consumer choices and increased competition, and thereby, lower costs, for health care services.

H.R. 2925 overcomes this barrier by requiring that the conduct of an organization meeting the criteria of a health care provider network be judged under the rule of reason. The result will be to permit a case-by-case determination as to whether the conduct of that HCPN would be procompetitive, and thus permissible under the antitrust laws. It is important to understand, however, that this is not an exemption from the antitrust laws. In no event would providers be allowed to set prices or control markets if, in doing so, they have an anticompetitive effect on the market. The normal principles of antitrust law will continue to apply.

Only an organization meeting specified criteria would qualify for the more liberal, rule of reason consideration. The network must have in place written programs for quality assurance, utilization review, coordination of care and resolution of patient grievances and complaints. It must contract as a group, and mandate that all providers forming part of the group be accountable for provision of the services for which the organization has contracted. If these criteria are not met, the entity could still be considered per se illegal.

Rule of reason consideration would be extended not only to the actual performance of a contract to provide health care services, but also to the exchange of information necessary to establish a HCPN. An important limitation on the exchange of information is that it must be reasonably required in order to create a HCPN. Further, information obtained in that context may not be used for any other purpose.

H.R. 2925 delegates to the Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission authority to specify how rule of reason consideration would be implemented under these circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, the Antitrust Health Care Advancement Act of 1996 means greater choice for consumers regarding health care services and the delivery of quality health care at lower price. Later this month, on February 27 and 28, the full Judiciary Committee will be holding hearings on health care reform initiatives, both in the antitrust area and in the liability area. H.R. 2925 will be one of the proposals considered in those hearings.

GUAM COMMONWEALTH PROCESS MOVING TOWARD CLOSURE

HON. ROBERT A. UNDERWOOD

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. UNDERWOOD. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of participating in a meeting in San Francisco earlier this week with the Governor of Guam, the Honorable Carl T.C. Gutierrez, the Guam Commission on Self-Determination, and the Deputy Secretary of the Interior, the Honorable John Garamendi. Mr. Garamendi will be soon named as the President's Special Representative for the Guam Commonwealth discussions. The members of the Guam Commission on Self-Determination who participated in this meeting with the Governor included Presiding Judge Alberto Lamorena, Senator Hope Cristobal, Senator Francis Santos, Mayor Francisco Lizama, former Senator Jose R. Duenas, and Youth Congress Speaker Rory Respicio.

The Guam Commonwealth process that we are engaged in sorely needed a jump start, and the meeting in San Francisco renewed the commitment of the President and the leadership of Guam to an improved political status for our island. I am pleased that the administration has refocused on the Guam Commonwealth, and that bringing some form of closure to this process is the common goal of the participants.

The people of Guam are growing increasingly frustrated by the lack of progress on the Guam Commonwealth. There is a growing sense that the Commonwealth discussions will continue to drag on with no end in sight. This is not acceptable to the people of Guam. Our patience has limits, but our resolve is not diminished. That is why I am particularly encouraged by the consensus to complete the current discussions in a timely manner, and to wrap up these discussions by early this summer.

It is important to note that Mr. Garamendi reaffirmed in San Francisco that progress already made, and agreements already reached with Guam, will be honored.

Once the Clinton administration has completed its discussions with the Guam Commission on Self-Determination, the focus of our efforts will shift to the U.S. Congress, which has plenary authority over the territories.

I commend Governor Gutierrez, the Guam Commission on Self-Determination, and Mr. Garamendi for this very good beginning. I look forward to continuing the progress for the Guam Commonwealth, and to advancing the cause of self-government for the people of Guam in this legislative body.

PLAYING WITH FIRE

HON. RONALD D. COLEMAN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, the past 2 months have brought into sharp focus the lengths our new House Majority will go to get their way. The Republicans have virtually abandoned any pretense of true debate and discussion of differing views as they have literally stalled the functions of government in an attempt to force their extreme priorities on the President and the American people.

Twice, the Republicans shut down the Federal Government because the President and Congressional Democrats wanted to balance the budget without large tax breaks for the wealthy, and without the deep cuts in Medicare, Medicaid, education, and the environment needed to pay for them. House Republicans seriously miscalculated the President's resolve and thought closing our Nation's Social Security offices, Medicare offices and national parks, would force him to sign their budget, a right wing vision of how America should be run. To his credit, the President did not succumb to this pressure.

