

even middle class in some circumstances. The services they receive at the VA hospital constitute their sole access to health care. As we move from inpatient care to primary care in the general delivery of health care, it is important that we continue to offer similar services to our veterans. These preventive services reduce the need for costly inpatient services. In the long run, this will go further toward saving taxpayer dollars than the assorted tax cuts being proposed by the majority.

I call upon my colleagues to vote to restore the funding to the VA ambulatory care projects when the rescission package is brought to the floor next week. These projects make sense, and send a clear message that we are committed to our veterans and to their well-being. It is the least we can do to thank them for their service.

TERM LIMITS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. MCCOLLUM] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCOLLUM. Madam Speaker, I want to call the attention of our colleagues to the fact that 1 week from today the U.S. House of Representatives will have a historic first. We will have an opportunity for the first time in the history of this country to vote on a term limits constitutional amendment, an amendment that would limit the length of time that Members of the U.S. House and the U.S. Senate may serve in these two august bodies.

This amendment proposal will have many variations to be voted on out here, and there are certain preferences that some of us have as to one version or another. I know for one, I have been working for years in an effort to get a 12-year limit on both the House and the Senate. Six 2-year terms in the House and two 6-year terms in the Senate. Actually, I prefer that we lengthen the terms in the House and have three 4-year terms.

Whatever the debate may be over the number of years, the important bottom line is that we move along with the process and get a final passage vote that gets us to 290 and makes a bold statement out here.

The reason why we need term limits seems apparent to most people. A record 77 percent of the American people favor term limits. Sometimes the poll has been as high as 80 and other times as low as 70. But that is strong support for term limits which has been there for years and years and years.

What the American people have seen, that many in Congress have not admitted to in recent years, is the fact that we really have become very career-oriented in this body, in the House particularly but, to a large extent in the Senate as well.

Members here are serving full time, a way that the Founding Fathers would not have envisioned. A year-round Con-

gress is something, again, that the Founding Fathers had not envisioned.

Back years ago, we had a situation where Members came here for a very brief period of time at the beginning of the year, as in Senate legislatures, and serve for a couple of months, go home, and not come back again for another year. At the same time, Members served rarely more than two terms as Congressmen in the House and they went home and were citizen legislators in the true sense of the word.

Today's Government is too big for this. We are going to have, for the foreseeable future, a full-time U.S. House and Senate doing the will of the public, a job that is intended to be done. But at the same time what has happened that goes along with this that I think is a real problem is that Members are becoming increasingly concerned that it is a full-time job and a career as well. Not all feel that way, but a substantial number do. We need to take the career orientation out of Congress and put a finite limit on the length of time that you can serve here.

The reason why this seems to me to be important is because those who are constantly seeking reelection, viewing it as a career, are inevitably consciously or unconsciously going to try to please every interest group to get reelected. Believe you me, there is an interest group for every proposal that comes before Congress and certainly for every spending proposal. That is a good reason why we have not had a balanced budget.

In addition to needing to mitigate the career orientation of too many Members of Congress, we need to put a permanent rule in place, something in the Constitution that would limit the power of any individual Member to control a committee or to be involved as a chairman or been in a powerful position for too long a period of time. Only a term limit amendment can do that.

Then, term limits would provide also a certainty we are going to have new, fresh ideas here regularly, coming forward out of the public.

I would suggest to my colleagues who oppose term limits and say we need to have the experience and wisdom here of Members who are very good and talented, I would say, yes, there are a few, but there are thousands and thousands of other Americans who can replace those whom we turn out, who could come here, serve their country just as well and would serve just as well as those of us who might think a few of those Members are very talented who are here.

I happen to favor 12 years, as I have said. I think that makes more sense. Twelve years in the Senate and 12 years in the House rather than 6 years in the House or 8 years in the Senate or some other number that is appropriate.

My judgment is that if we go with a number different from the Senate and the House, that we are going to weaken this body as opposed to the Senate.

When we have conference committee meetings and we have other opportunities to debate the issues of the day with the Senate, they will have the more experienced Members in the room, they will have a tougher staff situation, and the House will be weakened. That is not good public policy.

