

will do. It will eliminate Medicaid coverage for over 69,000 children in Michigan. We know it will jeopardize the immunization program for children in Michigan. We know that over 600,000 children in Michigan will have their taxes raised by an average of \$380 by the year 2002. We know that they deny Head Start over 7,000 children in Michigan. We know that there are nutrition programs that will be cut in this reconciliation package.

Before we vote, I hope we get the whole text of the reconciliation bill and not just false promises.

PRESIDENT RAISES TAXES TOO MUCH

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

Mr. EWING. Mr. Speaker, the President has finally confirmed what Republicans have been saying all along—that he raised taxes too much. While speaking in Houston at a fundraiser he stated that a lot of people think “I raised their taxes too much. It might surprise you to know that I think I raised them too much too.”

Republicans promised tax cuts last year and this week we plan to vote on a budget package that will include a tax cut totaling \$245 billion dollars.

We are offering a \$500-per-child tax credit which will eliminate taxes for families making less than \$25,000. We reduce capital gains taxes by 50 percent. We reduce the tax burden on our Nations seniors by repealing the 1993 Clinton tax increase over the next 7 years.

Everyday it is more clear that Republicans want to lead this Nation into the next century, while the President and Democrats can only offer rhetoric, scare tactics, and flip-flops.

DEDICATED EDUCATORS

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

Mr. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to inform you and all of my colleagues of a special event taking place beginning this evening and for the balance of the week.

Our Page School is being visited by a validation team from the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. This visitation occurs once every 10 years, and a favorable report is critical to the reaccreditation of the school. I know Dr. Knautz, the principal of the Page School, and his very able staff have spent a year in preparation, and I am confident the school will be recognized for its continued excellence.

As chairman of the Page board, I want to acknowledge the dedication of these educators who are serving on the validation team. The chairperson is Ms. Maureen K. Newman of Great

Neck, NY. She is ably assisted by Mr. James M. Skeens of Randallstown, MD, Mrs. Kathryn Draper of Centreville, MD, Mr. Robert C. Williams of Edgewood, MD, and Mr. Don Mieczkowski of Sandy Spring, MD.

CORRECTIONS CALENDAR

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This is the day for the call of the Corrections Calendar. Without objection, the first bill on the calendar will be called last.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will call the second bill on the Corrections Calendar.

SENIOR CITIZENS HOUSING SAFETY AND ECONOMIC RELIEF ACT OF 1995

The Clerk called the bill (H.R. 117) to amend the United States Housing Act of 1937 to prevent persons having drug or alcohol use problems from occupying dwelling units in public housing projects designated for occupancy by elderly families, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 117

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act of 1995”.

SEC. 2. LIMITATION ON OCCUPANCY IN PUBLIC HOUSING DESIGNATED FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(a) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437e(a)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (1), by striking “Notwithstanding any other provision of law” and inserting “Subject only to the provisions of this subsection”;

(2) in paragraph (4), by inserting “, except as provided in paragraph (5)” before the period at the end; and

(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

“(5) LIMITATION ON OCCUPANCY IN PROJECTS FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES.—

“(A) OCCUPANCY LIMITATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a dwelling unit in a project (or portion of a project) that is designated under paragraph (1) for occupancy by only elderly families or by only elderly and disabled families shall not be occupied by—

“(i) any person with disabilities who is not an elderly person and whose history of use of alcohol or drugs constitutes a disability; or

“(ii) any person who is not an elderly person and whose history of use of alcohol or drugs provides reasonable cause for the agency to believe that the occupancy by such person may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants.

“(B) REQUIRED STATEMENT.—A public housing agency may not make a dwelling unit in such a project available for occupancy to any person or family who is not an elderly family, unless the agency acquires from the person or family a signed statement that no person who will be occupying the unit—

“(i) uses (or has a history of use of) alcohol, or

“(ii) uses (or has a history of use of) drugs, that would interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants.”.

(b) LEASE PROVISIONS.—Section 6(l) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d(l)) is amended—

(1) in paragraph (5), by striking “and” at the end;

(2) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(3) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

“(6) provide that any occupancy in violation of the provisions of section 7(a)(5)(A) or the furnishing of any false or misleading information pursuant to section 7(a)(5)(B) shall be cause for termination of tenancy; and”.

SEC. 3. EVICTION OF NONELDERLY TENANTS HAVING DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE PROBLEMS FROM PUBLIC HOUSING DESIGNATED FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES.

Section 7(c) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 is amended to read as follows:

“(c) STANDARDS REGARDING EVICTIONS.—

“(1) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), any tenant who is lawfully residing in a dwelling unit in a public housing project may not be evicted or otherwise required to vacate such unit because of the designation of the project (or a portion of the project) pursuant to this section or because of any action taken by the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development or any public housing agency pursuant to this section.

“(2) REQUIREMENT TO EVICT NONELDERLY TENANTS HAVING DRUG OR ALCOHOL USE PROBLEMS IN HOUSING DESIGNATED FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES.—The public housing agency administering a project (or portion of a project) described in subsection (a)(5)(A) shall evict any person whose occupancy in the project (or portion of the project) violates subsection (a)(5)(A).

“(3) REQUIREMENT TO EVICT NONELDERLY TENANTS FOR 3 INSTANCES OF PROHIBITED ACTIVITY INVOLVING DRUGS OR ALCOHOL.—With respect to a project (or portion of a project) described in subsection (a)(5)(A), the public housing agency administering the project shall evict any person who is not an elderly person and who, during occupancy in the project (or portion thereof), engages on 3 separate occasions (occurring after the date of the enactment of the Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act) in any activity that threatens the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants and involves the use of alcohol or drugs.

“(4) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—The provisions of paragraphs (2) and (3) requiring eviction of a person may not be construed to require a public housing agency to evict any other persons who occupy the same dwelling unit as the person required to be evicted.”.

SEC. 4. STANDARDS FOR LEASE TERMINATION AND EXPEDITED GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.

Section 6 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d) is amended—

(1) in subsection (k), in the first sentence of the matter following paragraph (6), by striking “criminal” in the first place it appears; and

(2) in subsection (l)(5), by striking “criminal” the first place it appears.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). The Clerk will report the Committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The Clerk read as follows:

Committee amendment in the nature of a substitute: Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as "Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY FOR PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCIES TO PROHIBIT ADMISSION OF DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSES TO ASSISTED HOUSING.

Section 16 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437n) is amended—

(1) in the section heading by striking "INCOME"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(e) AUTHORITY TO LIMIT ADMISSION OF DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSERS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a public housing agency may establish standards for occupancy in public housing dwelling units and assistance under section 8, that prohibit admission to such units and assistance under such section by any individual—

"(A) who currently illegally uses a controlled substance; or

"(B) whose history of illegal use of a controlled substance or use of alcohol, or current use of alcohol, provides reasonable cause for the agency to believe that the occupancy by such individual may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents.

"(2) CONSIDERATION OF REHABILITATION.—In determining whether, pursuant to paragraph (1), to deny admission or assistance to any elderly person based on a history of use of a controlled substance or alcohol, a public housing agency may consider whether such elderly person—

"(A) has successfully completed a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program (as applicable) and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of a controlled substance or use of alcohol (as applicable);

"(B) has otherwise been rehabilitated successfully and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of a controlled substance or use of alcohol (as applicable); or

"(C) is participating in a supervised drug or alcohol rehabilitation program (as applicable) and is no longer engaging in the illegal use of a controlled substance or use of alcohol (as applicable)."

SEC. 3. DESIGNATED HOUSING FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED FAMILIES.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7 of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437e) is amended to read as follows:

"DESIGNATED HOUSING FOR ELDERLY AND DISABLED FAMILIES

"SEC. 7. (a) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE DESIGNATED HOUSING.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject only to provisions of this section and notwithstanding any other provision of law, a public housing agency for which a plan under subsection (d) is in effect may provide public housing projects (or portions of projects) designated for occupancy by (A) only elderly families, (B) only disabled families, or (C) elderly and disabled families.

"(2) PRIORITY FOR OCCUPANCY.—In determining priority for admission to public housing projects (or portions of projects) that are designated for occupancy as provided in paragraph (1), the public housing agency may make units in such projects (or portions) available only to the types of families for whom the project is designated.

"(3) ELIGIBILITY OF NEAR-ELDERLY FAMILIES.—If a public housing agency determines that there are insufficient numbers of elderly families to fill all the units in a project (or portion of a project) designated under paragraph (1) for occupancy by only elderly families, the agency may provide that near-

elderly families may occupy dwelling units in the project (or portion).

"(4) LIMITATION ON OCCUPANCY IN PROJECTS FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—Subject only to the provisions of subsection (b) and notwithstanding any other provision of law, a dwelling unit in a project (or portion of a project) that is designated under paragraph (1) for occupancy by only elderly families or by only elderly and disabled families shall not be occupied by any individual who is not an elderly person and—

"(i) who currently illegally uses a controlled substance; or

"(ii) whose history of illegal use of a controlled substance or use of alcohol, or current use of alcohol, provides reasonable cause for the agency to believe that the occupancy by such individual may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other tenants.

"(B) CONSIDERATION OF REHABILITATION.—In determining whether, pursuant to subparagraph (A), to deny occupancy to any individual based on a history of use of a controlled substance or alcohol, a public housing agency may consider the factors under section 16(e)(2).

"(b) STANDARDS REGARDING EVICTIONS.—

"(1) LIMITATION.—Except as provided in paragraph (2), any tenant who is lawfully residing in a dwelling unit in a public housing project may not be evicted or otherwise required to vacate such unit because of the designation of the project (or portion of a project) pursuant to this section or because of any action taken by the Secretary or any public housing agency pursuant to this section.

"(2) REQUIREMENT TO EVICT NONELDERLY TENANTS IN HOUSING DESIGNATED FOR ELDERLY FAMILIES WHO HAVE CURRENT DRUG OR ALCOHOL ABUSE PROBLEMS.—The public housing agency administering a project (or portion of a project) described in subsection (a)(4)(A) shall evict any individual who occupies a dwelling unit in such a project and who currently illegally uses a controlled substance or whose current use of alcohol provides a reasonable cause for the agency to believe that the occupancy by such individual may interfere with the health, safety, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by other residents. This paragraph may not be construed to require a public housing agency to evict any other individual who occupies the same dwelling unit as the individual required to be evicted.

"(c) RELOCATION ASSISTANCE.—A public housing agency that designates any existing project or building, or portion thereof, for occupancy as provided under subsection (a) shall provide, to each person and family relocated in connection with such designation—

"(1) notice of the designation and relocation, as soon as is practicable for the agency and the person or family;

"(2) comparable housing (including appropriate services and design features), which may include tenant-based rental assistance under section 8, at a rental rate that is comparable to that applicable to the unit from which the person or family has vacated; and

"(3) payment of actual, reasonable moving expenses.

