raise awareness of and response to cardiovascular disease and stroke.

This spring here in the House of Representatives we will be conducting some hearings on the effect of women and heart disease together. Increased research on these and other women's health issues can and will improve the quality and length of our lives.

Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleagues in the Women's Caucus, are committed to raising awareness about women's health issues and to increase funding for women's health research; and today is an opportunity for us to speak on different topics but with a united voice. We, colleagues in the Women's Caucus and men as well and Members of Congress, are talking about and raising the awareness of issues pertaining to women's health.

HEALTH INITIATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the state of public health in America. Although we know more about health hazards and the importance of a healthy life-style today than we did 25 years ago, our health is actually getting worse in many respects.

Chronic diseases account for three out of four deaths in the United States annually; and 100 million Americans, more than a third of the population, suffer from some sort of chronic disease.

Chronic conditions are on the rise. The rate of learning disabilities rose 50 percent in this last decade. Endocrine and metabolic diseases such as diabetes and neurologic diseases such as migraine headaches and multiple sclerosis increased 20 percent between 1986 and 1995.

The rising incidence of disease can be attributed partly to the environment. This means not only air pollution and the rising CO_2 levels, which affect the quality of the air we breath, but factors such as industrial chemicals and plasticizers, increased exposure to low-dose radiation from sources that range from toasters to aircrafts, certain medications which affect the hormone production, and especially a person's life-style, including the diet, tobacco and alcohol use.

Mr. Speaker, I was proud recently to introduce the Women's Health Environmental Research Centers Act, a bill that enhances scientific research in women's health.

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There has been a lack of initiatives to especially look at women's health in connection with the environment. Women may be at a greater risk for disease associated to environmental exposures due to several factors, including body fat and size, a slower metabolism of toxic substances, hormone levels, and, for many, more exposure for household cleaning reagents.

Over the past decade, evidence has accumulated linking effects of the environment on women and reproductive health, cancer, injury, asthma, autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis and multiple sclerosis, birth defects, Parkinson's, mental retardation and lead poisoning. Lead and other heavy metals found in the environment have been implicated in increased bone loss and osteoporosis in post-menopausal women.

In one interesting study in New York, researchers found that women carrying a mutant form of a breast cancer gene are at higher risk of developing breast or ovarian cancer if they were born after 1940, as compared to women with the same mutant genes before 1940. This suggests that environmental factors are affecting the rates of incidence.

The interaction between environmental factors and one's genes also affect the susceptibility to disease. This will be a major area of research now that the Human Genome Project has been completed and new disease-related genes are being found at a rapid pace.

The evidence is clear and accumulating daily that the by-products of our technology are linked to illness and disease and that women are especially susceptible to these environmental health-related problems.

We need health research programs that are specifically targeted towards women's health. The passage of the Women's Health Environmental Research Centers Act will be a crucial step toward establishing the valuable and needed basic research on the interactions between women's health and environment.

The second initiative needed is to increase awareness and access for Americans to preventive screening tests for diseases such as cancer. Screening will save thousands of lives if it is detected at its earliest and most treatable stage.

I will soon introduce, along with the gentlewoman from Maryland (Mrs. MORELLA), the Colorectal Cancer Screening Act. Often colorectal cancer does not present any symptoms at all until late in the disease's progression. When discovered through screening tests, benign polyps can be removed, preventing colorectal cancer from ever occurring. But, unfortunately, fewer than 40 percent of colorectal cancer patients have ever their cancer diagnosed early.

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States for men and women combined. An estimated 56,700 people will die from colorectal cancer this year; and 135,400 new cases will be diagnosed. These newly diagnosed cases that will be divided nearly evenly among men and women are particularly tragic because they could be prevented.

Medicare began covering colorectal cancer screening in 1998, and many insurers now cover them also. However, all insurers must give enrollees access to this life-saving benefit, similar to what has been done for mammography screening.

