the Speaker's table and, under the rule, referred as follows:

S. 2106. An act to provide nationwide subpoena authority for actions brought under the September 11 Victim Compensation Fund of 2001; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

S. Con. Res. 45. Concurrent resolution commending the Ed Block Courage Award Foundation for its work in aiding children and families affected by child abuse, and designating November 2007 as National Courage Month; to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, October 5, 2007, at 3 p.m.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3606. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting

the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier Model DHC-8-100, DHC-8-200, and DHC-8-300 Series Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27713; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-240-AD; Amendment 39-15079; AD 2007-12-01] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3607. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Dassault Model Mystere-Falcon 50 Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27806; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-287-AD; Amendment 39-15090; AD 2007-12-12] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3608. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (EMBRAER) Model EMB-135 Airplanes and Model EMB-145, -145ER, -145MR, -145LR, -145XR, -145MP, and -145EP Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2006-26354; Directorate Identifier 2006-NM-196-AD; Amendment 39-15095; AD 2007-12-17] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3609. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company (GE) CF34-10E Series Turbofan Engines [Docket No. FAA-2006-25896; Directorate Identifier 2006-NE-33-AD; Amendment 39-15093; AD 2007-12-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3610. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company (GE) GE90 Series Turbofan Engines [Docket No. FAA-2007-27283; Directorate Identifier 2007-NE-05-AD; Amendment 39-15046; AD 2007-10-15] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3611. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca Arriel 2B Series Turbohaft Engines [Docket No. FAA-2005-23809; Directorate Identifier 2005-NE-52-AD; Amendment 39-15048; AD 2007-10-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3612. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Turbomeca Arriel 2B1 Turbohaft Engines [Docket No. FAA-2007-28009; Directorate Identifier 2007-NE-16-AD; Amendment 39-15047; AD 2007-10-06] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3613. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule — Airworthiness Directives; Pacific Aerospace Limited Model 750XL Airplanes [Docket No. FAA-2007-27859; Directorate Identifier 2007-CE-033-AD; Amendment 39-15049; AD 2007-12-08] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received September 18, 2007, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3614. A letter from the Program Analyst, Department of Transportation, transmitting