"(d) REQUIRED PLAN.—A plan under this subsection for designating a project (or portion of a project) for occupancy under subsection (a)(1) is a plan, prepared by the public housing agency for the project and submitted to the Secretary, that—

"(1) establishes that the designation of the project is necessary—

"(A) to achieve the housing goals for the jurisdiction under the comprehensive housing affordability strategy under section 105 of the Cranston-Gonzalez National Affordable Housing Act; and

"(B) to meet the housing needs of the low-income population of the jurisdiction; and

"(2) includes a description of—

"(A) the project (or portion of a project) to be designated;

"(B) the types of tenants for which the project is to be designated;

"(C) any supportive services to be provided to tenants of the designated project (or portion);

"(D) how the agency will secure any additional resources or housing assistance that is necessary to provide assistance to nonelderly disabled families that would have been housed if occupancy in project were not restricted pursuant to this section; and

"(E) how the design and related facilities (as such term is defined in section 202(d)(8) of the Housing Act of 1959) of the project accommodate the special environmental needs of the intended occupants.

For purposes of this subsection, the term 'supportive services' means services designed to meet the special needs of residents.

"(e) REVIEW OF PLANS.—

"(1) REVIEW AND NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary shall conduct a limited review of each plan under subsection (d) that is submitted to the Secretary to ensure that the plan is complete and complies with the requirements of subsection (d). The Secretary shall notify each public housing agency submitting a plan whether the plan complies with such requirements not later than 60 days after receiving the plan. If the Secretary does not notify the public housing agency, as required under this paragraph or paragraph (2), the plan shall be considered, for purposes of this section, to comply with the requirements under subsection (d) and the Secretary shall be considered to have notified the agency of such compliance upon the expiration of such 60-day period.

"(2) NOTICE OF REASONS FOR DETERMINATION OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—If the Secretary determines that a plan, as submitted, does not comply with the requirements under subsection (d), the Secretary shall specify in the notice under paragraph (1) the reasons for the noncompliance and any modifications necessary for the plan to meet such requirements.

"(3) STANDARDS FOR DETERMINATION OF NONCOMPLIANCE.—The Secretary may determine that a plan does not comply with the requirements under subsection (d) only if—

"(A) the plan is incomplete in significant matters required under such subsection; or

"(B) there is evidence available to the Secretary that challenges, in a substantial manner, any information provided in the plan.

"(4) TREATMENT OF EXISTING PLANS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, a public housing agency shall be considered to have submitted a plan under this subsection if the agency has submitted to the Secretary an application and allocation plan under this section (as in effect before the date of the enactment of the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995) that have not been approved or disapproved before such date of enactment.

"(f) EFFECTIVENESS.—

"(1) 5-YEAR EFFECTIVENESS OF PLAN.—A plan under subsection (d) shall be in effect for purposes of this section only during the 5-year period that begins upon notification under subsection (e)(1) of the public housing agency that the plan complies with the requirements under subsection (d). An agency may extend the effectiveness of the designation and plan for an additional 2-year period beginning upon the expiration of such period (or the expiration of any previous extension period under this sentence) by submitting to the Secretary any information needed to update such plan.

"(2) SAVINGS PROVISION.—Any application and allocation plan approved under this section (as in effect before the date of the enactment of the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995) before such date of enactment shall be considered to be a plan under subsection (d) that is in effect for purposes of this section for the 5-year period beginning upon such approval.

"(g) INAPPLICABILITY OF UNIFORM RELOCATION ASSISTANCE AND REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITIONS POLICY ACT OF 1970.—No tenant of a public housing project shall be considered to be displaced for purposes of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policy Act of 1970 because of the designation of any existing project or building, or portion thereof, for occupancy as provided under subsection (a) of this section.

"(h) INAPPLICABILITY TO INDIAN HOUSING.—The provisions of this section shall not apply with respect to low-income housing developed or operated pursuant to a contract between the Secretary and an Indian housing authority."

(b) LEASE PROVISIONS.—Section 6(1) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d(1)) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (6) as paragraph (7); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (5) the following new paragraph:

"(6) provide that any occupancy in violation of the provisions of section 7(a)(4) shall be cause for termination of tenancy; and"

SEC. 4. STANDARDS FOR ASSISTED HOUSING LEASE TERMINATION AND EXPEDITED GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.

(a) PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE.—Section 6(k) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d(k)) is amended, in the first sentence of the matter following paragraph (6), by striking "criminal" the first place it appears and all that follows through "such premises" and inserting "activity described in subsection (1)(5) of this section or section 8(d)(1)(B)(iii)".

(b) PUBLIC HOUSING LEASES.—Section 6(l) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437d(l)) is amended by striking paragraphs (4) and (5) and inserting the following new paragraphs:

"(4) require that the public housing agency may not terminate the tenancy except for violation of the terms or conditions of the lease, violation of applicable Federal, State, or local law, or for other good cause;

"(5) provide that the public housing agency may terminate the tenancy of a public housing resident for any activity, engaged in by the resident, any member of the resident's household, or any guest or other person under the resident's control, that—

"(A) threatens the health or safety of, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by, other residents or employees of the public housing agency or other manager of the housing;

"(B) threatens the health or safety of, or right to peaceful enjoyment of their premises by, persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises; or

"(C) is criminal activity (including drug-related criminal activity);"

(c) SECTION 8 HOUSING LEASES.—Section 8(d)(1)(B) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(d)(1)(B)) is amended by striking clause (ii) and (iii) and insert the following new clauses:

"(ii) the owner shall not terminate the tenancy except for violation of the terms and conditions of the lease, violation of applicable Federal, State, or local law, or other good cause;

"(iii) the owner may terminate the tenancy of the tenant of a unit for any activity, engaged in by the tenant, any member of the tenant's household, or any guest or other person under the tenant's control, that—

"(I) threatens the health or safety of, or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by, other tenants or employees of the owner or manager of the housing;

"(II) threatens the health or safety of, or right to peaceful enjoyment of their residences by, persons residing in the immediate vicinity of the premises; or

"(III) is criminal activity (including drug-related criminal activity); and"

SEC. 5. EXTENSION OF FHA MORTGAGE INSURANCE PROGRAM FOR HOME EQUITY CONVERSION MORTGAGES.

(a) EXTENSION OF PROGRAM.—The first sentence of section 255(g) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z-20(g)) is amended by striking "September 30, 1995" and inserting "September 30, 2000".

(b) LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF MORTGAGES.—The second sentence of section 255(g) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z-20(g)) is amended by striking "25,000" and inserting "50,000".

(c) ELIGIBLE MORTGAGES.—Section 255(d)(3) of the National Housing Act (12 U.S.C. 1715z-20(d)(3)) is amended to read as follows:

"(3) be secured by a dwelling that is designed principally for a 1- to 4-family residence in which the mortgagor occupies 1 of the units;"

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the reading). Without objection, the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute will be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH] and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] will each be recognized for 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH].

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, before the House this afternoon is H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act. The bill is designed to address the physical and economic needs of senior citizens.

On physical grounds, it is intended that seniors not be required to live with those who have brought drugs and crime into their housing projects. It is imperative to give seniors not only a safe environment in which to live, but one in neighborhoods where they have been brought up in a community with their past and current families.

In cities in particular, it is thus designed to halt gray flight.

For this initiative, I would compliment Mr. BLUTE, who introduced this approach in bill form, and Mr. FLANAGAN, who has been such an advocate of this change.

The second group of senior citizens this legislation—which was put together by the excellent work of Representative RICK LAZIO, chairman of the Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee—would help are those whose major asset is the house in which they have lived for many years, in which they have raised their family and in which they hope to continue to live, as long as they are physically capable of doing so.

Many of these elderly home-owning persons are facing financial pressures

which can be eased by allowing them to enter into so-called reverse mortgages through which they can remain in their homes while receiving either a lump sum payment or monthly payments based on the value of their homes.

□ 1430

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] to explain this program.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, time and time again Members have come to the floor of the House of Representatives and spoken about the tremendous opportunity we have in the 104th Congress. Today, through the corrections day process and through the hard work of many Republican Members, we are seizing that opportunity to right the wrongs of misguided public policies and to make sure our seniors can be secure in their homes.

H.R. 117 accomplishes two very important goals. By allowing PHA's to take steps to evict dangerous tenants, this bill ensures that seniors who have trusted the government to provide them with decent, safe housing can feel secure in their own homes. By reauthorizing the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage [HECM] program, this bill also ensures seniors who own their own home and who want to stay in their own neighborhood can do so in comfort, not worrying about whether they can afford to.

Too often, the best laid plans of HUD and Congress have effects that were never intended. Certainly, providing good housing for disabled Americans is something we should do and elderly-only housing projects tend to be some of the best federally-assisted housing available. Too many people who receive a housing subsidy are current drug addicts or alcoholics living under the guise of disabled persons. This mix has proven to be harmful to seniors and truly needy and deserving disabled people as well.

We cannot tolerate the harassment, intimidation, and even physical abuse that is heaped on older Americans by residents in their own building who are living at taxpayer expense. We cannot tolerate those who would prey on grandparents, our neighbors, or our children.

I appreciate the hard work of so many of my colleagues who played a part in bringing this legislation to the floor and the leadership shown by Members such as my distinguished colleague from Massachusetts, Mr. BLUTE. I applaud the commitment being made today by Members on both sides of the aisle who, by voting for this bill, are supporting and protecting our parents and grandparents.

I also appreciate the concern many Members have shown with regard to the other provision of H.R. 117 that was in a bill I introduced earlier this year as H.R. 1934, which reauthorized the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage Program for older Americans. I feel

very strongly about the need to reauthorize this program because of the tremendous value reverse mortgages have for seniors around the country.

This provision encourages those who want to stay in their homes and in the neighborhoods they care about, while at the same time making their life more livable. The HECM program can ensure the quality of life of older Americans at no additional cost to the government, making everybody winners.

In closing, I would remind my colleagues of the strong showing of support we have received for this legislation. The American Association of Retired Persons, the National Association of Home Builders, the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, and the National Assisted Housing Management Association have all voiced strong support for this bill. But in the final analysis we are passing this bill today not for political reasons: We are passing it for the people these groups represent and for the millions of Americans who look to this Congress for help and support. The Senior Citizen Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995 is a good bill and I urge all of my colleagues to support it.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me read to this Chamber the headline from an article written in the Boston Herald last Friday, October 20. The headline says: "Chelsea Widow, 73, Raped at Gunpoint."

This 73-year-old woman had just lost her husband 4 or 5 months prior to this outrageous incident, and was living alone in what was supposed to be an elderly-only public housing building in Chelsea, MA, a working-class city just outside of Boston.

Unfortunately, over the past several years more and more younger people have been allowed to move into this supposedly elderly-only public housing project, many with substance abuse problems. While nobody who actively abuses drugs or alcohol is supposed to get into public housing, too often screening is inadequate, old habits return, or drug pushers "game" the system and gain admittance to public housing under the guise of being disabled in order to ply their trade. As we all know, drug addicts commit crimes, particularly violent crimes, and, as in Chelsea, the victims are often the elderly and the frail.