I also happen to think that 6 years is too short. I think you need to be here a couple of terms before you are chairman of a full committee, you need to be in 6 years before you come into the leadership, because this is a full-time job right now whether we like it or not. It is a big Government. I think you open yourself, as term limits supporters, to the critics who oppose term limits altogether who will say the staff will run this place if you support the 6-year version. Twelve years in both bodies makes a lot of sense to me.

But the bottom line is we need, those of us who support term limits, to stick together. Our latest whip check shows we have about 230 Members openly pledged to support term limits in one form or another, coming out here for a vote next week. It is truly remarkable. Two Congresses ago we only had 33 Members of Congress willing to openly support term limits. In the last Congress we got up to 107. In this Congress now it appears that we are going to have at least 230 Members saying, "Yes, we want term limits in one form or another," and I hope all 230 and 60 more which we need to get to the two-thirds to pass the amendment, will be here for whatever version emerges on final passage, whether 6 or 8 or 12, whatever. I urge all Members to seriously consider term limits, remember it is a historic vote out here next Tuesday.

VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION 1995 RESCISSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Ms. DELAURO. Madam Speaker, cutting funding for veterans to pay for tax cuts to the wealthy is wrong. Clearly, my Republican colleagues from the House Appropriations Committee disagree. Last week, under the continued assault of the Contract With America, veterans learned that Republicans cut \$206 million from the Department of Veterans Affairs budget to help pay for tax cuts for the wealthy.

These cuts represent more than just money—they represent the breaking of a solemn promise Congress made with sick and disabled veterans across the Nation last year. These cuts target some of the most vulnerable groups in our society—aging World War II and Korean conflict veterans and other who have sacrificed so much for our Nation.

This funding is sorely needed. The Department of Veterans Affairs has been counting on this assistance to pay

for six critically needed ambulatory care projects and to replace worn out medical equipment.

This was not money unwisely appropriated. In the case of the ambulatory care projects, each of these projects have been carefully considered and authorized. Further, they are an essential part of the Department's plan to move away from costly inpatient care to delivering cost-effective outpatient care; part of the Department's plan to invest taxpayers dollars and make the VA medical delivery system more efficient.

One of these projects, the West Haven VA Medical Center, is located in my district in West Haven, CT. The West Haven VA Medical Center serves the entire Veterans Administration's medical system. It is the site of the National Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Research Center and the only VA AIDS diagnostic laboratory. Despite its notable reputation, the center's buildings are in extremely poor condition.

The proposed ambulatory care clinic at West Haven would connect the two main, deteriorating buildings and provide the space that is necessary to respond to the number of outpatient visits at the hospital which have doubled since 1984.

Madam Speaker, this, in the words of Lauren Brown, a nurse at West Haven, is not any way to treat " * * * vets [who] served their country regardless of party affiliation or which party was sitting in the White House."

In Connecticut, we are lucky. The West Haven Project is supported by the entire delegation—Republicans and Democrats alike. It is my hope that Members will follow the example Connecticut has set and stand in support of our veterans by restoring funding for the Veterans' Administration.

Madam Speaker, our obligation to our veterans must be kept. These cuts are mean-spirited. They do not save money. They must be reversed. When there cuts are debated on the floor next week, I urge my colleagues to support an amendment that will restore this crucial funding to the Department of Veterans Affairs medical construction and equipment accounts.

VETERANS RESCISSIONS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Puerto Rico [Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. ROMERO-BARCELÓ. Madam Speaker, last Thursday, the House Appropriations Committee voted to cut six Veterans' Administration ambulatory clinic projects totalling \$156 million and \$50 million in medical equipment purchases which already face an \$800 million backlog.

One of these projects happens to be the San Juan Veterans' Affairs Medical Center Outpatient Clinic addition, a project designed to address a 15-year problem of severe overcrowding at the facility. Considered as a VA priority

for many years. The area currently used for ambulatory care at the San Juan VA Medical Center provides only 40 percent of the space required according to VA standards. Therefore, temporary measures such as converting storage space and corridors into clinical and examination rooms have been the mode of addressing these chronic space deficiencies for many years. Currently, some outpatient clinics and medical interviews are being performed in the hallways and nursing stations of the facility and exit corridors have been converted into additional waiting areas, potentially comprising the health and safety of both patients and visitors.

