different programs would be set up, one in each state. Federal funding would be cut by 12% in the first year alone. Poor children would be lopped off programs in every state. Kids—who cannot lobby or vote—would have to compete for shrinking public funding against powerful special interests. Kids would lose. And health care costs would rise even higher to address the needs of more hungry children, *costs which could be avoided if food programs are not cut.*

3. PROPOSED CHANGES WOULD INCREASE THE NUMBER OF HUNGRY CHILDREN

Children will pay the price of shortsighted deficit reduction. Converting successful federal nutrition programs into reduced state grants will result in deep funding cuts—nearly $31 billion by the year 2000. If the proposed Balanced Budget Amendment also passes, cuts will be even greater. In hard times, when tax revenues fall, there will be more hunger but less help.

Drastic changes in the nation's nutrition programs would make them insensitive to economic needs in a particular year. They would no longer insure that those in need could be protected. In fact, by their very nature proposed changes would not guarantee where assistance goes. And Congress could cut critical food programs further at any time.

''IF IT'S NOT BROKEN, DON'T FIX IT''

The nation's nutrition programs are cost-effective and target the truly needy. According to the General Accounting Office, one program alone (Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children) saves $3.50 in special education and Medicaid costs for every prenatal $1 invested. Other research shows that children who get a school meal perform better academically.

The existing programs work, and they work well. The only problem is that they are not reaching enough of those in need. Proposed changes would mean that they never will.

For the richest nation on earth to deny food to its own children is a shortsighted betrayal of our values and our future. It is also unnecessary. In the name of our nation and its children, we call upon reason to prevail in Congress.

□ 2300

IN SUPPORT OF CHILDRENS NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Florida [Ms. BROWN] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I spoke with 95 little 3-year-olds in my district. Tonight, I rise on their behalf.

The school lunch program has worked well since 1946—it's not broken. America's children are our most important resource for the future.

Studies show that if a child is hungry, taxpayer dollars for education are wasted because when kids are hungry they can't learn. According to the Children's Defense Fund, millions of children will go hungry by cutting funds for school lunches, food stamps, child care, Head Start meals, and WIC programs. Republican double-talk says ''cuts to school lunches'' aren't ''cuts,'' but block grants to States. That deceives the American people. As a 10-year veteran of the Florida legislature, I can tell you that sending Federal dollars to the States as block grants does not ensure that these funds will go to child nutrition programs.

This school lunch program began after the start of World War II when young men tried to enlist in the military and were rejected because they were malnourished and couldn't pass the physical. President Truman wisely determined that producing healthy youngsters was in the national interest. It still is today.

Congress should not be cutting child nutrition and child care. These cuts take food out of the mouths of hungry children. No big federally subsidized defense contractor has seen a dime threatened. No wealthy individual has seen his special tax breaks cut. In fact, the reason they're making all these cuts is so that the wealthy can get additional capital gains benefits on the backs of suffering children.

Republicans seem to think they can fool some of the people, some of the time. But you can't fool all of the people all of the time. The Contract on America is a contract on children, the elderly, veterans and the hardest working Americans.

The school lunch program works, it feeds hungry children. As the saying goes, ''If it's not broke, don't fix it.''

IN SUPPORT OF FEDERAL NUTRITION PROGRAMS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PAYNE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to commend the gentlewoman from North Carolina for the special order.

Mr. Speaker, tonight I rise in support of America's children because the Contract With America is an all-out assault on America's children.

Last week, in this Chamber's Committee on Economic and Educational Opportunities, the former Education and Labor Committee, I offered two key amendments which will would have protected the most vulnerable members of our society.

One of my amendments would continue to guarantee free meals to children who are under 130 percent of poverty which was repealed in H.R. 999, the Welfare Reform Consolidation Act. My amendment was unilaterally defeated by the Republican supporters of the so-called ''contract''.

Restoring free meals for children at or below 130 percent of poverty would have continued a policy set in 1974 to help protect the health and well-being of low-income children. The Republican plan as detailed in H.R. 999 will curtail access to the main source of nutrition for some youngsters. Overall funding for the school-based block grant will be capped at a 4.5 percent rate of increase per year.