We have tried several times over the past several years in the Congress to make it possible for public housing authorities to set up elderly-only public housing, and to kick out trouble makers who are threatening the elderly for any reason. In fact, later this year I expect the committee to consider whether or not former drug or alcohol abusers should be considered disabled at all for the purposes of public housing.

But for various reasons, the attempts to restore elderly-only housing have

failed. So, today we are moving forward on a bipartisan basis to try to address this terrible problem and I want to commend Chairman LAZIO for bringing this bill to the floor.

This bill will give housing authorities the power to screen out people with histories of drug and alcohol abuse if they have reasonable grounds for expecting that the applicants will cause problems.

It requires housing authorities to get rid of nonelderly tenants who have current alcohol or drug abuse problems.

It enables housing authorities to get rid of tenants in family or elderly projects who are threatening the health and safety of other tenants.

It clears away the existing barriers to the creation of elderly-only public housing, and allows for the creation of disabled-only housing or housing for mixed populations.

While I support this bill, and urge my Democratic colleagues to do the same, I must point out that the Republicans have not always been so friendly to the elderly who live in our public and assisted housing.

Just a few short weeks ago, the Republicans voted to kill all new rental assistance that the Secretary was using largely to move the disabled out of senior-only housing.

Just a few short weeks ago, the Republicans voted to raise rents on senior citizens living in public and assisted housing, and the Republicans defeated amendments offered by me and my colleague BARNEY FRANK to roll back these rent increases.

These same Republicans came to the floor and voted for a budget that will absolutely decimate public housing, in spite of the fact that about one-third of public housing units are occupied by the elderly. Where will they go when the walls start falling down around them, or there is no more heat or hot water?

Finally, while authorizing public housing authorities to create disabled-only housing, the notion that any such housing will ever be built, given the tight-fisted budgets passed for housing by this Republican Congress is, frankly, a fantasy. The need will be greater, but there will be less and less housing for these extremely vulnerable people.

So, I ask my Republican colleagues not just to cast the easy votes and make speeches on the House floor, not just to pay lip service to the needs of the elderly and disabled, but to cast the tough votes and fight the tough battles for increased housing for the elderly, the disabled, and the poor.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to my friend, the distinguished gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE].

Mr. BLUTE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. Speaker, just over a year ago, this House passed on a voice vote an amendment to the Housing and Com-

munity Development Act that would have prevented drug addicts and alcoholics from residing in elderly public housing.

However, the Senate did not act on this legislation, and, therefore, I reintroduced it this year. Since then I have worked with Chairman LEACH and Chairman LAZIO on perfecting this bill and I believe that with their leadership and with the leadership of many members of the committee on both sides of the aisle that we have brought before this House a bill which everyone can be proud of and can support.

The fact of the matter remains as it did last year and the year before then that senior citizens are living in fear because of a law which Congress passed back in 1988. That law allows young drug and alcohol abusers into senior housing facilities. The result of this misguided statute has brought terror into the lives of elderly Americans across the country who deserve to live out their retirements in safe and secure housing.

Not only are our parents and grandparents subjected to loud music and all-night parties, they are being shaken down for loans, harassed, robbed, assaulted and, yes, in some tragic cases even raped.

Let me just state some of the horrible situations that our seniors are living with under current Federal law:

In my district, an elderly woman was shaken down for a \$1,000 loan by a 38-year-old former drug abuser who lived in her complex. He then threatened the life of the woman's relatives after being confronted by them.

In the city of Boston, a 92-year-old woman was raped in her public elderly housing apartment by a 38-year-old neighbor in her building who was a drug abuser.

More recently the Committee on Banking and Financial Services heard emotional testimony from a senior citizen from Worcester, MA, Anneliese Belculfino, who spoke about young men lined up outside as a prostitute tossed her keys out the window, and a drug abuser and resident running naked through the hallway harassing elderly tenants.

In addition, the committee heard testimony from Jack Mather of the Brockton, Massachusetts Housing Authority who said that the percentage of nonelderly disabled in senior housing has risen from 9 percent to 38 percent.

This bill will change this disastrous policy. I can think of nothing that is more important to correct in the Federal code than this policy. I urge this House to adopt this bill.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ], the former chairman of the committee, an individual who has done more for public housing and housing of our Nation's poor and senior citizens than any individual in this Chamber.

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the very kind remarks of

Chairman KENNEDY, particularly coming from him, whom I greatly admire. In a grandfatherly way, I have watched him grow up, so it is something that I deeply appreciate.

Mr. Speaker, the bill before the House clarifies current law. As a practical matter the bill is not necessary. The fact is that housing authorities already can screen applicants for disabled housing, to ensure that persons who are likely to be disruptive or a threat to their neighbors are not placed in senior citizen projects. And housing authorities already can evict tenants who are disruptive or who threaten other tenants. But to the extent that housing authorities believe they need clearer legal guidance, this bill provides that guidance.

In its original form, this bill would have permitted public housing authorities to refuse housing or to evict virtually anyone, on an arbitrary basis. We worked in a bipartisan way to make improvements in the bill, to provide a reasonable level of protection against arbitrary and capricious actions by housing authorities. However, even as it stands, the bill could be read as permitting actions against tenants based solely on gossip and rumor, rather than any real evidence of misconduct. Therefore I want to emphasize that it is not the intent of this bill to deny anyone the right to reasonable process.

Every tenant of a public housing unit, just like any other citizen, has the right to be protected against neighbors who pose a threat or who engage in criminal conduct of any kind. That is what this bill is about—to make clear that disabled individuals who use drugs or alcohol, and who are disruptive or threaten their elderly neighbors, will promptly be evicted. And in addition, this bill makes it clear that a housing authority can deny housing to a person who is likely to threaten the peace and safety of a senior citizen housing project. This protection can be provided without violating anyone's right to a reasonable process. Moreover, as I have stated before, housing authorities can already do this under current law—all this bill does is to make that fact clear to anyone who feels a clarification is needed.

The majority did work with us to make needed revisions in the bill, and I appreciate the cooperation that we received. The bill in its current form is much improved, and I support it.

□ 1445

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute and 30 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Iowa, [Mr. NUSSLE].

(Mr. NUSSLE asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NUSSLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

On July 24, the citizens of Waterloo, IA, spoke to the Speaker of the House and myself during a town meeting. During that visit, the Speaker made a

commitment to the people of Waterloo that we were going to act today on this important legislation. So today we do act.

I commend the chairman, the gentleman from New York, [Mr. LAZIO], and the gentleman from Iowa, [Mr. LEACH], and many others who have worked tirelessly on this issue.

I want to read to you the pleas of the citizens group in Waterloo that has been working on this issue. In part it says this: when a drug dealer lives in Federal housing, more specifically in section 8 housing, we find our battle is not only with the drug dealer, but also with the Federal Government.

They went on to say, as poor families sit on waiting lists, sometimes for years, to receive section 8 housing, drug dealers roll up their thick wad of twenties and continue to get their rent paid by the Federal Government. Federally funded housing should be the most crime-free housing in our Nation. Instead it has become synonymous with drugs and violence. Being poor should not mean you are forced to live among drug dealers and violent criminals.

Therefore, families are forced to live with drug dealing and with violent neighbors because of regulations that go unenforced by Housing and Urban Development. Today we will stop this practice by this important legislation.

We answer the pleas of Leon Moseley and Donna Jones and many others from Waterloo and across the country that have been pleading for help and action by the Federal Government so that they do not have to live in communities that are full of drugs and violence. I commend this entire Congress for working in an area where Housing and Urban Development would not.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN] who came to see me on this issue going back almost 6 years ago. He has been working tirelessly to try to clean up elderly housing in his district. I commend him for his steadfast efforts in that regard.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank my very good friend from Massachusetts and the ranking Democrat on the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity.

This is a very good bill. Certainly all of us are aware of the fact that we have so many seniors who are asset rich and cash poor, and so this home equity conversion mortgage extension works out very well for them and is going to relieve a lot of anxiety for them. I am particularly excited about the provision that relates to the screening and eviction of drug and alcohol abusers in public and publicly assisted housing.

I did not come to the conclusion in any easy way. In fact, when I got involved in public service, back many years ago, it was really over subsidized housing. By the time I was mayor of Alexandria across the river, one out of every seven homes in Alexandria were subsidized.

But increasingly they become characterized by drug dealing and crime and violence. It was not working. Elderly residents were scared for their lives to live in publicly assisted housing. Single mothers had to come to the conclusion really that their children were going to get involved in drug dealing before they became adults. It was almost inevitable. It came to a climax when I lost a very good friend who was a police officer in a highly publicized shootout over a drug transaction. I will not go into the specifics of that, but it became clear that we had to do something.

I went to Secretary Kemp and got a waiver to do exactly what this bill does today. In fact, this bill builds on the provisions that were in last year's Housing and Community Development Act that expanded the grounds for eviction for criminal activity to any activity that threatens the health, safety or right to peaceful enjoyment of the premises by the other residents and by public housing employees.

This measure includes language that I offered last year to remove the geographic limitation that current law places to the expedited eviction procedure by striking the on-or-near-such-premises language. What happens is that drug dealers know very well where the boundary is, they just step over to do their drug dealing.

This bill also clarifies that ignorance of illegal drug activity should not by itself be grounds for exempting a tenant from the expedited eviction procedure. That actual-knowledge standard is a real easy way out for the tenant of record. It encourages the leasehold, which is oftentimes the parent, to avoid knowing what the members of their family, who should be under their control, are actually doing on the premises.

Mr. Speaker, one outstanding concern is that the eviction and screening provisions should be extended to all government assisted privately owned housing. There are approximately 1.4 million public housing units, while there are more than 2.1 million section 8 publicly assisted housing units.

What is effective for public housing should be applied to the privately owned publicly assisted housing as well. In reviewing the legislation, it is not exactly clear if tenants in project-based section 8 programs and tenants in FHA-insured subsidized housing are covered. I am not aware of any legislation standards for eviction from section 8 project-based on FHA-subsidized housing, although I believe HUD has issued rules and a handbook for this housing.

So I think it would be helpful if we could clarify with respect to the project-based section 8 housing and the FHA-subsidized housing whether this applies to them.

Mr. Speaker, could the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], clarify that?

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MORAN. I yield to the gentleman from New York.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to respond to the gentleman.

I want to thank the gentleman from Virginia first of all for his tireless work in this area and for his very valuable input and his strong personal understanding of the issue in working with our staff and particularly with me.

The intent of this bill is to apply stronger eviction standards as broadly as possible to all forms of section 8 housing as well as public housing. Regarding other forms of assisted housing, we are urging the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development to apply stricter standards, stricter eviction standards to all activity, whether criminal, drug related or otherwise in all types of assisted housing.