After a 15-year struggle by Puerto Rican veterans, Congress finally appropriated the necessary funding—\$4.8 million—to finalize the construction of the vitally needed outpatient clinic at the San Juan VA Medical Center last year. The project had already been authorized and \$4 million had been appropriated for its design a year earlier. Puerto Rico's 145,000 veterans, particularly the sick and disabled, celebrated this long-awaited achievement, construction of which is scheduled to begin this year, only to see the House Appropriations Committee decide to take away all the funds a few months later.

However, the fact that strikes me the most is that these proposed cuts will be particularly devastating to the VA medical system because the targeted facilities are all ambulatory outpatient care facilities. The rescissions come at a time when the VA is involved in the effort of shifting from hospital inpatient care to outpatient and non institutional care settings, which is in keeping with the new general trend in providing medical care throughout the Nation. The purpose is not to put patients in the hospitals, but to keep them out of hospitals.

In the words of Veterans Affairs' Committee Chairman BOB STUMP—and I will quote from his February 28, 1995, letter to Appropriations Committee Chairman BOB LIVINGSTON—

The particular projects selected for rescissions by the subcommittee—VA/ HUD Appropriations—are unfortunately the type of projects the Veterans' Affairs Committee has been encouraging the VA to pursue. It is my strong belief, shared by veterans and their service organizations, that giving greater priority to ambulatory care projects is clearly the right approach to improve service to veterans.

Mr. STUMP went on to conclude—and I once again quote—that "in striking contrast to the needs the VA faces, these cuts move VA in the wrong direction."

The Department of Veterans Affairs has consistently ranked the six targeted ambulatory projects as the ones with their highest priorities. They are an integral part of the Department's effort to move away from costly inpatient care and provide more accessible, cost effective and efficient outpatient care. Ultimately, all these projects will

save the VA medical system and, therefore, the American taxpayer, millions of dollars.

However, by proposing the rescission of these six projects, the Republicans are sending a very clear message: The health of our Nation's veterans is not a priority

Madam Speaker, we owe a great debt to our veterans. A reduction in hard earned medical services to deserving veterans is not the way to pay for a tax cut for the wealthy and the most wealthy, influential corporations.

I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to support restoring this vital funding when this ill-conceived rescissions package is brought to the floor next week. While it is a small reward for the sacrifices our deserving veterans have made, it is the very least we can do.

PROPOSED BASE CLOSURES IN GUAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Guam [Mr. UNDERWOOD] is recognized during morning business for 3 minutes.

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Madam Speaker, under the Secretary of Defense's recently released list of base closures to be considered by BRAC, Guam is the hardest hit American community on the list. Four of Guam's facilities, all from the Department of the Navy, were slated for closure or realignment by the Department of Defense, affecting some 2,700 civilian and 2,100 military positions. In terms of total personnel affected, Guam is targeted for more reductions than such large States as California, Virginia and New York.

The proposed reductions could be devastating to Guam's economy. The reductions represent between 5 and 10 percent of the entire work force on Guam, and as much as a quarter of Guam's economy could be adversely affected. Let me repeat: up to 10 percent of the entire work force will be thrown out of work. And these are the DOD's own figures, not my estimates. To put it in perspective, if this magnitude of cut were undertaken in California, almost 1.5 million jobs would be affected.

But these types of reductions did not occur in California. In fact, according to testimony by the Secretary of the Navy Dalton yesterday, four bases in California were spared because of the potential economic impact. Does anyone doubt whether they even considered the economic let alone the human impact of their cuts on Guam.

To compound the job loss, the Navy is trying to have it both ways. They're closing down facilities, saying they don't need them, and at the same time holding on to all the assets in case they need them in the future. Under the proposal to close the ship repair facility, or SRF, the Navy would not transfer the piers, floating drydocks, its typhoon basin anchorage, floating