Now, once again, the Republicans want to take this country down the road of irresponsibility; this time with very dangerous consequences. Republicans want to throw our country into default be refusing to extend America's borrowing authority. This would jeopardize our Nation's credit rating—currently the highest in the world. Not only would this throw the world's financial markets into a tailspin, and would cause the value of the dollar to plummet worldwide, it would have a devastating impact on hard-working American families who are struggling to pay their own bills and obligations.

The reason we must raise our debt limit is because America must issue bonds and borrow money to meet its current obligations, even as we gradually eliminate all borrowing to balance the Federal budget. Those obligations include $30 billion in Social Security checks, which would not be issued if the Government goes into default next month. It would also mean that no tax refunds would be paid to Americans who are owed these funds. And it would prevent America from making payments on its other financial obligations, which would mean that America's financial credibility—unquestioned throughout our history—would be destroyed.

The result? Interest rates would go up on credit cards, home mortgages, and loans. Average Americans would pay a heavy price for the Republicans' childlike behavior for decades. Moody's Investors Service announced recently that for the first time in history it was considering lowering the credit rating for certain U.S. Treasury bonds.

The reason? Because NEWT GINGRICH and his extremist allies would rather promulgate their right-wing agenda than compromise. The Republicans understand the need to raise the debt limit. In their Seven Year Balanced Budget Reconciliation Act, even after cutting Medicare and Medicaid, they, themselves, call for the raising of the debt limit by $5.5 trillion.

America paid its bills during the Reagan-Bush years. When a Republican President controlled the White House and Democrats controlled one or both Houses of Congress, and we borrowed to pay for annual deficits, the debt limit was raised 27 times. Our predecessors understood the importance of keeping our financial obligations. Now, the Republican-run Congress is willing to throw that away and risk financial catastrophe in order to score political points.

The Republicans have said they will use any means at their disposal to force the President to accept their program.

America must not default on its debt. We are the preeminent financial power in the world because we keep our word. If we allow that faith to be damaged, our economy will be hurt in ways that will hit every family in the pocketbook.

Congress should not go into recess, as the Republicans propose to do, until we vote to raise the debt limit. The situation will become critical by the end of February unless we do so.

On January 22, the Treasury Secretary notified the Congressional leadership by letter, that unless the debt ceiling is increased, he would have to take additional steps to prevent default in mid-February, and that even those steps would provide funds only until March 1. Congress should take action this week to enact a clean debt limit increase.

It is time to raise the debt limit with no gimmicks, conditions, threats or delays. The American people deserve congressional action, not watching a parade of politicians go to recess.

TRIBUTE TO THE PARKWAY CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL SYMPHONIC BAND

HON. JAMES M. TALENT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. TALENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the Parkway Central High School Symphonic Band from Chesterfield, MO. The Marching Colts proudly represented the St. Louis area by participating in the 1996 Tournament of Roses Parade.

Parkway Central is located in the Parkway School District, which has long been committed to providing their students excellent facilities and instructors for its music programs. Under the skilled guidance of their director, Mr. Doug Hoover, the Parkway Central band has a history of national performances; including performances at the 1989 George Bush Presidential Inaugural Parade, and the 1991 and 1993 King Orange Parades in Miami.

The Marching Colts have benefitted from outstanding community support from Chesterfield and the entire St. Louis community. The band has successfully used various fundraising efforts, including their annual fall craft show known as the Craft Harvest, to raise thousands of dollars. This event boasts over 200 vendors and several thousand patrons. These efforts stand as a testament to the dedication of the parents, faculty, and local community who have rallied around the efforts of these young people.

Mr. Speaker, the Parkway Central band is to be commended for its continued hard work and dedication to excellence, which has brought not only their school nationwide recognition, but is also a great source of pride to the residents of St. Louis County. It is with great pride that I congratulate these fine educators and students and recognize the contributions they have made while at Parkway Central High School.

PARENTS TELEVISION EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

HON. JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 1, 1996

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, the bill I am introducing today addresses a problem faced by parents across the country—controlling what their children see on television.

Parents can control what movies their children see, but what can a parent do when their kids can turn on the TV every night and see murder and gore? What can a parent do when their kids can come home after school, flip on the TV and see talk shows with titles such as, ''Nude Dancing Daughters, ''Incest Family,'' ''Get Bigger Breasts or Else,'' and ''Women Who Marry Their Rapists''?

The television industry, in a rush for ratings, too often takes an anything goes attitude and loses its sense of responsibility. The industry has every right to make a profit, but when in the process they help to debase our culture, we have to say enough is enough. They're chipping away at our moral foundation and, in the long run, this will be disastrous. It may sound corny in this day and age, but it's still true: A society without clear collective values and strong morals is like an engine without oil—eventually, it grinds to a halt.