I would also like to assure my colleague from Virginia that I will continue to work in this area with him to ensure that all multifamily assisted housing meets the stricter eviction standard that the gentleman speaks so eloquently about. I am prepared to include provisions in H.R. 2406, the United States Housing Act of 1995, that would cover all forms of assisted housing and pledge to work with my distinguished colleague from Virginia and other interested colleagues who share these concerns.

I would turn to my distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA], the former ranking member of the Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunity whose experience in this field who will no doubt play an important part in this process, with the gentleman's indulgence.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MORAN. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] and our colleague, the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN].

I have worked on this issue as the ranking member of the subcommittee for a number of years. Clearly section 202 housing projects are by their very design for elderly only; at least they should be. These projects are almost universally well run, well maintained and relatively free from crime. But it is precisely this type of environment that we should be able to provide for all seniors in all federally assisted housing.

I am really pleased that the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN] has brought this subject up. We must work very diligently to close any existing loopholes that there may be and to be sure that that kind of protection is afforded for all seniors and disabled. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her leadership and for that clarification, as well as the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO],

the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ], the former chairman, and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], the former chairman, as well.

I thank them very much for clarifying that, and the substance of this legislation is very important.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New Jersey [Mrs. ROUKEMA], the chairperson of the Subcommittee on Financial Institutions and Consumer Credit and a great friend of seniors throughout America.

(Mrs. ROUKEMA asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. ROUKEMA. Mr. Speaker, recovering alcoholics and drug abusers should never have been allowed to live in these housing projects that are clearly reserved for the elderly and the disabled. We have the opportunity today to close this shameful chapter for our senior citizens.

Our seniors have a right to live their lives in quiet and trouble-free environments rather than one filled with drug abusers, dealers, and alcoholics. It should never have happened.

I want to commend the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE]. I worked with him since 1992. We thought we had the problem resolved. As has already been stated, the problem goes back to the 1988 act.

At the time of that 1988 legislation, I opposed the change in the law. In 1992, we thought we had worked with the chairman of the committee and many others who rewrite the laws and protect against it. But we said at the time it would probably need more working. In 1994, we went through the same exercise, a good exercise. It was a good piece of legislation. Unfortunately, the Senate did not act on the legislation.

So I want to thank the chairman, thank the ranking member, and all those who are working here today to finally fix the problem and provide for clarity, not only in the law but also for the regulatory process so that there will be no more confusion and that we will give the safety to the senior citizens that they deserve and close this shameful chapter in the history of public housing and subsidized housing.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my friend, the gentleman from Ohio [Mr. HOKE].

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I really thank the gentleman for his work and the work of the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] on this bill. This is a long time coming.

It is great work, and I am proud to be associated with it and to support it. It seems to me that what we have done here finally is we have injected some common sense into a process that was very short on it. We are saying very clearly and for the first time that there are certain things, certain standards that we can demand that people must adhere to in order to qualify for, in order to be able to take advantage of public assisted housing.

One of those things is that we are not going to allow drug addicts and drugs to be disrupting the lives of senior citizens in federally subsidized housing. I have got a specific project in Cleveland on the west side of the Cuyahoga River that overlooks the river. It is a wonderful community, a diverse community of senior citizens who care for each other, who care about each other, who take care of each other in a very remarkable way. Yet, they were victimized by drug dealers in their building. I am so delighted that we are fixing that problem today. I commend the gentleman for his efforts.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. FLANAGAN], a great advocate of this legislation.

(Mr. FLANAGAN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FLANAGAN. Mr. Speaker, before I give the statement I prepared, I would like to call to the House's attention the testimony given by the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN] before the full committee. If Members are in any way undecided on this bill, I urge them to pull that testimony and read Mr. MORAN's remarks. He was very self-effacing today when he said he would not go through the details, but it is an amazing story, and it is truly a moving one. I wish that there were time for him to repeat it fully here.

Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act of 1995, I am pleased that this legislation is on the House floor today. I am very proud of this legislation. It is the result of a bipartisan effort to protect our seniors and to make their housing safer.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this year I visited with the coalition to save the Greenview and Eckhardt apartments in Chicago. Seniors discussed many of the problems that they face everyday as residents in public housing. The picture that they painted was horrifying. The housing of substance abusers in these complexes is despicable. Our seniors' safety is threatened with guns, gang crime, violence, and prostitution into what should be their safe haven—their homes.

The Eckhardt apartment complex clearly illustrates that mixing elderly and nonelderly substance dependent residents does not work. Mr. Speaker, it is nothing less than tragic that our poor and innocent senior citizens should have to live in public housing facilities designated for the elderly and the elderly and disabled families with nonelderly tenants who are substance abusers. These drug and alcohol abusers are a threat to the health and safety to the seniors who live in these projects. For elderly citizens, who are most susceptible to physical attack, having to live in the same project with these substance abusers in an outrage.

This legislation toughens placement and eviction policies in order to protect residents of public and assisted housing programs from substance abusers. It gives public housing directors the authority to bar troublesome tenants from their buildings, and this reduce the threat to seniors.

Although I am not on the committee, I have attended hearings on public housing by the Banking and Financial Services Committee and its Subcommittee on Housing and Community Opportunities. Time and time again it was brought up that one of the most important actions that can be taken to protect our seniors from such atrocities in public housing is the careful pre-screening of applicants. Everyone wants this to happen, the tenants, the managers, the Federal, State, and local public officials. The only ones who are not happy about this bill are those who know that they wouldn't be allowed in.

The blute bill, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act of 1995 (H.R. 117) is the appropriate step in that it allows for proper pre-screening of potential tenants. We owe it to our seniors to fight for their safe housing. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

□ 1500

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my good friend, the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. KLINK].

Mr. KLINK. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] for yielding this time to me.

This is an issue that is very important across the Nation, but particularly we have seen it in the Pittsburgh region. I know the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY] has worked very hard on this issue, as has the former chairman, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ], now ranking member, and I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] for his hard work on this because this is an issue that, I think, we can see that something good occurs today.

As my colleagues know, back in 1988 housing provisions were enacted that resulted really in commingling of senior citizens and substance abusers in public housing complexes, and obviously the introduction, as my colleagues have heard from Members here today, Mr. Speaker, had led to conflicts, and it had led to crime. In response in 1992 Congress designated seniors-only, disabled-only, and mixed housing, but there has been some confusion by those people who run the public housing. I think that this bill today will clarify how these designations can be made. I think this will be a great help. The rules to implement these three categories have been difficult to enforce. If we talk to our housing directors. We have talked to them, in western Pennsylvania. They tell us that only 10 of 3,400 public housing authorities have had their plans approved so far. We hear all the time from people who say:

Look, we don't want to go down to common areas because we are afraid of who we are going to see down there. We don't want to go down to shared laundry facilities because we don't know what kind of situation we are going to get involved with.

I thought the comments of the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] were particularly enlightening because we heard the same thing where they get shaken down by people who really kind of force them into giving them loans, and it is really a shake-down, and the seniors really at this point in their lives are supposed to feel some kind of security in their home situation.

In Pittsburgh we have also had in recent news; in fact this was back on the sixth of September of this year, the attempted rape of a 90-year-old woman in the Wilmerding Apartments just outside of the city of Pittsburgh. This is just the kind of thing that residents there had feared would happen for a long time. This is a senior citizens' high rise. Betty Pebanic, who is 76 years old who lived in the Wilmerding Apartments for 10 years said, "We are all frightened, this fellow has got to be put away." Of course she was referring to a 40-year-old man named Earl Thomas who was arrested within an hour after the assault. Now this 90-year-old woman who he attempted to rape must have been just a little bit too much for Mr. Thomas to handle despite the difference in age because she bloodied his eye, she got away from him, and she chased him away. Not only did she chase him away, but when the police were summoned, they found blood droplets. They found out it was not hers, it was his. But they also found his plastic bank card, and they were able to identify him, and within 1 hour Mr. Thomas was arrested. He was taken out, he was arraigned on \$100,000 bond. It was really something because the police station is right next door to the highrise, and the police officers arrived, and they saw Mr. Thomas peeking out of his apartment. What is going on here? And they noticed that he had a fresh wound on his eye. They said, "Come out here, we'd like to talk to you." He did, and within a matter of a few moments after they found the bank card, they talked to him, and they were able to arrest him, but this is really not the kind of peace of mind that people need to have. They need to know that they are not going to be attacked, and, unlike this 90-year-old woman, they will not have to fight themselves off. I think that if Congress enacts this bill today, it will have done something good.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH].

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], chairman of this committee, for yielding me the time and for the excellent work he has done in this area, and also the speaker, the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. NUSSLE], the gentleman from Mas-

sachusetts [Mr. BLUTE], the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. KENNEDY], the gentleman from Virginia [Mr. MORAN], and all the people that have been involved in straightening out, bringing some common sense back to, this 1988 law which mandated that disabled people were eligible to live in public housing and disabled people were people who had doctor's certificates, they were mentally ill, drug addicts and the like, alcoholics. We are restoring a little common sense back into the law today.

This again, I think, shows and points to the fact that law in many areas of our country today has run amok. We have got too much Government, we have got to bring some common sense back into these areas again, and I think we could be in session here 2 weeks or longer taking up bills like this.

Drug dealers have no place in public housing. In fact, drug dealers have no place in America anywhere, and we are going to force them out of public housing, but where are these rats going to run? We have to make sure that we get after the drug dealers, not just push them out of public housing, although that is a first step.

We have waged wars all over the world, hot and cold, to go after, against, murderous regimes so people throughout the world could live in peace, dignity, and safety. We are doing it for people in public housing here today. We have some 3,400 public housing projects throughout the country.

It has been mentioned before that we heard excellent testimony, and we did at the hearing. We heard from many senior citizens. Quite frankly it was very moving when people would tell us, "Hey, I moved into this beautiful apartment, Members of Congress, but after a few months the drug dealers came in, the alcoholics came in, and they took over, and I was a prisoner in my own apartment." Is that the kind of America we want? I do not think so, and that is why I think the legislation of the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] is so important.

I want to digress here, make a point. We have got drug dealers and alcoholics who are so-called disabled on SSI. Why do we have 250,000 people, drug addicts and alcoholics, as disabled? They should not be disabled. It is costing us \$2 billion a year, and I hope we address that issue, too.

Mr. Speaker, the dreaded knock on the door is no longer just a famous metaphor representing the power of evil in foreign dictatorships.

Such sinister knocking is being heard increasingly by our Nation's elderly living in our public housing projects.

So who is doing the knocking here? The answer sometimes means life or death to the frail elderly person reaching for the door knob.

Is it a delivery person with essential food or medicine as ordered? Or is it a menacing neighbor disabled by drugs, alcohol, or mental illness? Often that is exactly whom it is.

Often, the vulnerable aged person finds robbery, rape, injury, and even death waiting when the door opens.

Such crazed or addicted neighbors live legally cheek by jowl with the elderly in public housing projects.