Under the current law, the rate of increase for fiscal year 1996 would be 5.2 percent, which is still not enough to meet current needs. It is unbelievable that we would risk letting children go hungry in this country under the cloak of fiscal responsibility. And I do not think that most Americans want to shred a critical safety net for children and infants.

If this proposal becomes law, it will be left up to the States or school district to decide whether or not to provide any free meals at all; States will not be required to serve meals to children who cannot afford to pay for them we know that hungry children cannot learn, because hunger impairs their ability to learn.

At a time when much lip service is given to improving education through the use of high-technology learning along the information superhighway, it seems very contradictory to take away such basics as the school lunch program.

I think every American should have deep concerns about what the termination of funding for feeding programs for children says about the direction this Nation is heading.

These are children who did not choose or ask to be born into a situation of poverty. These are children who cannot approach the legislators and legislatures, to let the folks who are making the decisions know that these policies are harmful and damaging to them. And these policies punish them for circumstances over which they have no control. Americans have always been proud of our spirit of concern for one another and compassion for people who are less fortunate than we are.

Has that been wiped out by the Contract With America?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON].

Mrs. CLAYTON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Just to remind the audience, these are faces of real people. Mr. Speaker, I believe tonight the case has been made against H.R. 4, particularly the case of the provision to eliminate nutritional programs. We are more than Members of Congress, Mr. Speaker. We are actually public servants and we must remember that our first responsibility is not to the parties that we are members of but to the people we represent.

At the end of each day, Mr. Speaker, we must be honest with the facts, who have we helped and who have we harmed. Have we helped the few or have we helped the many?

I think President Kennedy had it right 34 years ago when he stated, ''A country that cannot help the many who are poor cannot protect the few who are rich.'' No party or no person has an exclusive on family values and personal responsibility. Those are standards that each of us hold absolutely dear.

□ 2310

And if we do, we care about children.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for the time. I thank the gentleman for yielding to me, and I thank him for his participation.

Mr. SABO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America, and to express the fears my constituents have communicated to me about cuts to nutrition assistance programs. I would also like to thank Congresswoman CLAYTON for organizing this debate.

The Contract With America would transfer control over Federal programs which provide a safety net to poor children to the States, while at the same time transferring only a portion of the money needed to provide these vital services. Many programs would suffer under this proposal, including those which provide protective services to abused children, those which provide child care assistance to the working poor, and those which provide nutrition assistance to the undernourished.

Approximately 13 percent of the children in Minnesota live below the poverty line, and it is estimated that 160,000 children go hungry as a result. Children who do not receive nutritious meals suffer from poor health and diminished performance in school. I have fought to support successful programs like the National School Lunch Program and the Supplemental Food Program for Women Infants and Children [WIC] which were created to combat childhood hunger and give young people the opportunity to succeed.

One woman living in Minneapolis recently wrote me that the National School Lunch Program has served as a last line of defense for her family against hunger. Since her husband left, she has had difficulty making ends meet. Nevertheless, she can be confident that her two young daughters will receive at least one carton of milk and one nutritious meal a day when we cannot afford to purchase these items.

This family's experience demonstrates the need for a reliable safety net. Nutrition assistance programs like these have represented our nation's acceptance of the basic responsibility we have to care for our children.

The welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America represent a fundamental shift in our Nation's policy toward young people. The contract asserts that we, as a nation, should abdicate responsibility for providing basic protective services, basic support services, and basic nutrition to children in need.

Those who support the contract would have us believe these proposals were crafted in the name of reducing bureaucracy. I am not deceived by such rhetoric. One Federal bureaucracy would be replaced by 50 State bureaucracies. The only thing that would really be reduced is a child's access to a healthy meal.

