

As Congress heads home for the recess, I urge Members to review the proposed legislation with their state leadership. I am primarily concerned about the effect this legislation may have on Mississippi's financial stability, both now and in the future. These so-called "reforms" would severely impact Mississippi's budget and our ability to fund other important priorities, like education and public safety. Before Congress makes such sweeping reforms to our healthcare system, I implore you to first ensure that these changes are efficient and beneficial to our citizens, without burdening our states through unfunded mandates.

Sincerely,

HALEY BARBOUR,
Governor, Mississippi.

SEPTEMBER 8, 2009.

Hon. ROGER WICKER,
*U.S. Senate, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR WICKER: Governors across the nation are growing increasingly concerned about the financial strain rising healthcare costs are putting on state budgets. During the National Governors Association (NGA) meeting in July, governors—both Republicans and Democrats—formalized their opposition to current Congressional reform proposals by issuing a policy opposing unfunded mandates that shifts costs to the states. This will necessarily require almost all states to raise taxes to manage this burden. In Mississippi, the issue of Medicaid expansion hits close to home, since our state's share of the Medicaid program is currently \$707 million, or 12 percent of a \$5.87 billion state supported budget, which includes temporary stimulus funds.

Nevertheless, the current proposals, both in the House and Senate, will expand the Medicaid program at additional costs paid not by the federal government, but passed down to the states. After a call with the governors representing the NGA Healthcare Task Force and the Senate Finance Committee, Chairman Baucus told the news media it would be impossible for the federal government to pick up all the costs for new Medicaid recipients; thus, states would have to bear some of the costs.

Why? Although CBO appears to estimate that H.R. 3200 will cost more than \$1 trillion over the next ten years, the fine print reveals the true cost would be much higher. By imposing tax increases early in the budget window, before the bulk of the spending occurs, the true cost of the bill is hidden by budget gimmickry. Delaying the implementation of the program until the fourth year also uses budget tricks effectively to hide the immense long-term cost of this proposal. CBO has projected a 10 year deficit of more than \$200 billion associated with the bill as is. However, when the full cost of the bill is taken into account after it is fully implemented, the spending in the bill skyrockets to nearly \$2 trillion over 10 years (2014-23) with a deficit of more than \$600 billion. I have included an attachment showing the scoring of H.R. 3200 the only comprehensive health care reform bill CBO has scored.

According to the National Association of State Budget Officers, Medicaid expenses in 2007 for federal and state government combined were \$336 billion. This number is projected to reach \$523 billion by 2013, a 56 percent increase in just six years. Should the reforms being debated in Congress become law, Mississippi would be saddled with an average increase of \$360 million in additional costs, on top of the already \$707 million it costs to fund Mississippi's annual state share of the Medicaid program. These proposals, which would cover all individuals at 133 percent federal poverty level (FPL), will burden

state budgets, forcing states to raise taxes. In Mississippi, that would necessarily mean increases in our state income or sales tax rates. Mississippi, like so many states, simply can't afford to pick up the tab for another unfunded mandate passed by Congress.

Such state tax increases would be on top of the federal tax increases already included in the House and Senate bills, like huge tax increases on small businesses whether in the form of an additional 8 percent payroll tax or a 5.4 percent income tax surcharge. During a deep recession, when most people believe job creation and economic growth should be top priorities, huge tax increases will make it more expensive to employ people; consequently, employers will employ fewer people.

Medicare, the nation's largest provider of health coverage for the elderly and people with disabilities covering over 46 million Americans, is on the chopping block. CBO has estimated that provisions in H.R. 3200 would lead to a total of \$162.2 billion in cuts being taken from Medicare Advantage plans. This \$162.2 billion impacts 11 million people and represents nearly \$15,000 in new costs passed to every Medicare Advantage senior beneficiary. These harmful and arbitrary cuts could result in Medicare Advantage plans dropping out of the program, harming beneficiary choice, and causing millions of seniors to lose their current coverage. Moreover, the bill grants federal bureaucrats the power to eliminate the Medicare Advantage program entirely, making the oft-repeated statement, "if you like your plan you can keep it," ring hollow for seniors.

Lastly, if we are trying to make health care more affordable, how do you leave out tort reform? After all, litigation and the resulting practice of defensive medicine add tens of billions to the cost of health care. In Mississippi we passed comprehensive tort reform in 2004, partially to stop lawsuit abuse in the area of medical liability. It worked. Medical liability insurance costs are down 42 percent, and doctors have received an average rebate of 20 percent of their annual paid premium. The number of medical liability lawsuits against Mississippi doctors fell almost 90 percent one year after tort reform went into effect. Doctors have quit leaving the state and limiting their practices to avoid lawsuit abuse.

With all the issues concerning a government-run health care system, I wanted to warn you of the state tax increases Mississippi will shoulder on top of the federal tax increases in the pending bills as well as my concern for the increased costs our senior citizens will face as Medicare Advantage is cut. Congress must slow down and work in a bipartisan manner. Everybody agrees that health reform is needed, but it should be done thoughtfully. I hope you'll keep this important information in mind when proposals that shift costs to states or to our senior citizens are considered.