This is true because a 1988 Federal law mandates that such mentally disabled persons are eligible to live in the same public housing with our senior citizens.

Physically disabled persons are eligible for public housing, too, but the physically disabled reportedly pose little or no threat to others.

The reign of terror comes from the doctor-certified mentally disabled—the mentally ill, drug addicts, and alcoholics.

The threat affects the entire population of public housing projects, including children. It is particularly terrifying for the hundreds of thousands of our vulnerable senior citizens forced by economics to live there. And we must put a stop to it.

The legislation before us today, H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995, addresses this intensifying problem of our senior citizens.

I intend to vote for this bill, and I urge my colleagues to join me.

We have waged wars—both cold and hot—against murderous regimes around the world to try to make sure our people—all of them—can live in peace, dignity, and safety. But in our country's 3,400 public housing projects, many, particularly our senior citizens, live frightened, often terrified lives.

Testimony received by the committee is compelling.

It suggests addicts' attacks and threats aimed most often at the frail elderly are occurring hundreds of times a day throughout our 1.3 million public housing apartments and units.

Of these units, about 35 percent are occupied by elderly persons averaging 76 years of age.

Four out of five are women.

About 10 percent of the units are occupied by mostly younger persons disabled by mental illness, drugs, or alcohol.

Of the remaining units, 45 percent are families with children, and 10 percent are families without children.

The liberals argue that the disabled component is only a small number of people, and that they should have the right to try to live independently and to try fit in if they can.

Housing project managers tell me, however, that it only takes one disruptive disabled person to keep an entire building in a constant uproar.

Disabled persons have no business being intermingled, as present Federal law mandates, with the elderly.

The test for the elderly and others should be whether ages are high enough, whether incomes are low enough to make them eligible and whether they are capable of independent living.

Our housing managers should not be required to minister to a population of disabled persons.

They have no trained staff for the disabled. They are not nurses. They have no medical or other special qualifications for coping with those who refuse to take their prescribed medications.

They are not skilled in criminal investigation often essential to preventing or eradicating

drug-dealing rings who seek out elderly-only projects as ideal bases for drug selling.

I commend the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] for his crusade to keep this issue before the Congress.

The gentleman brought the committee one of its most eloquent witnesses, Anneliese J. Belcuffino of Worcester, MA.

She is the tenant leader in her building. I will never forget her testimony:

We have 199 apartments When I first moved in about eight years ago, it was beautiful. Most tenants were senior citizens.

Now we have almost more young people in here than seniors.

Most of the younger tenants are drug addicts or alcoholics or both.

Old ladies are afraid to ride with those people in the same elevator. . . . A few times human waste was found in the elevator. . . .

Late at night prostitutes are being let into the building. I have also seen drugs being dealt here outside near my porch.

A lady went to the laundry room to wash her clothes. She places them in the dryer and goes to her apartment to do a little housework while the dryer takes about one hour. When she gets back to the laundry room her dryer is empty. That happens quite a few times.

I would like for the younger people to have their own building and let the seniors live in peace and without fear for the time they have left.

And the problem seems to be getting worse. Actually, the magnitude makes no difference. None of this should ever happen at all.

This bill would provide three approaches: Managers could keep seniors and addicted persons separated if the managers submit and win HUD approval of operational plans to do so under streamlined procedures.

Such plans would be effective for 5 years under my amendment adopted by the committee, instead of for only 2 years as originally proposed.

Public housing managers could refuse to mix senior citizens and persons with a history of drug and alcohol abuse.

And druggies and alcoholics could be evicted for disruptive behavior under an expedited procedure.

As far as our senior citizens are concerned the subject before us amounts to fear and powerlessness inflicted on them by the Federal Government in public housing.

I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Alabama [Mr. BACHUS].

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, in July 1994 I received a letter from a 90-year-old woman in my district, and she said:

I live in a senior citizens' apartment building which now accepts tenants with drug, alcohol, and emotional problems. There have been several threatening instances caused by these problem people. I no longer feel safe in this building.

She signed the letter:

Please help us.

As a result of that letter, I made some inquiries and found that the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] was to offer H.R. 117, and I became an original cosponsor. Since that time I have heard testimony which basically tells us of the terror of these senior citizens. The gentleman from

Wisconsin [Mr. ROTH] spoke of a lady who saw her public housing building turned from a wonderful place to live to a nightmare. I heard testimony from a similar woman on our committee who said, and I am going to read her description:

When I first moved in about 8 years ago, it was beautiful. Most tenants were senior citizens. Now we have almost more young people than seniors. Most of the young tenants are drug addicts, or alcoholics, or both. Old ladies are afraid to ride with these people in the same elevator. At night prostitutes are being led into the building. I've seen drugs dealt outside my porch. A lady went to the laundry room to wash her clothes. She placed them in the dryer, goes back to her apartment. When she returns, her dryer is empty. This happens quite a few times. A few times human waste was found in the elevator. I would like for the young people to have their own building. Let the seniors live in peace and without fear for the time they have left.

I call on all of us in the time that these seniors have left, let them live in peace. Vote "yes" on this legislation.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Delaware [Mr. CASTLE], chairman of the Subcommittee on Domestic and International Military Policy, a great Member of this body.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chairman, I would like to commend Chairman LAZIO and Congressman BLUTE, who have worked hard on this legislation and who have made a commitment to supporting and protecting older Americans. As a member of the Banking Subcommittee on Housing and Community Development and a cosponsor of this bill, I am pleased that we are voting on this legislation today.

The Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act addresses a problem that has arisen both as a result of a national housing policy which allows for the mixing of elderly and disabled populations in public housing; and a 1988 law that expanded the definition of disabled to include former abusers of drugs and alcohol.

Senior housing units were created to aid older or disabled people who needed a place to live by. By expanding the definition of disabled, we have virtually made seniors prisoners in their own homes. They are afraid to leave their own apartments due to the harassment, intimidation, and even physical abuse that they must endure at the hands of some so-called disabled residents who are living at the expense of American taxpayers.

I have visited housing complexes in Delaware, and when I toured Electra Arms high-rise apartments and East Lake family housing complex, I heard time and time again from both the housing authorities and residents that other than weapons and crime in some of the lower income housing, they thought this was the single greatest problem which they face.

Just last week, a female, a mentally disabled resident with a history of drug dependency who is not elderly, but is

living in the elderly-only Crestview Apartments in Wilmington, set fire to her 8th floor unit. The fire was set intentionally, and did considerable damage before being brought under control. Thankfully, no one was hurt. But, unfortunately our country's seniors endure incidences such as this every day.

Seniors should feel protected and secure in their homes. This bill takes us one major step closer to making public housing communities safer and bringing peace of mind to residents.

Again, I applaud the leadership of Chairman LAZIO and Congressman BLUTE and urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to my friend, the gentlewoman from Connecticut [Ms. DELAURO].

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, I rise this afternoon really to say thank you to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for their work on this very, very important bill, and I tell my colleagues that this bill makes public housing safe for our seniors, and amen. We have waited for this day for a very, very long time.

Mr. Speaker, this bill employs better screening of potential tenants prior to admission and a more streamlined procedure for evicting tenants who put the health, and safety, and peaceful enjoyment of other residents at risk in senior housing.

In addition, this legislation clarifies the ability of public housing authorities to create elderly-only, disabled-only and mixed population housing based on local needs.

I have worked with elderly residents and public housing authorities in New Haven to ensure that such protections were passed into law as part of the Community Development Act in 1992.

Seniors have the right to feel safe in their homes; particularly, elderly residents who can afford to live nowhere else.

I am proud to join my Republican and Democratic colleagues today, as we embark on the next stage in providing seniors a safe and more secure living environment.

The Community Development Act of 1992, included language to permit public housing authorities to designate certain projects for elderly-only, for disabled residents only, or mixed housing. However, we did not provide the tools necessary to implement these laws. To date, only 10 out of 3,400 local public housing authorities have had mixed housing plans approved by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act, that we are taking up today, clarifies the rules for implementing these plans while providing essential safeguards against wrongful exclusion or eviction of tenants under current law.

This can truly be an issue of life and death. In New Haven, CT, several years ago, an elderly public housing resident

living in the Crawford Manor public housing development was killed by a non-elderly resident. This painful tragedy created a reaction of fear and resentment among the elderly, not only in Crawford Manor, but throughout the city.

Despite the passage of the mixed housing legislation, I continue to receive letters from local tenants, organizations citing complaints from residents of elderly housing complexes regarding abusive or violent tenants.

□ 1515

Here is a portion of a letter I received from Sylvain Nisbet, president of the New Haven Tenants Representative Council in October of last year.

The problems that certain persons are subjecting the elderly to are extraordinary and catastrophic. I have received complaints about fighting, lack of security, intoxication, urine in hallways, loud, offensive, obscene language, threats on seniors lives, confusion, disorder and criminal activities. Senior citizens deserve to have a better living environment. At the very least, we are entitled to our rights of peace and quiet enjoyment in our apartments.

Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly agree with Sylvain Nesbitt. This bill will assist in achieving that peace and security and community that our seniors deserve.

Mr. Speaker, let me make a personal comment here. My mother is 82 years old. She sits on the city council in New Haven, CT. Five years ago at age 77 she said to me when I was elected to this body, "If there is one issue that you can work on that I have seen day after day in every senior housing complex that I go into, it is the fear that seniors live in because of the situation with drug addicts and alcohol abusers." She said "If you can work on anything, please see if you can do something about this."

I do not sit on this committee, but I have been active in this area. I applaud my colleagues for bringing this bill forward today, and helping me make good on a promise to my mother and to the seniors of the city of New Haven and the Third District and the seniors of Connecticut.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois [Mr. WELLER], a fine member of the Subcommittee on Housing of the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 117. I am proud to co-sponsor this initiative with the chief sponsor, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE].

Mr. Speaker, let us keep this issue real simple. This bill rights a wrong, that wrong that jeopardizes the safety of my constituents, seniors living in senior housing. Today HUD bureaucrats say my seniors must live alongside recovering drug addicts and alcoholics, a situation that has forced

many seniors to live in fear. In fact, according to testimony from seniors living in the Chicago housing authority and other public housing authorities in Joliet, Will, Grundy, Kankakee, and LaSalle counties, many seniors have been victims of rape, physical assault, and other violent crimes and are afraid. According to many of the news articles that many of us are sharing, and I will include this in the RECORD, they are afraid even to leave their apartments to go to the store, simple daytime activities.

H.R. 117 rights this wrong and lets local housing authorities keep senior housing for seniors. This is authority they have asked for. I urge an aye vote. Let us allow our senior highrises to be safe housing for seniors. Keep senior housing safe for seniors by putting this into law.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD an article by Joseph Mallia:

[From the Boston Herald, Feb. 22, 1994]

RAPE VICTIM SUES BHA—SAYS ATTACKER SHOULD HAVE BEEN EVICTED

(By Joseph Mallia)

A 92-year-old woman who was raped in her elderly-housing apartment two years ago is suing the Boston Housing Authority for failing to protect her from her assailant, another resident with a history of violence.

