

CUTS IN ENERGY ASSISTANCE
DEVASTATING TO RHODE IS-
LAND'S SENIORS, WORKING
POOR

(Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks, and include extraneous matter.)

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, we hear all the time from Republicans about how they want less Government. Now we know what are talking about. They are talking about less Government assistance to our senior citizens during the winter. That is right. The Republicans have cut heating assistance for low-income families in my State of Rhode Island.

When the average heating bill in Providence, Rhode Island, is \$1,200 a winter, a grant of \$414 can make a world of difference. Sixty percent of the households in my State who receive energy assistance are either elderly or on fixed incomes, or working poor. Most have household incomes between \$6,000 and \$8,000.

Mr. Speaker, talking about tax cuts, a capital gains tax cut is not going to be any comfort to my senior citizens in my State next winter.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard time and time again that the opposition is determined to provide less Government and lower taxes, but for who?

Well, now we have the answer. The cuts before us clearly show that the intention is to provide less help to those who most need it, and lower taxes for those who have the most.

For those who fear the onset of winter, and the long and cold nights that it brings, these cuts will force a choice between heating and eating. My State of Rhode Island was supposed to receive \$8.8 million in energy assistance next winter. No more.

This bill turns its back on the 26,000 households, more than 59,000 individuals in Rhode Island, who rely on the little bit of help they get for energy assistance.

When the average heating bill in Providence is \$1,200 a winter, a grant of \$414 can make a world of difference.

To quote a couple from my State, writing about the assistance they received: "Thank you so very much from our hearts to yours. By your compassion we're touched. May God bless you * * *. Not one day did we live cold * * *"

Sixty percent of the households in Rhode Island who receive energy assistance are either elderly, on fixed-incomes, or working poor. Most have household incomes between \$6,000 and \$8,000. A capital gains tax cut will provide little comfort to these people in the dead of winter next year.

This cut is indefensible, and I suspect that is why the majority would not even allow an amendment restoring this money to make it to the floor.

They will be able to avoid the pain of a vote today, but our seniors will be forced to feel the pain of their cuts tomorrow.

The cuts to housing again hit at those most in need. Forty percent of the housing cuts will strike senior citizens, threatening the very viability and quality of their housing by slashing operating subsidies and modernization

funds—maintenance, necessary improvements, and security will be cut back.

In Pawtucket, RI the cut in modernization funds could mean that a planned central security station will have to be eliminated. What protection will the seniors living in Burns Manor derive from the big business loop holes in the tax package?

Is this the right way to begin cutting the budget? I do not think so.

When it comes to cutting the budget, let us start with the programs that are the weakest and not the programs for the weakest.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 1995, and a previous order of the House, the following Members are recognized for 5 minutes each.

A TRIBUTE TO JIM "BOW TIE" PHELAN AND THE MOUNTAINEERS OF MOUNT ST. MARY'S COLLEGE

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

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Mountaineers of Mount St. Mary's College on their first ever trip to the NCAA division 1 basketball tournament.

The Mountaineers are led by their coach Jim "Bow Tie" Phelan, the second most active winning coach in the country, and in his honor I wear this bow tie today.

The Mountaineers got to the big show by defeating Rider College in the championship game of the North East Conference tournament. Coach Phelan's hard work ethic and determination drove the Mount to overcome an early 23-9 deficit to defeat Rider in the final minutes of the game. The Mountaineers are a young group of energized players that play with the pride inspired by Coach Phelan. I am gratified that such a spirited team of young men is representing western Maryland in our national tournament.

The Mountaineers face a tough challenge when they play the No. 1 seeded Kentucky Wildcats in the first round of the tournament. I am sure the Mountaineers will play to their very best and the lessons they will learn will make them better players and a better team in the future.

I wish the Mountaineers and Coach Phelan all the best of luck in this competition.

CRITICISMS OF THE RESCISSIONS PACKAGE

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

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, we will no doubt hear a great deal of criticism of this rescissions package as cutting too

much, too fast, or that vital programs are being cut unfairly. I can understand that feeling. All of us have had to have a little bit trimmed on various programs that are pet projects or pet laws that we thought were working very effectively. Obviously, because of the size and scope of the bill which we passed this morning—and I think justly—this rescissions package offers ample opportunity for objection on the part of those who are opposed to spending cuts. Likewise, amendments were proposed and might have been proposed by those who would rather see alternative cuts to those contained in the bill. I attempted to offer an amendment to rescue the summer youth program which is vital to most urban cities in this country and was eliminated in the stealth of night, 1:30 a.m., over the chairman's objection. And we were not able to offer it because of the time situation on the floor and the fact that we had to preside over a committee that could only be held this morning when the House was in session.

We hope that will be worked out in conference and I am confident that between the other body and the House conferees, it will be worked out in conference.

The point I want to make is in some ways the bill does not go far enough. For instance, the rescission bill that came before us does not make a single cut or rescission in the military construction program. That budget category has been totally spared from the budget knife. While this Congress does not want to cut needed funding for military housing and for facilities critical to the national defense, to argue that every single dollar in the military construction program is of a critical nature is nonsense. We should be as rigorous in our efforts to cut wasteful spending in military programs as we are in social programs.

Let me give one example of such waste. The Navy is preparing to spend hundreds of millions of dollars to homeport up to 3 nuclear aircraft carriers in San Diego. The fiscal year 1995 military construction budget contains \$18.3 million for dredging San Diego Bay to accommodate those carriers and directs that the Navy spend another \$5.1 million for the design of facilities necessary to homeport these carriers. This represents a costly down payment on what may be a three-quarters of a billion dollars boondoggle duplicating existing facilities the Navy is proposing to eliminate in the base closure process.

Engineering reports suggested that the Navy could homeport these same carriers in Long Beach for \$25 million or less. At the same time, the Los Angeles Times has reported in a March 3 story that the Navy's plan to dispose of the spoils of this dredging may very well be illegal. Thus, the project may not even be allowed to go forward. Yet the Navy is proposing that we spend in excess of \$100 million in next year's