Sincerely,

HALEY BARBOUR,
Governor, Mississippi.

JULY 21, 2009.

Hon. BENJAMIN NELSON,
U.S. Senator, Hart Building, Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE JOHANNIS,
*U.S. Senator, Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.*

DEAR SENATOR NELSON AND SENATOR JOHANNIS: I just returned from the National Governors Association meeting and much of the discussion among Governors was about health care. As former Governors, I thought you might appreciate the information that we received from the NGA staff. Attached are seven handouts.

The handouts and discussion among Governors reflect concerns about funding, cost,

Medicaid, employer mandate, and insurance reforms. The single most important concern was this legislation would be the biggest unfunded mandate on the fifty states in the history of our country.

President Obama has told the Governors that health care reform must not be an unfunded mandate for the states. I am in strong agreement that an unfunded health care mandate would be unfair to state taxpayers.

In handout 4, NGA Executive Director Ray Scheppach outlines concerns about Medicaid in the context of health care reform. He indicates that if the Medicaid expansion becomes an unfunded mandate, states are likely to reduce their investments in education. That would be very unfortunate and as Scheppach writes "Reducing state education investment will lower U.S. competitiveness, productivity and real income of U.S. citizens. This is not good long-run policy for the U.S."

While I have other concerns about health care reform, one of the most troubling aspects is the potential for an unfunded mandate on the states. I strongly urge you to avoid an unfunded mandate on the states. Thank you.

Sincerely,

DAVE HEINEMAN,
Governor, Nebraska.

FORMER CONGRESSMAN
BRADEMAS AWARDED HONORARY
DEGREE BY THE AMERICAN COLLEGE OF GREECE

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. SARBANES. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to note that on June 27, 2009, our distinguished former colleague in the House of Representatives, Dr. John Brademas, was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by The American College of Greece.

John Brademas was the first Greek-American elected to the United States House of Representatives and as such this honorary degree from The American College of Greece has particular symbolic resonance. I add, however, that this is the 55th honorary degree received by Dr. Brademas.

Madam Speaker, the remarks of Dr. Brademas at The American College of Greece on June 27, 2009 follow.

JUNE 27, 2009.

REMARKS OF DR. JOHN BRADEMAs, PRESIDENT EMERITUS, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, NEO FALIRO, PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP STADIUM, ATHENS, GREECE

Father Constantinos, President Horner, Dr. Sue Horner, Consul General McKeever, Chancellor Bailey, chairman Peter Thun of the Board of Trustees, Senior Vice President Protopsaltis, fellow honorees, members of the faculty and graduating students of The American College of Greece.

It is for more than one reason that I count the award I have just received among the great honors of my life, and I'm especially pleased that my wife, Mary Ellen, a practicing physician, was able to break away from New York City to join us here.

In the first place, this is a degree from The American College of Greece. As you know, my late father, Stephen J. Brademas, was born in Greece—in Kalamata—and my two brothers and sister and I were all raised to be deeply proud of our Hellenic heritage.

"Be proud that you are an American", my father used to say, but "be proud, too, that you are a Greek!"

All four of the Brademas children were deeply conscious of the importance of our Greek background.

Here let me say how pleased I am that my cousin, Anna Bredima, General Counsel for the Union of Greek Shipowners, is here today with her two children, Evangelo and Ersiliana.

Anna, by the way, is a graduate of Pierce College.

Although my mother was not of Greek descent she was, like her father, a teacher—and that fact emphasizes another dimension of his Greek ancestry that my father used to press upon his children—the importance of learning, of knowledge, of education.

A second dimension of the history of Greece that my father and I often discussed was democracy. "We Greeks invented democracy!" my father reminded us, and said that some of us should still practice it.

Accordingly, after graduating from Harvard University and one year of postgraduate study there, I went to England, on a Rhodes Scholarship, to study at Oxford University. At Oxford, I wrote a doctoral dissertation on the anarchist movement in Spain but I like to note that although I studied anarchism, I did not practice it!

For on my return to my hometown in Indiana, I immediately plunged into politics and became a candidate for election to the Congress of the United States. Just old enough—25—under our Constitution to be a candidate, I lost my first race by half a percent. Naturally, I ran again, two years later, but lost a second time. Undaunted, I was first elected, on my third attempt, and then ten times re-elected. So I served as a Member of Congress for 22 years.

In the House of Representatives, I gave particular attention to writing legislation to support schools, colleges and universities; and the students who attend them; to measures to help libraries and museums; and the arts and the humanities, generally.

In my last four years as a Member of Congress, I was the Majority Whip of the House of Representatives, an assignment that brought me every other week, with Speaker of the House of Representatives, "Tip" O'Neill of Massachusetts, and the other Democratic Leaders of the House and Senate to breakfast at the White House with President Jimmy Carter and Vice President Walter Mondale. All Democrats, we talked politics and policy.

It was, of course, while a Member of Congress that I became deeply involved in the issue of Cyprus, a matter that continues to preoccupy me. I worked closely then with my valued friend, also a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford, and the first Greek-American elected to the United States Senate, Paul S. Sarbanes. And I'm pleased to note that Paul's son, John Sarbanes, now serves in the United States House of Representatives.