The housing authority is responsible because officials knew the assailant, Eric Lee Davis Jr., was dangerous but failed to evict him, the woman maintains in her Suffolk Superior Court civil suit.

The woman's name was not made public because she was the victim of a sexual crime.

"The elderly have been asking for help for years. But the only time the BHA or other agencies take notice is when a lawsuit is filed," said the victim's lawyer, Jeffrey A. Newman. "This was a man who would assault them, threaten them, walk around without clothes—they were absolutely responsible to evict him."

The attack "severely psychologically damaged" the victim the lawyer said. "She has essentially lost her independence. She's untrusting and fearful."

BHA officials could not be reached for comment last night.

Davis, who is 6-foot 3-inches and weighs 190 pounds, was found unfit to stand trial and was committed to Bridgewater State Hospital, Newman said. After he was charged, Davis gave police a tape-recorded confession, authorities said.

Davis, who was 38 at the time of the attack, had faced a previous attempted rape charge in a 1986 assault on a 66-year-old woman, law enforcement sources said. That charge was dropped and Davis instead was civilly committed to Bridgewater State Hospital for treatment, and later released.

Federal law allows disabled and handicapped persons to live in the Dorchester complex at 784 Washington St. which was designed for the elderly. And elderly tenants of public housing across the country face similar dangers, Newman said.

For a year before the rape, Davis "had harassed various tenants; had threatened them; had demanded money and food from them; had made a practice of roaming the hallways causing various tenants to be afraid to walk the hallways unaccompanied," according to court documentation.

Davis also "roamed the halls semi-naked; loudly expressed threats and desires to kill various people and to rape various people, including tenants and his own mother; he grabbed various tenants including the rape victims," the lawsuit claims.

He also forcibly kisses the victim, and forced his way into elderly tenant apartments, the lawyer says.

The lawsuit accuses the BHA and its officials with "deliberate indifference to a known danger . . . the dangerous activities and proclivities of Eric L. Davis."

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Washington [Mr. METCALF], another fine member of the committee.

(Mr. METCALF asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] for his relentless commitment to senior citizens living in federally assisted housing. The reforms in H.R. 117 are long overdue. In title VI of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, Congress allows public housing authorities and federally assisted apartment owners to designate elderly only housing. However, problems still persist in mixed populations housing, especially in buildings where the level of nonelderly residents remain high or where drug- and alcohol-abusing much younger tenants continue to be admitted.

Our seniors deserve to live in a peaceful environment free from the threats of violence and inappropriate conduct from a small group of residents. As a senior myself, I can understand the problems which arise when different age groups live in close proximity to each other. H.R. 117 provides the tools to fix this problem.

This legislation will achieve the following:

Authorizes public housing agencies to establish occupancy standards. This would allow public housing agencies to screen potential tenant first, before providing housing. The Everett Housing Agency in my district has had problems with some nonelderly tenants with alcohol abuse. If they could screen potential residents first, they can assist these individuals and direct them to treatment centers.

Amend the lease provisions which give public housing agencies greater flexibility in evicting residents in cases where the behavior of one resident affects the safety of others.

Last, nonelderly residents who do not display inappropriate behavior or are drug users are not evicted. I support this commonsense reform which will protect both our seniors and other tenants. I encourage my colleagues to support H.R. 117.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, while I want to continue to be complimentary of the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO] on this bill, and other Members on the other side of the aisle with regard to their concerns about elderly only housing, we cannot ignore the fact that while this has taken place on the House floor today, this Congress, over the course of the last few months, has

absolutely decimated the public housing budget of this country. We have seen a quarter of the Nation's housing eliminated by the Republicans in a move, at the same time while they are providing a tremendous tax cut to the richest people in this country.

So while everybody is marching out to the House floor today indicating they are standing up for our Nation's senior citizens, let us recognize that there are millions and millions of Americans that are becoming senior citizens that will never get access to any housing because of the housing cuts that have taken place under the leadership of the Republicans that are now sanctimoniously standing up and looking as though they are protecting the seniors of the country. It is the height of hypocrisy to indicate that we are protecting seniors as we go about gutting the very programs and projects which they need.

Mr. Speaker, we will see housing for senior citizens decimated at a result of these cuts. We will see homeless people created as a result of these cuts. We will see the homeless budget cut by 50 percent as a result of these cuts.

Mr. Speaker, I just think it is unbelievable that people can stand up here on the House floor and look like they are standing up for our Nation's elders, like they want to stand up for every grandmother that writes them, and at the same time they walk in the back door and cut the very legs off of the programs that provide for this housing.

Mr. Speaker, I just believe we ought to be honest with the American people, that if we are going to provide a \$245 billion tax cut and at the same time go about absolutely decimating the public housing budget, absolutely decimating the assisted housing budget, and we go back in and try to pretend to people like we are actually doing them a favor, then it is just not intellectually honest, it does not hold up for the kind of politics that the Lincoln Republican Party has stood for in the past; that it in fact ends up going after and blaming the victims.

We refer time and time again to the worst public housing, ignoring the fact that out of 34,000 public housing authorities in this country, 33,300 of them are well-run. We cannot tell the difference between the private housing and the public housing. Yet, we go about indicting public housing, as a result of the worst public housing in America.

Let us stand up for housing. Let us stand up for our senior citizens. Let us give them housing. Let us house our homeless. However, let us not do that, and the same time coming on the House floor and looking like we are acting and standing up for our Nation's seniors, and going in the back door and absolutely leveling the housing budgets that they depend on so they can lead a life of dignity in their senior years.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 30 seconds to the distin-

guished gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. GOODLING].

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me.

Mr. Speaker, I would just ask the following question: Is a \$500 credit for long-term care insurance, which every senior citizen wants, something for the rich? Is a \$500 credit for home care something for the rich, which is part of that tax package? Is a \$148 marriage penalty correction something for the rich? Is \$5,000 for the adoption of a child something for the rich? Is \$2,000 for an IRA for parents that stay at home with their children something for the rich?

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. LOBIONDO], one of the outstanding class of 1994.

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of our Nation's senior citizens. H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens' Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act, addresses a problem that is facing housing authorities throughout the country and in the Second District in New Jersey.

For months now, the Housing Authority of the city of Millville has been attempting to designate its three highrises as "elderly only" under the bureaucratic nightmare imposed by current statutory and regulatory law. The delay that Millville has encountered in this designation has led to several problems. First, as we heard in the very compelling testimony presented to the committee, our senior citizens should be allowed to live together in peace and quiet without fear for their own safety. The current law simply delays Millville's ability to put this designation into effect. An additional effect of this delay is that without approval of the designation plan, the housing authority cannot acquire and renovate another building that will be used for housing the young disabled even though funding is available.

Enactment of H.R. 117 will streamline the process of elderly or disabled only designations while also giving our housing authorities greater power to exclude those with a history of drug or alcohol abuse. The designation and exclusion provisions of this bill will ensure that seniors have clean and safe quality housing. I strongly support this very important legislation and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of our elderly and disabled by voting yes on H.R. 117.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to answer the allegations that were just made.

The truth of the matter is that the vast majority of the tax cuts that are being provided by the Republicans go to people with incomes above \$100,000. There are some small provisions that trickle down to the working people,

and to people that fit certain categories, but the overwhelming majority of the benefits go to the richest people in the country, No. 1; No. 2, the Republicans are gutting the Medicare program, they are gutting the Medicaid program; No. 3, they are gutting the basic standards for all of the nursing home care in this country.

If we are going to talk about who is standing up for our Nation's senior citizens, go look at their own budget, go look at who benefits, who wins, and who loses.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas [Mr. GONZALEZ].

Mr. GONZALEZ. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding time to me, and at the very outset wish to identify and adhere to his remarks and his position, and once again express my admiration for his superb leadership in this respect.

Mr. Speaker, what the Republican cuts mean, simply put, is less housing, higher costs, and lower quality. We will see more homeless than ever before, and more people who are forced to choose between paying the rent and buying fuel. We should not delude ourselves that this is making things better, what we have here before us; housing will not be improved, that is, made possible to be improved. It will only be made worse.

This bill may be a good and sensible thing in itself to do, but at the same time, the Republicans are intent on wrecking housing, not making it better. The Republicans are using this bill to look as if they are concerned, even as they wreck housing and housing programs. Therefore, while this bill in itself may be good, what comes next is the wrecking ball. That makes senior citizens and everyone else pay more and get a lot less.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois [Mr. LAHOOD].

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I want to refocus the attention on what we are here to debate today, and try to be intellectually honest with the American people about what we are talking about. We are talking about the fact that we want to make the existing housing that exists in this country safe for senior citizens, and we are doing it in a bipartisan way.

I think it is a little unfortunate that those Members that want to accuse Republicans of doing things against senior citizens do not take the time to do that in another place and another time, perhaps on the debate on budget reconciliation, or as you did during the Medicare debate, but the debate here today and the discussion here today is on the efforts of your colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts, PETER BLUTE, who, when he was elected, came here and introduced this bill while you

were in control, not when we were talking about tax cuts.

I think the gentleman from Massachusetts deserves an awful lot of credit for having the foresight to bring this bill to the House when he was first elected.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. LAHOOD. I yield to the gentleman from Massachusetts.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out that we did pass this bill.

Mr. LAHOOD. I know, and I think your colleague, the gentleman from Massachusetts, deserves an awful lot of credit for bringing it back up again, not the idea now that we are trying to use this to leverage and try to scare senior citizens, when what we are really trying to do is protect them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to make one comment about my own aunt. I have traveled all over central Illinois, whether it be in Jacksonville, Havana, Beardstown, Springfield, or my hometown of Peoria. My aunt is 90 years old. She was lived in senior housing for 25 years. She is blind. She has lived in that housing scared to death for many years of the kind of people that were there.

I think because of the leadership of the gentleman from Massachusetts PETER BLUTE, the gentleman from New York, RICK LAZIO, and Members on the other side to bring this bill forward and to get it passed, not only in this House but in Senate, it is a credit to our majority, along with the minority, who care deeply about senior citizens and improving their community, because these senior housing projects are their community within a community. I laud all of those for getting the bill forward and ask support.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in complete support of this important piece of legislation, not only for the country, but for my district as well. Next to balancing the Federal budget, public safety in our housing communities is something I hear about all the time. Everywhere I go, senior citizens tell me of the horror stories of having to live their lives terrified by crime in public housing facilities. Senior citizens are being held hostage, because crime is out of control. Our Nation's public housing facilities have become a breeding ground for criminals and criminal behavior. I am sometimes outraged at the stories told to me throughout my district. This must stop.