Finally, I would like to mention that Congress has asked the Centers for Disease Control to develop a nationwide tracking network so we can begin to draw the critical link between disease and environmental toxins, genetic susceptibility and life-style. The Women's Caucus followed up with a letter to the CDC director, Jeffrey Koplan, to reiterate our interest in this important initiative.

Although we do not have cures for the most devastating disease that affects women, we can minimize our chances of developing them or at least prolong the years that we are healthy by the understanding of the risk factors, both environmental and genetic, as well as taking control of our health by having preventive screening tests before it is too late.

As a public servant and a scientist, I believe that one of the most important concerns of Congress should be to help to promote America's public health. Congress should commit itself to provide all Americans access to medical technologies that save lives, and Congress must provide continued funding for scientific research across all disciplines.

NEW ADMINISTRATION IS NOT SERIOUS ABOUT ADDRESSING GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GILCHREST). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. INSLEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, I, as a Democrat, have an admission to make. I have come before the House to admit that I was fooled into believing that the new administration was actually serious about doing something about global climate change. I was fooled into having hopes that this administration would abide by its promises to show some leadership to do something about carbon dioxide, which is polluting our atmosphere and warming our planet.

I had those hopes until yesterday. I want to tell my colleagues why I had those hopes. The new director of the Environmental Protection Agency, former Governor Christie Todd Whitman, said last week that she wanted to work to do something to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from our polluting plants. A few weeks ago, the Secretary of the Treasury said that he believed that this was a serious problem, that it needed to be addressed, and the government could no longer afford to ignore it.

The President of the United States last September told the American people and promised the American people that, if elected President of the United States, he would work to curtail carbon dioxide emissions from our power

generating plants in this country. A promise, a pledge, a commitment that yesterday was sadly broken when he bowed down to the oil and gas industry and said he was not going to lift a finger to reduce these CO_2 emissions, to reduce the pollution that is coming out of our plants.

I was fooled, and I am greatly disappointed. But I have not given up, and the reason I have not given up is because I believe that there are good Members on both sides of the aisle in this Chamber who are willing to show some leadership in moving forward on climate change issues.

I am just alerting Members of the House to this fact that I do not think we can look to leadership from the White House on this after yesterday's stunning reneging on a promise to the American people, and that we need to show some leadership.

I am telling the House this because, if we are going to have action by the Federal Government of doing something about the climate change problem in this country, we in the House are going to need to get out in front of this issue.

I know there are Members on both sides of the aisle who are willing to do this. The gentleman from Maryland (Mr. GILCHREST), who is in the chair today, has shown a recognition and some leadership in this regard.

To do this, I am urging my fellow Members to do a few things: first, to join our Global Climate Change Caucus, a bipartisan group of Members who are committed to finding common sense and workable means of reducing climate change emissions.

Second, I would ask our Members during this tax cut debate that is going on that, no matter what happens in the tax cut, we devote a portion of it to creating incentives for efficient clean energy sources of new technology, wind, solar, fuel cell technology; to bring those technologies to market-based prices; and to use this tax cut debate in a meaningful way on an environmental basis.

I ask Members to join the bipartisan group that is working to try to fashion some package of tax cuts that can help these new technologies become a market base so that we can put them in our homes and our houses.

I ask Members to cosponsor a bill I have called the Home Energy Generation Act that will allow one when one puts a solar panel on one's home to sell one's excess power back to one's utility and have one's meter run backwards so one gets a credit.

There are a lot of things we can do, but I am urging Members of the House to come to the forefront and be leaders because there is going to be a vacuum, unfortunately, out of the White House.

Let me tell my colleagues another thing very disturbing that happened yesterday. The President of the United States, when he decided to ignore the explicit promise to the American people on this CO_2 emission issue, said the reason he did so was because he was concerned about prices of electricity going up.

Well, frankly, that is a surprise to us because, for the last 2 months, we have been asking the President of the United States to do something about electrical prices in the West, and he has refused to do anything about it.

