

majority to declare that the State government, State subdivisions, municipalities, and school districts are powerless to act to provide a remedy for arbitrary discrimination.

Observers of today's argument are hopeful that the Supreme Court will uphold the Colorado Supreme Court's decision invalidating amendment 2. I congratulate Denver and the other appellees for their powerful arguments before the Supreme Court this morning, and look forward to a decision consistent with this Nation's commitment to the civil rights of all its citizens.

#### WELCOME TO PRESIDENT ZEDILLO

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

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, today the new President of Mexico, Ernesto Zedillo, is in town meeting with our President and the bipartisan congressional leadership. Mr. Speaker, Mexico is a good friend, and it has had some tough times, and it is important that we show support to the new government and the new President of Mexico.

Last week the President of Mexico paid back \$700 million of Mexico's debt ahead of schedule. As a good neighbor should, the United States helped Mexico out of a severe financial crisis with a loan of \$20 billion. Among our top priority goals in United States-Mexico relations are to disrupt and defeat the narcotrafficking that so negatively affects both of our countries and to build the American economy by helping United States business do business with Mexico.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to welcome the new President of Mexico, to say that we are friends, that we back each other, that we need each other, that the problems of immigration and drugs and many other foreign policy issues and our economic ties are strong and should become stronger.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD a letter to me from Ambassador James R. Jones, as follows:

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, MEXICO,

OCTOBER 3, 1995.

Hon. BILL RICHARDSON,  
U.S. House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. RICHARDSON: Bill, I have written many "Dear Colleague" letters during my seven terms in Congress. This is the first time I have written you as U.S. Ambassador to Mexico. The occasion is the State Visit to Washington next week of Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo. I want to give you my assessment of our bilateral relationship and the status of Mexico's economic and political condition and prospects for the future.

Overall, U.S.-Mexico relations are the most mature, positive and cooperative I have seen since first visiting Mexico as a young White House Assistant nearly thirty years ago.

Among our top priority goals here at the U.S. Embassy in Mexico, two principal objectives are to disrupt and defeat the narcotrafficking that so negatively affects both of our countries and to build the Amer-

ican economy by helping U.S. business do business with Mexico.

Mexico and the United States are cooperating more closely and effectively than ever in the fight against domestic and foreign drug cartels who hope to use Mexico as a shipping point to America. President Zedillo has told me each time we have met how seriously he views the threat of organized crime to Mexico's sovereignty and its economic well-being. He has ordered closer cooperation of Mexican law enforcement agencies with ours and we are seeing results. A major narcotics trafficker and several cartel lieutenants have been arrested. Together with Mexican authorities we have developed more effective measures to detect and intercept drug shipments. So far this year, more than 400,000 metric tons of cocaine, heroin, marijuana and dangerous drugs have been seized in transit. We have a long way to go to stop the flow of drugs to the United States, but we are moving in the right direction.

Progress continues also in developing commercial opportunities for U.S. business with Mexico in ways that benefit both countries. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) is working. Last year, Mexico surpassed Japan as our second largest trading partner before the currency crisis hit in December causing Mexico's most severe recession in decades. Today, even in the midst of this economic crisis, U.S. exports to Mexico are seven percent higher than before NAFTA took effect. And today our exports to Mexico support more than 700,000 U.S. jobs.

In addition, the economic recovery program in Mexico is also working. Absent a most unexpected event, I believe that the macroeconomic recovery will begin by the end of this year and recovery of the real economy by the middle of next year. This is important to us for two reasons: first, Mexicans buy overwhelmingly from the U.S. About 70 percent of their imports come from us. When Mexican consumers increase their purchasing power, it will expand our market opportunities which enhance jobs in the U.S. Second, creating economic opportunities in Mexico itself is without doubt the most effective way to control illegal immigration. Therefore, increasing commerce helps us both.

The Mexican Government has held steadfast to free market economic reforms and sound fiscal and monetary policies. The loan assistance package which the United States arranged to help Mexico avoid a default which could have triggered a global recession was not foreign aid. This loan has already earned our government \$479 million in interest and there are indications that Mexico will be able to pay the principal ahead of schedule.

Mexico is experiencing its greatest political, legal and democratic reforms in history. Election law changes last year have resulted in generally recognized fair elections and have given strength to opposition political parties. The Mexican Congress has gained vast new powers. The Supreme Court has been reformed. Some critics have viewed these developments as a sign of weakness in the Presidency and of potential instability. I believe just the opposite. It takes more strength to advance democracy than it does to retain authoritarian rule. We strongly support these democratic reforms and believe they improve stability in these difficult times.

This is a period of dramatic transition in Mexico as well as with our bilateral relations. The direction of this change is very positive. The values being promoted in Mexico such as a free market economy, open democratic systems, cleaning out corruption and strengthening law enforcement are values we share.

We also share a 2,000 mile border with this nation of 92 million people. We must make our relationship work to provide new opportunities for both countries. I will welcome your ideas.

Sincerely yours,

JAMES R. JONES,  
Ambassador.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

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

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

#### NEW REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue with part of what I was talking about earlier today, and, that is, the new Republican leadership Medicare plan which I say new because as a member of the House Committee on Commerce, I first received the actual legislation not yesterday, but a week ago Monday on the day when the Committee on Commerce was expected to mark up the bill without any opportunity for a hearing. As a consequence, the Commerce Democrats decided to have their own hearings a week ago last Tuesday, on October 3, and there were a number of things that came out of that hearing that were very interesting in terms of where this Republican Medicare plan is taking us.

The concern that I have or one of the major concerns that I have is that this bill seeks to lure seniors into HMO's or other managed care programs with no choice of doctors in order to try to achieve the \$270 billion in savings that are proposed. If seniors do not move into managed care plans, budgetary gimmicks would kick in to take even more money out of the Medicare system. So I consider this plan a very unhealthy plan for the future of Medicare.

Let me talk a little bit about the concerns I have and why I say that it will force essentially seniors into HMO's or managed care systems. One of the concerns that I had a few months ago was that the Republican plan was going to basically put forward a voucher system whereby the Federal Government would give the senior a certain amount of money in a voucher or coupon and that if that was not enough to pay for a good quality health care plan, the senior would have to make up the difference by putting out more money.