Mr. Speaker, I also speak from personal experience. My 90-year-old aunt, Ann Tapscott, who happens to be blind, is a resident of the Sterling Towers Apartments in Peoria, Illinois. She has lived there for over 25 years. Not a day goes by in which she has not felt threatened by the drug activity at Sterling Towers. This type of activity is reprehensible, and we have an obligation to bring it to a halt.

Fortunately, the bill we are considering today, H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act of 1995, would prohibit the placement of current or former drug and alcohol abusers in public housing that is specifically designated [section 202] for elderly, or elderly and disabled families. Mr. Speaker, I com-

mend our colleague and friend, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE]. He has worked tirelessly, since 1992, on this issue. I wholeheartedly support the bill and urge its adoption by the House.

Mr. Speaker, before closing, I would also like to thank my colleagues on the Banking Committee for their leadership in this issue. Senior citizens in central Illinois are truly grateful.

□ 1530

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Tennessee [Mr. WAMP], a great Member of the new class.

Mr. WAMP. Mr. Speaker, compassion should not be measured by how many people are in government housing, or by how much money we spend on government programs. Compassion should be measured by how few people are in government housing, and how efficient we use the limited resources we have in the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that we have been to this floor and this House many times this year benefiting senior citizens. As a matter of fact, I believe that last Thursday when we passed the Medicare Preservation Act it was the most courageous vote that we will cast the whole time I am here, and I just got here, for senior citizens.

This bill cures two problems that have been identified with senior citizens. Those who have equity that they can use to generate income on a monthly basis for themselves, and those who do not have home equity that are living in government housing to make that a safer place. For 4 years my grandmother, at 85 years old and on a \$450 a month income, campaigned to send me to Congress, and she died 10 months ago. Today she would be pleased.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Florida [Mr. GOSS], a member of the Committee on Rules and a great Member of this body.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Long Island, NY [Mr. LAZIO] for yielding time to me, and I congratulate him and the gentleman from Iowa [Mr. LEACH].

Mr. Speaker, this bill fixes precisely the type of senseless, really I should say dumb, regulation that the Corrections Day process was created to address. Placing violent drug abusers and alcoholics intentionally into taxpayers subsidized senior housing project defies common sense. More important, it puts at risk some of the most frail of our society, as we have heard numerous times here.

There have been numerous reports of seniors being harassed, abused, and even to the point of rape, because of this ill-conceived mandate that needs to be fixed. This is wrong, and like so many big government regulations, it is hurting real people across America.

Mr. Speaker, obviously seniors should not have to live in fear of their neighbors. They should not have to endure criminal activity in their homes,

and they should not have to endure anxiety-causing rhetoric by architects of failed social experiments either. They should be allowed to enjoy their retirement peacefully, comfortably, and with dignity.

Mr. Speaker, I urge a "yes" vote on this important legislation which also extends the home equity conversion mortgage program, which is of great interest to many seniors.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut [Mr. SHAYS], a distinguished member of the Committee on the Budget.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is long overdue. I have always been puzzled why alcoholics and drug abusers are considered disabled with all the government rights and privileges that go with being disabled.

Young alcoholics, young drug abusers should not be in senior citizen housing. They should not be in federally subsidized homes, and I am grateful we are finally coming to grips with this terrible problem.

Senior citizen housing should be for the elderly and those who are truly disabled.

Mr. KENNEDY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, once again I just want to say that I strongly support this legislation that we are acting on today. It is legislation that was passed in the last Congress. It was also interesting to see earlier this year when we were attempting to work out a policy that had been begun by Secretary Cisneros to get these drug abusers and alcoholics out of public housing, that was voted against by my Republican colleagues.

The truth of the matter is, while people want to say well, there is some negativism with regard to the general attitude of the Democrats toward what is going on in the housing bill of this country, that is absolutely right. We are very negative about the fact that you can cut 26 percent of an agency's budget without a single hearing and come back and then have a bill on the House floor that makes a small appeal to a particular group of people, and then try to pretend that that is representative of all of the things that you are trying to do in terms of senior citizens' housing.

Mr. Speaker, we ought to be getting rid of this policy that is patently ludicrous policy, that we consider people disabled for the purposes of gaining access to public housing because they have drug abuse or alcoholic abuse in their histories. That is patently ludicrous. The Democratic Congress knew that, and passed a bill to fix it last year.

The Republicans are now piling on, giving credit where it is not really due, but giving credit for passing this bill on the House floor today. I give them credit for having passed this bill in the committee; it is something we ought to

do. But we ought not to lose sight of the fact that while we are doing this we are also gutting and decimating senior citizens' housing all across this country. We have cut a quarter of the Nation's housing budget and we are absolutely gutting the very homeless programs that are needed to back up the cuts in the programs that are providing public and assisted housing.

So while I want to give credit, and I have given credit, to the gentleman from New York [Mr. LAZIO], and the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE] and others for their steadfast work, and it has been steadfast on this issue, we ought not to lose sight of the fact that at a time when we are taking a small step in moving senior citizens' housing forward, we are taking a large step backward in terms of all of the effects that the Republican policies will have on our Nation's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LAZIO of New York. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 45 seconds.

Mr. Speaker, one of the great responsibilities of this body is to care for those who cannot care for themselves, and it was with this in mind that an amendment had been offered earlier in the year to restore money for the section 202 program, which is the program for new construction for senior housing and for the disabled, and also for housing for people with AIDS. In the end, because of the changes that have been made as a result of that amendment, and because of the support in this body on a bipartisan basis, there will be more units available to the disabled and more units available to seniors than have been in the past, and that is a very positive thing.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to mention the fact that in this program we are working hard to give seniors the ability to take equity out of their own homes. This is not a handout. Back on Long Island, Betsy, 83, and Estelle, 90 years old, who live in Amityville, were able to use the reverse equity program to get a new heating system, to get a new roof on their home where there had been none before.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. BLUTE], a great proponent of this legislation.

Mr. BLUTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend the chairman of the full committee, Mr. LEACH, and the chairman of the subcommittee, Mr. LAZIO, and all of the Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle who have worked to bring us to this point where we are dealing with this very important piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, today we Members of Congress have a unique opportunity to right a historic wrong, a wrong-headed Federal policy that has allowed drug and alcohol abusers into senior housing which has caused the ruination of the lives of senior citizens from Los Angeles to Boston, from Chicago to Miami, and all over our great country. This is

a policy that needs to change, and it needs to change today.

The fact is that this situation violates the American people's sense of reasonableness, and it is having an impact out there among senior citizens.

We now have a phenomena called Gray Flight in which senior citizens no longer even want to apply for senior housing because they know what is going on in those buildings.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill makes sense. It will right a historic wrong. I think we should stand up for common sense, for reasonableness, for sanity, and for senior citizens' protection, and I ask that the Members of this House on both sides of the aisle strike a blow for seniors living in senior housing and vote for this piece of legislation.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 117 and I urge all of my colleagues to support it. While H.R. 117 does not break any new ground in terms of what a public housing authority can do to ensure the security and happiness of its senior residents, it does clarify the intent of Congress in this area. Furthermore, H.R. 117 is a good example of Members from both sides of the aisle working together to produce solid, fair legislation.

It is clear that the law allowing disabled people into senior-only public housing, while extremely well intentioned, has led to problems. And, while we do not want to say that all handicapped people should be excluded from senior-only housing, it is clear that we should enable public housing authorities [PHA's] to make and enforce policies that ensure the rights of all senior citizens to pursue a safe and peaceful existence.

H.R. 117 does, I believe, a good job of clarifying that the PHA's do have the power they need while at the same time ensuring that they cannot and should not use this law to act in a capricious or arbitrary manner. As originally brought before the full Banking Committee, H.R. 117 contained some language that concerned me. Amendments which were adopted by Mr. LAZIO and Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. FLAKE and Ms. WATERS, Mr. NEY and Mr. WELLER, and Mrs. ROUKEMA and myself, however, improved the bill considerably and eased many of my concerns.

In the case of my amendment, I had concerns that by explicitly stating that PHA's could evict a person for disruptive or illegal behavior by others in their household or guests "regardless of whether the resident had actual knowledge of such activity" would provide disingenuous PHA's with too much authority to follow their own agendas. It would be wrong, for example, for a grandmother to be put out into the street because a grandson sold drugs from the apartment once, if it was done without her knowledge.

At the same time, I do not believe that a claim of ignorance, especially when it is false, should absolve a person of all responsibility. For this reason, I feel comfortable that the language which is contained in the amendment offered today by Chairman LEACH, which reflects the agreement between myself and Chairman LAZIO, will allow a PHA to evict problem tenants while at the same time protecting the rights of the truly innocent.

I believe that the legislation before us, which reflects the changes adopted in committee, is a good bill which will, hopefully, provide PHA's

with more clarity as to what they can do to cope with the problems facing their senior populations. The amendments accepted in committee were not compromises; rather I would view them as improvements. All of them addressed issues that we all felt were important, regardless of our party affiliation.

In this vein, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members of the Banking Committee, especially Chairman LAZIO, and their staff for their cooperation on this matter. While, as I said earlier, I had some concerns that in a few isolated cases the original text gave the PHA's too much discretion, Chairman LAZIO and his staff worked hard to address my concerns and in the end I feel that we arrived at a product that is satisfactory to all involved.

I am especially pleased to see this situation addressed by this Congress as it is a problem in Baltimore City. Since the 1988 change in regulations there have been several—too many, in fact—incidents in which the peace or safety of seniors living in public housing has been threatened. While Baltimore's PHA has taken steps to alleviate the problem, I understand that there are concerns as to whether or not such actions are legal. I hope that this bill will alleviate the city's concerns.

As I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation and I urge my colleagues to support it. Our seniors deserve to live in peace and safety.

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995. Passage of this measure is vital to ensure that our Nation's seniors are kept safe within their homes. I do not want any elderly public housing resident within my district, or any other district throughout the United States, to continue living in fear because their neighbor is abusing drugs or alcohol.

Under the Americans With Disabilities Act [ADA], people of any age with mental or physical disabilities can reside in any federally assisted housing program that is designated to house elderly families. This is good and fine. However, when current and former drug abusers fall under this disabled category, senior citizens do not receive the quiet, safe living conditions they deserve and expect. Instead, they are plagued by the threat of guns and violence. Such elderly residents of public housing are horrified to leave their houses in fear of falling victim to crime.

As you can see, this effect of ADA is ridiculous and must be changed. On this corrections day, we must right a wrong and prevent drug abusers from disrupting the lives of seniors. H.R. 117 will allow public housing authorities to evict drug abusing tenants living in elderly family housing. I urge each of you to join me in voting in favor of this bill to protect our nation's seniors. The elderly population must be afforded the right to live the duration of their lives with peace of mind in safe surroundings.

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill. This measure addresses the fundamental concerns of seniors—fear for their economic and physical safety.

The right of seniors to continue to live in their own neighborhoods, and their right to live in peace, will be enhanced by this legislation.