The Parents Television Empowerment Act of 1996 requires the Federal Communications Commission to establish a toll-free number that television viewers can call to complain about violence and other patently offensive material. The complaints would be considered by the FCC when deciding whether to renew the licenses of stations that aired the material.

Callers' comments would also be forwarded to the offending stations, and the stations would have to respond to each caller.

This is not censorship. This is an attempt to give viewers a better way to bring pressure on television producers and to help improve a situation that has truly gotten out of hand.

The average American child watches 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on television before finishing elementary school. Study after study has shown that television violence causes aggressive and violent behavior in children who watch it. Despite this growing body of evidence, TV and cable companies continue to broadcast murders, rapes, and gratuitous violence into our living rooms.

Psychologists have raised strong concerns about the impact on children from talk shows that explore such topics as incest, rape, and pornography in a manner intended more to sensationalize and shock than educate and inform.

The V-chip is part of the solution. But I think that the conversation about this problem should not be just in our living rooms, but also in institutions where public policy is made.

Television producers are fond of saying, ''We're only giving viewers what they want.'' Well, this bill gives consumers, especially parents, a way to tell the television industry what it wants.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JOSEPH P. KENNEDY II REGARDING THE PARENTS TELEVISION EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

Mr. Speaker, the bill I am introducing today addresses a problem faced by parents across the country—controlling what their children watch on television.

When it comes to movies, parents can control what their children see by paying attention to ratings. But what can a parent do when their kids can turn on the TV almost every night and see murder, blood and gore? What can a parent do when their kids can come home after school, flip on the TV and see talk shows with titles such as, ''Nude dancing daughters,'' ''Incest Family,'' and ''Wives of Rapists''?

The television industry, in a rush for ratings, too often takes an 'anything goes' attitude and loses its sense of responsibility. The industry has every right to make a profit, but when in the process they help to debase our culture, we have to say enough is enough. In the long run, this chipping away at our moral foundation will be disastrous. It may sound trite, but it's certainly true: A society without clear collective values and a strong sense of moral responsibility is like an engine without oil.

The Parents Television Empowerment Act of 1996 requires the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to establish a toll-free number that television viewers can call to complain about violence and other patently offensive material. The complaints would be considered by federal officials when deciding whether to renew the licenses of stations that aired the material.

The FCC would be required to publish summaries of viewer comments on a quarterly basis. The comments would also be forwarded to the offending station and would become part of that station's relicensing process. The stations must, under law, respond to each complaint.

Let me stress: This is not censorship. This is not some sort of pollyanish attempt to block out the real world. This is an attempt to give viewers a better way to bring pressure on television producers and to help improve a situation that has truly gotten out of hand.

The average American child watches 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on television before finishing elementary school. Study after study has shown that violence on television causes aggressive and violent behavior in children who watch it. Despite this growing body of evidence, networks, cable TV companies and producers continue to broadcast murders, rapes and gratuitous violence into our living rooms for our children to see.

While there is less scientific evidence about the impact of television talk shows on children, psychologists have raised strong concerns about them. Many of these shows explore topics such as incest, rape and pornography in a manner intended more to sensationalize and shock than educate and inform.

Television producers are found of saying, 'We're only giving viewers what they want. Let the market decide what shows appear on TV.' Well, this bill simply establishes a way to make the market work better by giving consumers, especially parents, an avenue to express their opinions and concerns.

Concern about television programming cuts across lines of ideology, race and gender. There's an outcry across the land to give people a better way to do something about what they see on TV. My bill gives them that opportunity.

H.R. ——

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Parents Television Empowerment Act of 1996''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds the following:

(1) The average American child watches 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence on television before finishing elementary school.

(2) Many of the poorest and potentially most vulnerable groups in our society are the heaviest viewers of television.

(3) Television violence is often presented without context or judgment as to its acceptability.

(4) Most of the violence on television is presented during times when children are likely to be viewing.

(5) The 1972 Surgeon General's Report, Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence, found that there was a significant and consistent correlation between television viewing and aggressive behavior and a direct, causal link between exposure to televised violence and subsequent aggressive behavior on the part of the viewer.

(6) The 1982 National Institute of Mental Health report, Television and Behavior: Ten Years of Scientific Progress and Implications for the Eighties, found that ''violence on television does lead to aggressive behavior by children and teenagers who watch the programs,'' and that some viewers learn to be passive victims.

(7) Numerous other studies establish a causal connection between watching violence on television and increasingly violent behavior of children.