

that is unnecessary and totally irresponsible. We are trying to avert the normal legislative process.

We should not delay action on this issue. It is our responsibility to take action and we must do it now. This motion is nothing more than Congress ducking its responsibility and losing its credibility.

We have to face the debt issue head on and not hide. This motion would place the burden solely on the shoulders of the administration. This motion would make Secretary Rubin take desperate action to keep us from facing a default.

Our credit rating has been placed on a credit rating watch for the first time ever and we can not sit idly for 30 days. Last week, on the floor we heard over and over that trust funds especially Social Security would be at risk. Well this motion does the opposite. It would require Treasury to use the trust funds.

Let's stop this now and act responsibly. Americans are sick and tired of this game of chicken. It is time for us to take the high road and send the President a clean debt ceiling extension.

Unfortunately due to a delay in my flight, I missed the vote on this motion. If I was present, I would have voted "no."

TRIBUTE TO THE AFRICAN HERITAGE CULTURAL ARTS CENTER

g extension.

HON. CARRIE P. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, November 13, 1995

Mrs. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I join with the people throughout our community in recognizing the 20th anniversary of the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center in Miami.

The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, formerly the Model City Cultural Arts Center, opened its doors in 1975 in the heart of the inner-city community. The center was conceived and developed through the efforts, ideals and commitments of a citizens task force on which it was my honor to serve as a member of the board of directors.

The African Heritage Cultural Arts Center has a comprehensive, developmental multiart program which includes an array of classes in dance, drama, instrumental music, voice music, and visual arts. The facility has many elements of a full cultural center. It houses a dance studio, a music room, arts and crafts

studio and much more. The center is a catalyst for youth in the arts, and offers such outstanding programs as the after school Arts Academy and the Saturday Creative Arts Workshop.

The Cultural Center has seen many of its students go on to various levels of prominence. The center's programs provide an important service to our community and have proven to be very beneficial. They offer an outlet for young people to learn and enjoy the arts through developmental, multiarts programs. The classes have boosted the morale of our young people and have provided a positive influence in our community.

Mr. Speaker, the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center has dedicated the past 20 years to developing the minds and skills of our young people. I wholeheartedly commend this wonderful organization for its steadfast service to our community. I know my colleagues join me in honoring the African Heritage Cultural Arts Center on the occasion of this tremendous milestone in its history.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 115, FURTHER CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS FOR FISCAL YEAR 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 7, 1995

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to House Joint Resolution 115, the second continuing resolution for fiscal year 1996. This measure is definitely not just a continuing resolution bill. Once you clear the smoke and mirrors you find that over 60 percent of the bill is devoted to provisions designed to generate funds for the Republicans' tax giveaway to the rich, and to silence the voice of those who speak out against injustices against the most vulnerable in our society.

House Joint Resolution 115 increases the cost of health care for seniors by requiring Medicare beneficiaries to pay higher premiums. In fact, the Medicare premiums contained in the Republicans' continuing resolution measure are even higher than those contained in their reconciliation bill. Under current law, in 1996, seniors' Medicare premiums are \$42.50 compared to \$55.10 under House Joint

Resolution 115. This is a 30-percent increase in 1996 alone.

Mr. Speaker, the average income of Medicare beneficiaries is less than \$18,000 per year, this compares to an average income of between \$8,000 and \$9,000 for the 11 million widows and never-married women on Medicare. There is no way that these seniors can afford a 30-percent increase in their health care premiums. Seniors must not be forced to choose between medicine and food, or between a doctor's visit and heat. It is just wrong to force seniors to suffer such hardships in order to pay for a tax cut for the rich. This is an insult to their dignity, and strips them of their self-respect.

Again, House Joint Resolution 115 is not just a continuing resolution. Contained within the Republicans' bill is a 22-page very controversial authorization bill for the Istook prohibition measure. The legislation is specifically designed to restrict the political advocacy rights of the American people. Keep in mind that no hearings have been held on this extreme, unprecedented, and unconstitutional measure. House Joint Resolution 115's restrictive political advocacy provisions threaten the ability of organizations to carry out their mission including the Red Cross, American Civil Liberties Union, National Minority Aids Council, National Caucus and Center for the Black Aged, Coalition for the Homeless, religious organizations—yes, the list goes on—and yes, it even includes the Girl Scouts.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Republicans believe an extensive political advocacy gag law is just what it takes to force the American people to stomach the pain, and suffering that will result from their life threatening cuts in healthy start, meals for the elderly, energy assistance, education for the disadvantaged, employment training, safe and drug free schools, the list goes on and on.

While the gag provisions are a blatant insult to the rights of the American people, it will take more than a legislative silencer to quiet the cry of children, the elderly, and families that would result from the Republicans' budget cuts in critical quality-of-life services.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans' assault on the rights of the American people, and their targeted assault on seniors must be stopped. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "no" to all measures and provisions that attempt to gag the American people. Vote "no" increasing the cost of health care for seniors. Vote "no" on House Joint Resolution 115.