That is why I was working on a legislative response to the problem of ensuring safety in senior housing and I welcome today's response to this thorny issue.

That is why I became the first original cosponsor of my colleague from New York's renewal and expansion of the Home Equity Conversion Mortgage Program that has been incorporated into this bill.

Rhode Island has a special interest in the survival of this program. Three-hundred and sixty-three Rhode Islanders have benefited from the conversion program since its inception in 1989, giving us one of the top five participation rates in the country.

The typical conversion participant in Rhode Island is 72 years old, with an annual income of \$13,000.

The conversion program is ideally suited to the needs of Rhode Island's senior population.

Sixty-two percent of older Rhode Islanders own their own homes.

In 1989, the median income of households for persons over 65 was only \$16,403.

This program targets those in need with help tailored to their particular circumstances.

This bill could not have come at a better time, because after what was approved last week and what stands to be enacted later this week, seniors are going to need to mortgage their homes more than ever.

More seniors will need to mortgage their homes to pay medical bills.

More seniors will need to mortgage their homes to pay heating bills.

More seniors will need to mortgage their homes to pay basic daily expenses.

This bill will provide comfort to some, but nothing compared to the harm caused by the cuts to Medicare, Medicaid, and housing programs.

It will provide little comfort to seniors who know that promises made to them are being broken.

It will provide little comfort to a senior whose Medicare premiums will double over the next 7 years.

It will provide little comfort to a senior whose public housing rent will go up at the same time the quality of that housing will decline.

It will provide little comfort to a senior who will have to say goodbye to the doctor who took care of them for years as they are hustled into managed care.

It will provide little comfort to a senior whose spouse is in a nursing home where restraints, inadequate staffing, drugging patients, and people sitting in their own waste are once again common practice.

But this bill will provide comfort to politicians looking for cover.

Those who today vote to protect seniors, are doing seniors no service if last week and this Thursday they vote to dismantle Medicare and Medicaid.

These are conflicts that cannot be reconciled.

The safety offered to seniors in this bill is real and laudable, but let's be honest: it pales in comparison to the safety seniors are losing in almost every other measure considered in this Congress.

Mr. VENTO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. H.R. 117 reauthorizes the home equity conversion mortgage, an important option for seniors that want to stay in their own homes and need a financial fix to do so. H.R. 117 also clarifies the abilities that public housing authorities [PHA's] have to protect seniors in public housing.

Congress has moved several times in the past few years to address the controversial

issue of mixed populations in public housing that had been designated as senior buildings. In 1992, the Banking Committee worked very diligently to set up a fair residency procedure for PHA's to set up elderly-only buildings, disabled-only buildings, and mixed buildings. Last year, the House passed an amendment to clarify the screening capabilities of PHA's with regard to nonelderly substance abusers and this bill today is a continuation of that process. I am pleased that we are moving today to clarify the role of the PHA's screening so that our seniors do not have to pay the price because of the bad behavior of some tenants.

The bill reauthorizes the HECM program. The success of the HECM or reverse mortgage program in Minnesota has been outstanding, and the program has had a positive impact across the Nation. In Minnesota, through September of this year, some 298 reverse mortgage loans have been closed, with 25 or so pending or planned to go to closing in October. These 300-plus loans are the result of 853 formal counseling interactions that were the result or roughly 5,000 calls of inquiry within Minnesota.

In 1992, Congress reauthorized this demonstration program and extended its authority to 25,000 loans. Although under 10,000 reverse mortgages have been issued, the authority has expired and we need to reauthorize it quickly today.

This reverse mortgage program, with this important extension of authorization, will serve many more senior homeowners, improving their quality of life. Reverse mortgages enable people to remain in their homes and permit the use of their own equity to enhance their lives. The reverse mortgage authority has a minimal impact on the Federal budget—through the Federal Housing Administration—and, in fact, reduces the demand on subsidized housing and some nursing home placements because of home health care payments facilitated by such a choice. The reverse mortgage program targets lower income seniors and today has afforded close to 10,000 people the opportunity to maintain ownership while meeting important personal and health needs. In fact, reverse mortgages have been used to prevent foreclosures because of back taxes or ill-advised home equity loans as well as for other needs.

I am pleased we are seeing rapid action on at least this measure and hope that we will continue to work positive on housing policies. To date as this Congress has moved, it unfortunately is making disastrous cuts in the overall housing budget that I cannot and do not support.

Mr. HEINEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join in supporting H.R. 117, the Senior Citizen Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995. I was pleased to cosponsor this legislation for our vulnerable senior citizens who live in public housing and who have a right to feel safe in their homes. There is a crisis across this country, brought about because of misguided housing policies that have allowed drug and alcohol abusers to live side by side with vulnerable senior citizens. The law was intended to provide housing for seniors and the disabled. Drug abusers have figured out that if they tell public housing officials that their drug addictions make them disabled, they too can claim public housing rights—next door to our most vulnerable elderly Americans.

The Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act prohibits current or former drug and alcohol abusers from being placed in public housing which was specifically set aside for the elderly, disabled, and their families.

Mr. Speaker, as a senior citizen and a veteran, I think it is a disgrace to treat our seniors this way. During a recent hearing on this legislation, the House Banking committee heard shocking testimony from seniors terrified to go outside their homes, and seniors who told us they were repeatedly preyed upon by their drug addict neighbors. The Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act takes care of this problem.

If a public housing project was built for senior citizens, then senior citizens shouldn't have to fear for their lives if they live there. Public housing bureaucrats have used a loophole in the law to let dangerous drug addicts move next door to elderly men and women who never hurt anyone. It is a disgrace that we have allowed this to happen to the same generation that protected this country in World War II.

Mixing drug addicts with senior citizens was never a good idea. It's not what the law was intended to do. As a former chief of police, I know the elderly are particularly vulnerable to crime. I'm delighted to help protect them.

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker I rise in strong support of H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety Act of 1995. I commend the committee for its leadership in recognizing the urgent need to address this serious and distinct issue affecting elderly persons living in public housing.

Nationwide, housing authorities have been struggling with problems arising from mixed populations residing in housing originally established for the elderly. These problems present serious challenges for our Nation's public and assisted housing authorities who have to balance the needs of our senior citizens, while at the same time, provide housing and other specialized services for the nonelderly, in particular the physically and mentally disabled.

Mr. Speaker, in my capacity as a member of the VA/HUD and Independent Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee, I was able—a few years ago—with the support of my colleagues to include provisions in the appropriations bill that would allow the establishment of projects in which only elderly residents would be permitted to live. In addition, reasonable efforts were taken to provide alternative housing to handicapped and disabled persons, and to set aside certain other housing assistance for such persons.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the definition of eligible disabled populations includes certain substance abusers who tyrannize other residents. This is often the case in those units where mixed populations reside together. It is unconscionable that we place our Nation's elderly in such unsafe and fearful environments.

H.R. 117 gives housing authorities the ability to rid their developments of unsavory individuals who have overwhelmed housing authorities across this Nation. Our support of this measure sends a strong message of support not only to our seniors but to public housing authority directors who are forced to operate under increasing deficits and declining Federal support.

Mr. Speaker, I hope that my colleagues will support H.R. 117 today and also stand up for

all other residents of public housing during later deliberations on funding for federally assisted housing.

Mr. REED. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 117, the Senior Citizens Housing Safety and Economic Relief Act of 1995.

All too often, I have spoken with residents of my State's senior housing complexes who are concerned about their safety and quality of life. For too many, expectations of a quiet, all-elderly environment have gone unfulfilled because of a few drug abusing neighbors who are so disruptive that seniors are afraid to leave their apartments. Instead of enjoying the golden years of life with their contemporaries, our older citizens have been unable to live in the type of peaceful environment that was promised to them.

This legislation will clarify the current discrepancy in the mixed population language for section 8 housing. H.R. 117 will allow public housing officials to deny admission to persons whose use and abuse of alcohol and illegal drugs causes a severe threat to the security and well-being of our senior citizens. It establishes specific terms and conditions for leases with respect to termination of tenancy. The bill also provides for an expedited grievance hearing process before local public housing authorities, allowing these potential problems to be solved much quicker.

I believe that this legislation is an important step toward resolving this issue. For many, public or subsidized housing is the only opportunity for decent, affordable housing. We must continue to expand the supply of such housing for all Americans. Indeed, the root of the mixed-population issue is really the lack of affordable housing options in many of our communities. The final solution to this problem will come when we are able to provide adequate, decent, safe, and affordable housing for Americans of all ages.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and make our senior housing complexes safe again.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Pursuant to the rule, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the committee amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The committee amendment in the nature of a substitute was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken.

Mr. BLUTE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 5 of rule I, further proceedings on this question are postponed until 5 p.m. this evening.

FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ACT REVISIONS REGARDING PAPER BALERS

The Clerk called the bill (H.R. 1114) to authorize minors who are under the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor

Standards Act of 1938 and who are under 18 years of age to load materials into balers and compactors that meet appropriate American National Standards Institute design safety standards.

The Clerk read the bill, as follows:

H.R. 1114

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS TO LOAD MATERIALS INTO BALERS AND COMPACTORS.

In the administration of the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, individuals who are 16 and 17 years of age shall be permitted to load materials into cardboard balers and compactors that are safe for the 16 and 17 year olds loading the equipment and which cannot operate while being loaded. For purposes of this section, such balers and compactors shall be considered safe for 16 and 17 year olds loading such equipment if they are in compliance with the most current safety standard established by the American National Standards Institute.

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE OFFERED BY MR. GOODLING

Mr. GOODLING. Mr. Speaker, I offer an amendment in the nature of a substitute.

The Clerk read as follows:

Amendment in the nature of a substitute offered by Mr. GOODLING:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY FOR 16 AND 17 YEAR OLDS TO LOAD MATERIALS INTO SCRAP PAPER BALERS AND PAPER BOX COMPACTORS.

(a) GENERAL RULE.—In the administration and enforcement of the child labor provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, employees who are 16 and 17 years of age shall be permitted to load materials, but not operate or unload materials, into scrap paper balers and paper box compactors—

(1) that are safe for 16 and 17 year old employees loading the scrap paper balers or paper box compactors, and

(2) that cannot operate while being loaded.

(b) DEFINITION.—For purposes of subsection (a), scrap paper balers and paper box compactors shall be considered safe for 16 or 17 year old employees to load only if—

(1) such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors are in compliance with the current safety standard established by the American National Standards Institute;

(2) such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors include an on-off switch incorporating a keylock or other system and the control of such system is maintained in the custody of employees who are 18 years of age or older;

(3) the on-off switch of such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors is maintained in an off condition when such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors are not in operation; and

(4) the employer of 16 and 17 year old employees provides notice, and posts a notice, on such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors stating that—

(A) such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors meet the current safety standard established by the American National Standards Institute;

(B) 16 and 17 year old employees may only load such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors; and

(C) any employee under the age of 18 may not operate or unload such scrap paper balers and paper box compactors.