We have asked him to adopt a short-term wholesale price cap, to have a circuit breaker to reduce these extraordinary price increases that we are having on the western United States right now. He has refused to even consider it.

We let the greatest transfer of wealth from the western United States to generators of electricity since Bonnie and Clyde roamed the prairies because of these huge run-ups in prices, unprecedented, unjustified, and unreasonable. By the way, this is not just me talking. Our own FERC, the Federal Energy Regulation Commission, under the Bush administration made a finding that these prices were unreasonable, unconscionable. I think unconscionable is my language, but at least they said unreasonable.

Despite that finding, the administration has refused to lift a finger to limit these extraordinary increases in electrical rates. We believe we are going to ask the administration, we have been asking for 2 months to do that.

Let me tell my colleagues why that is so dangerous, Mr. Speaker. I am going to read from the Wall Street Journal article in yesterday's paper, which I will now summarize. We have the possibility of losing 43,000 jobs, this the State of Washington alone, if the administration does not work with this Congress in a bipartisan fashion to adopt wholesale price caps. I hope all my Members will join me in this effort.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO KEEP ITS 25–YEAR PROMISE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MOORE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I have been in Congress for 2 years, and I have learned a lot of things after I got here. For example, 25 years ago, the Congress passed and the President signed into law a new bill called IDEA, which stands for Individuals With Disabilities Education Act. In that new law, the Congress promised to the State and local school districts, if they would take special-needs children out of hospitals and institutions and bring them into local public schools, that Congress and the Federal Government would fund the cost of education to the tune of 40 percent.

Mr. Speaker, 25 years later, last year, Congress was up to 14.9 percent, not 40 percent, 14.9 percent; and that is outrageous. That is what we call an unfunded mandate, and that is what gets people back home in the real world so upset with Congress. They promised that they would do this and that. The people locally did this, and Congress did not fulfill their portion of the promise.

Well, 25 years later, Mr. Speaker, I think it is time that Congress stepped up it the plate and filled the promise it made 25 years ago.

I wrote President-elect at the time Bush on January 25 and said to President-elect Bush: ''I hope you will set this a priority funding measure in your new budget as the new President.''

I had the opportunity 4 weeks ago to go to the White House and speak with President Bush; and at that time, I said to him, ''Mr. President, this is one of the most important things we can do that I think will beneficially affect education, not only through every State, but throughout our Nation in public schools; and that is full funding of special education the way Congress promised 25 years ago.''

The President said, ''I understand, but we would like to have a little more flexibility and give the States and local school districts an opportunity if they need to build schools or use it for special education.'' Well, 25 years later, again, somebody needs to speak up for special needs children and say Congress should fulfill its promise.

The President has a program he calls Leave No Child Behind. Well, I say to the President that, if we do not do this when we have the opportunity this year or next year, then we will never do this. We will not leave one child behind. We will leave thousands of children behind, and that is disgraceful.

We have projected by the Congressional Budget Office over the next 10 years a budget surplus of $5.6 trillion. The President has recommended a $1.6 trillion tax cut. Surely if we can find the political will to do a $1.6 trillion tax cut, we can find the political will and the backbone to fund a program that is 25 years old for special-needs children in our country.

It does not impact just special-needs children. It will affect virtually every child in public schools in our country, because I have talked throughout my district in every school district throughout my district to school administrators and teachers; and a disproportionate share of the present school funding goes to special-needs children. Nobody begrudges that. God knows they need it. But sometimes the people who are shortchanged are the other kids, and not one child in our public schools should be shortchanged by Congress' failure to perform its promise.

This is not a partisan issue. When one looks at a special-needs child, one does not see a Republican, one does not see a Democrat, one sees a child, a child with needs, and needs that should be addressed by this body.

If at this time in our Nation's history, when we have these huge projected surpluses, we do not step up to the plate and fulfill our promise, shame on us. Shame on us. I hope and believe that the President and the Congress this year will do the right thing.