My home State, Minnesota, is expected to lose $18 million in Federal nutrition funding under the welfare provisions included in the Contract With America. This is a daunting sum of money for a State which already faces a hunger problem. Currently, 1 in every 16 Minnesotans seeks help from food shelves, receiving an annual total of 4 million pounds of food. For example, Minnesota FoodShare, an organization which provides food to needy families throughout the State, would have to dramatically increase their efforts. They would have to generate 17.6 million more pounds of food, or six times the amount of current contributions, to compensate for these lost Federal funds. Clearly, Minnesotans would suffer if these welfare provisions are adopted.

True welfare reform does not destroy a child's safety net. Rather, it makes it possible for families to become self-sufficient. Full-time workers should be able to provide food, shelter, and the basic necessities for their families without being forced to turn to the Federal Government. I have proposed raising the minimum wage by 50 percent to $6.50 an hour. Individuals can only move away from public assistance programs once they are empowered to help themselves. I believe increasing the minimum wage is a key element of any welfare reform.

I strongly urge my colleagues to reject the welfare provisions contained in the Contract With America.

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the Republican proposal to end the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, better known as WIC.

Since its inception, WIC has been a model nutrition and food program. For infants, WIC reduces low-birth weights and lowers infant mortality rates by 25–66 percent among Medicaid beneficiaries. For children, WIC increases readiness to learn, improves diets and increases rates of immunization against childhood disease. For women, it significantly increases access to adequate prenatal care and improves their dietary intake.

Study after study has proven that WIC is not only successful in achieving its goals of good nutrition and health for children, but is also cost-effective. Every dollar spent on pregnant women in WIC saves up to $4 in Medicaid for newborns and their mothers. For every very low birthweight prevented, Medicaid costs were reduced on average from $12,000 to $15,000. The only problem WIC has faced over the years is that it has always been underfunded. Doesn't it make more sense to invest in preventive programs to keep women and their kids healthy than to spend thousands later to keep a premature baby alive because it lacked the care it needed early on?

If WIC is block granted, my own State stands to lose $2.7 million in Federal funding for WIC—which translates into approximately 5,200 women and children being denied WIC services. This will mean local WIC programs will be forced to turn away nutritionally at-risk children and postpartum women. More children will be denied food and health care so that our wealthiest Americans can get a tax break. It's becoming clearer to me who the Republicans made their contract with and where their priorities are.

In my own district, I know first hand how successful WIC has been and how it has helped countless families stay healthy. I know of a young mother of five in Taunton, MA, named Dorothy who is not on welfare, receives WIC so that she can feed her family. If this small investment is denied, she and her family will suffer immeasurably.

Mr. Speaker, I am well aware of the need to get our Nation's finances in order and I intend to work with our new leadership to try to achieve this noble goal. But, I would respectfully suggest that keeping our kids and young mothers well fed and healthy is an infinitely wiser investment for our country than this star wars weapons fantasy—which unfortunately seems to be making an expensive comeback.

I would urge my colleagues to show a little forethought and little heart, as we decide the fate of our country's most precious resource—our children.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my special order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MCHUGH). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from North Carolina?

There is no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MOAKLEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Mr. MOAKLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Ohio [Ms. Kaptur] is recognized for 5 minutes.

[Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

THE REPUBLICAN NUTRITION PLAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. CHAMBLISS] is recognized for 30 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. CHAMBLISS. Mr. Speaker, I have with me today, tonight, my colleague from the 10th District of Georgia, Mr. NORWOOD, and also my distinguished colleague from the First District of Georgia, Mr. KINGSTON.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia [Mr. KINGSTON].

Mr. KINGSTON. I thank the gentleman. You know, it is too bad, after listening to all the last hour, the people of America had to listen to, and I am sure no one is watching C–SPAN right now, and we cannot respond. I also will point out to the viewers back home that we had a room full of Democrats in here about 30 minutes ago, now they are all gone, now that we have some floor time to talk about some of their ridiculous and absurd bellyaching about protecting bureaucrats.

All we know is that we are going to cut programs to cut out bureaucracy, and all the whining and gnashing of teeth over here to protect bureaucracies, and you know, as you listen to it, everything works. Every program is a good one, and everyone is efficient, and it is saving America, and it is doing this, it is doing that. Why, if we