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They have taken it step by step. Since it is an election year, they want to provide the tax break this year, hand out candy before the election, and next year come back with the full dimension of the Medicare cuts that will be necessary to pay for these election eve political tax breaks for the wealthy. The good indication that they still have their plan to cut Medicare on track is the budget resolution we have up tomorrow as they propose to have seniors pay for bills that they get from doctors above what Medicare pays.

THE PRESIDENT AND WELFARE

(Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, you will remember that during his Presidential campaign, Bill Clinton promised to end welfare as we know it. But when he was elected, he vetoed welfare reform twice.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans take a different view. We do not view welfare as a political football. We want to give the States greater flexibility. We want tough work requirements. We want a 5-year limit on benefits. We want to lift people out of poverty and despair.

There is a huge difference between Bill Clinton's view on welfare reform and the Republican view of welfare reform. Bill Clinton wants to demagog. He wants to protect Washington bureaucracy and Washington spending.

Republicans want to actually keep our promises and actually do something to make a difference in the lives of those caught in the grasp of the welfare state.

Mr. Speaker, we can only hope that Bill Clinton will honor his word and help us reform welfare.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHAMBLISS). The Chair would remind the Member not to refer to the President in personal terms.

IMPACT ON AGRICULTURE OF UNION PACIFIC-SOUTHERN PACIFIC MERGER

(Mr. STENHOLM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STENHOLM. Mr. Speaker. I rise to express my deep concern regarding the proposed merger between the Union Pacific and Southern Pacific Railroads which is under consideration by the Surface Transportation Board.

If approved, this merger would be the largest rail merger in the history of the United States. It will result in only two railroads controlling the entire western half of the Nation. This massive consolidation of rail transportation could hurt competition in the rail industry, and ultimately, hurt farmers, ranchers, and shippers in the agriculture industry.

It is no secret that rail service is critical to the economic well-being of this Nation's agricultural and rural economies. Nearly half of all grain produced in the United States moves to market by rail. In fact, in 1995, grain, grain mill products, and other farm products accounted for more than 2.14 million rail loadings.

The very survival of farmers and ranchers depends on their ability to ship commodities at a competitive price and in a timely fashion. Access to reliable, cost-effective rail transportation is the only way they can remain competitive in markets here and overseas. With this proposed merger, they may not have that critical access.

With this merger, competition for rail transportation of agricultural products will be eliminated in some areas. With reduced competitive transportation options, agricultural shippers could be faced with higher rates and prices for rail services.

Farmers and local shippers in many rural areas will become captive customers, totally dependent on only one carrier to supply grain cars and ship to distant markets.

The proposed merger seems to be on a dangerous fast track. As the Surface Transportation Board considers this merger, we must urge them to consider all alternatives to monopoly and duoploy.

CHILDREN NEED PARENTS, NOT GOVERNMENT EXPERTS

(Mr. LARGENT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LARGENT. Mr. Speaker, in the next few days, we will be hearing a lot about the plight of children. The Stand for Children rally, scheduled for Saturday, will urge government to do more for children. The best protectors of children, the event organizers claim, are government bureaucrats and children's advocates.

I disagree. The best advocates for children today—and the most unappreciated—are moms and dads standing together for their children. The best thing we could do as a society and for children is not pour more money into marginal programs, but affirm and support families and parents.

H.R. 1946, the Parental Rights and Responsibilities Act, promotes the idea that family is key to providing for children. Parents are in the best position to protect and provide for their children. And the PRRA protects families from the harmful actions of government bureaucrats.

If the actions of the East Stroudsburg, PA, school officials who conducted genital exams on 11-year-old girls, without informing the girls or receiving explicit parental approval, is any indication of what it means to stand for children, Congress should quickly vote on and pass the PRRA. Because when it comes to children, what they need are moms and dads—not government experts.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION MONTH

(Mrs. CLAYTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, both President Clinton and Governor Hunt of my State have declared May as Teenager Pregnancy Prevention Month.

Many are observing National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month because it has been shown that many more teenagers become pregnant during May than in any other month.

This is attributed to the many special events that occur in May such as proms, graduations, field trips, and other social outings.

The goal of teen pregnancy prevention efforts should be to assist teens to achieve social responsibility and long-term economic self-sufficiency.

To achieve this goal we must have a combined effort between the public and the private sectors.

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month provides an opportunity to recognize existing teen pregnancy prevention programs.

Over the days and weeks to follow, I will share with our colleagues information about a variety of teenage pregnancy prevention programs that are underway.

It is time for all of us to join in this effort.

SPENDING ON CHILD CARE

(Ms. DUNN of Washington asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DUNN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, last week the White House rapid response team got another one wrong. Clinton adviser George Stephanopolous actually said that the administration opposed the Republican bill in Congress because it cuts too deeply into child care. ''We've been willing to have flexibility,'' he said, ''but we cannot agree to cuts in child care.''

Mr. Speaker, are Republicans cutting child care? Well, to borrow a phrase from John McLaughlin: wrong. Let us talk reality. The current Republican welfare plan based on the bipartisan Governors' proposal calls for $4.5 billion more in mandatory and discretionary child care spending than the Clinton plan.

Here is the bottom line, Mr. Speaker: Republicans provide more funding for child care in our welfare plan than does the President in his, and making up excuses to oppose welfare reform does not help a single child escape the welfare