As I am the son of a Greek immigrant, I am pleased to call your attention to another son of Greek immigrants, both his father and mother. I speak of Peter C. Peterson, the highly successful and highly respected American business leader and public servant. Peter G. Peterson, co-founder of Blackstone Group and former Secretary of Commerce, has just published a fascinating book, *The Education of an American Dreamer*, which I am pleased to present to President Horner for the College library. Your faculty and students will find the story of this remarkable son of Greek immigrants inspiring. I am confident.

More modestly, I am pleased also to present a book of my own to The American College of Greece, *The Politics of Education*,

in which I describe my experience as a Member of Congress in writing legislation to assist schools, colleges and universities; the students who attend them; and measures to assist libraries and museums.

I move ahead, In 1980, as a result of the landslide victory of Ronald Reagan, I lost my race for reelection to a twelfth term. Shortly thereafter, I was invited to become president of New York University, the largest private, or independent, university in the United States. In 1991 I became president emeritus, my present responsibility, so now I'm only going some twelve hours a day!

If I were to single out one dimension, of my commitment to strengthening New York University, it would be that I gave particular attention to building our programs for the study of other countries and cultures, not only through programs in New York City but centers abroad as well. Much of the responsibility of an American university president focuses on fundraising, both from the Federal government and private sources. So I pressed hard, and, I believe, effectively, to bolster the financial situation of New York University.

I must add just a word about my present initiative, another strongly shaped by my Greek origins, the establishment at NYU of the John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress, of Congress as a policy-making institution.

Let me explain that unlike parliamentary institutions in Europe, the Congress of the United States has great power, in addition to that of the President of the United States, to make national policy. But with 100 Senators and 435 Representatives and without the party discipline characteristic of parliamentary systems, it is not easy for even informed Americans to understand Congress. So we are, with the establishment of the John Brademas Center for the Study of Congress at New York University, creating an institution that will bring together Senators, Representatives, scholars and citizens to discuss the ways in which our national legislature makes national policy and ways of improving the system.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, from what I have told you, I hope you can see that I have inherited from my Greek father at least two dimensions of the extraordinary contributions of Hellenic civilization to today's complex world: first, respect for learning, for education; and second, respect for politics, for democracy.

So even as I pay tribute to two distinguished persons you are also honoring here today, Andrew Athens, a valued friend of many years and an outstanding leader of the Greek-American community; and Mikis Theodorakis, musician, scholar, public servant, I reiterate how deeply touched I am to receive an honorary degree from The American College of Greece.

RECOGNITION OF THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE CLEAN TRUCK PROGRAM

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to applaud the economic and environmental benefits the landmark Clean Truck Program has brought to southern California during its first year.

California is home to one of our nation's largest and most vibrant economic hubs: the

ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles. Unfortunately, the ports are also home to emissions generated by the short-haul transport of goods. The neighborhoods surrounding the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles are disproportionately impacted by the air pollution caused by trucks and suffer from associated health problems including emphysema, asthma, and cancer.

Successfully addressing localized air pollution and climate change will require a national strategy and a federal framework to coordinate implementation of air quality goals. Cities, local communities and local government can and should play a role in our national strategy.

As seen by the Clean Truck Program's success, local governments are already making important contributions to federal efforts to improve air quality. On October 1, 2008 the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles implemented a ban on trucks with model years prior to 1989. Today, port officials estimate that approximately 1,500–2,000 "dirty" diesel trucks have been removed from drayage operations. The new trucks that replaced them generate 90 percent fewer emissions than the old dirty diesels.

Beyond cleaning the air the Clean Truck Program has successfully stimulated local economic activity. The program's financial incentives have stimulated \$500 million in private investment. Nationwide, new truck sales are down 60 percent. In contrast, truck dealers near the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles have reported a 33 percent year over year increase in sales due to the financing made available by the Clean Truck Program. These new truck sales include the sale of several liquefied natural gas trucks, which draw upon one of America's greatest energy assets.

Almost 800 trucking companies have embraced the program's financial incentives, resulting in the deployment of more than 5,000 2007 EPA compliant trucks. At the program's current pace, the ports estimate that by January 2010, more than 90 percent of the cargo transit at port terminals will be made by trucks meeting USEPA 2007 heavy duty truck emissions standards. This achievement will allow the ports to meet their 2012 goal of 80 percent emissions reductions from overall drayage operations two years ahead of schedule.

The ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles Clean Truck Program has been a tremendous success and has brought economic and environmental benefits to the Area. I congratulate the ports on the first year of an innovative solution, and I optimistically look forward to the results of the program next year.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANCE OF CLINICAL TRIALS THAT FOCUSED ON WOMEN AND PEOPLE OF COLOR IN THE UNITED STATES

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

Mr. HONDA. Madam Speaker, people of color, both women and men, have historically been underrepresented in the medical profession, biomedical and biotechnology research, and clinical trials in the United States. As we move toward an era of personalized medicine,