

against rising rates of teen pregnancy. Preventing unintended pregnancies among sexually active teens through counseling and education is the highest priority of Federal family planning programs.

Community based teen pregnancy prevention programs place a strong emphasis on avoidance of unprotected sex, or avoidance of sex completely during the teen years. The community level is where we all need to get involved to assist young people through the difficult prospect of growing up in this uncertain world we have made for them.

We can offer teens activities like summer youth employment, like school-to-work programs, like after school programs and activities. We can encourage them to become involved in their communities—to volunteer their services to help the lives of others, rather than creating a life in a difficult environment.

And we can definitely help by refusing to make out-of-wedlock childbirth and pregnancy the scapegoat in the welfare reform debate. Denial of AFDC benefits to unwed adolescent mothers is cruel. This is not the way to deter teen pregnancy. This is the way to increase the number of poor women and children in this Nation.

We can achieve a significant reduction in teen pregnancy the same way we can achieve real welfare reform—by offering positive, long-term solutions.

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

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the gentlewoman for joining me. I will have the opportunity to address the House for 5 minutes, but I think your approach is correct, that to indeed approach the community and raise their awareness as to their opportunity to encouraging young people to be positive, and at the same time, we provide the young people with the option of development skills and life skills that they would elect to go forward with their lives and develop, and would not, perhaps, engage in destructive behavior.

I would say part of this is economic, and the other is social. All of us have the responsibility. Finally, to the extent I do have a moment, I would say this is not something that Congress itself can do, this is something that all society has to be part of. I would encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that this is an opportunity where we work can work together. It does not make any difference of party affiliation or politics or philosophy. I think all of us would rather see young people develop their skills and be mature when they became parents. It would give an opportunity for our society to be better. Thank you for allowing me to participate as well.

Ms. PELOSI. It is under your leadership that we are here today.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that in addition to what the gentlewoman is saying, we must do all we can in succeeding to foster the self-esteem of our young women and actually our young men today. We are responsible to let each of them know there are people who love and support them,

that love and support does not have to come from a child of their own, and that love is something they can give to themselves, a feeling of self-worth that will allow teens to say no in the face of great decisions or pressures. That sense of self-worth comes from the family, from school, and from the community.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, unless the gentlewoman from North Carolina would like this time, I would like to yield back the balance of my time. I have spoken on three issues: Supporting the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] on the subject of the environment and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] on the importance of the environment to the health of the American people; and on the subject of teen pregnancy.

In my close, I would like to say, once again, thank you to Edmond G. Brown, Junior, for the—Edmond G. Brown, “Pat,” Senior, for his contribution. I know I speak for every member of the California delegation when I say to the Brown family that we are grateful for their unselfishness with “Pat” Brown in making him part of our State’s history, and his great legacy is one that will live for a long time to come, and extend on behalf of our delegation condolences and deepest sympathy to Mrs. “Pat” Brown.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, is it not correct under special orders, the individual managing the time is supposed to be here in the Chamber when the special order is underway?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct, ordinarily, but during the first hour the minority leader and the majority leader may reallocate the time as they see fit.

Mr. WELDON. I thank the Speaker. I just asked that question in case it arises again. We did not object, and I would not object, but I just wanted that clarified for the RECORD.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO IGNORE IMPENDING MEDICARE BANKRUPTCY

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is in critical condition. For nearly a year now, the President and the liberal House Democrats have refused to address Medicare’s impending bankruptcy. In fact, they have ignored the warnings of the Medicare trustees and instead demagogued this issue, waging a campaign of fear and misinformation.

When the Republican-led Congress sent a bill that passed the House and

the Senate to the President which would have saved Medicare from bankruptcy and preserved it for future generations, the President vetoed the bill. Yet, 3 weeks ago yesterday, new evidence revealed that Medicare is indeed going bankrupt faster than the Clinton administration admitted. Three weeks ago yesterday, there was an article in the New York Times, not exactly a conservative publication, that said the Medicare insurance trust fund lost money in 1995.

This little article reads: “Medicare’s Hospital Insurance Trust Fund lost money for the first time since 1972, 2 years earlier than officials in the Clinton administration had predicted.” That is what the New York Times reported, again, 3 weeks ago yesterday. “We had projected that 1997 would be the first fiscal year with a deficit,” said Richard S. Foster, chief actuary of the Federal Health Care Financing Administration, which runs Medicare. “Once the trust fund starts losing money, the losses are expected to grow,” the New York Times reported.

Then the next day the Washington Post reported the following: “The White House confirmed a report yesterday that suggested the Medicare hospital trust fund may be hemorrhaging even faster than previously expected—ending fiscal 1995 with a balance that was \$4.7 billion lower than predicted.”

In April 1995 the Medicare Board of Trustees, including three Clinton Cabinet officials and the commissioner, or the Director, of the Social Security Administration, warned Congress and the President that Medicare would be bankrupt by the year 2002 unless it took steps to preserve Medicare from bankruptcy and to reverse the soaring spending rate, the exponential spending rate path Medicare was on to bankruptcy.

The Clinton administration, of course, tried to sweep these findings under the rug. When the President spoke to the White House Conference on Aging just a month later, in May of 1995, he never mentioned the Medicare trustees’ report. Instead, the President and the liberal House Democrats spent most of last year, and again, the early part of this year, blasting Republican plans to save Medicare. But as I mentioned earlier, according to the New York times, the Clinton administration had data as far back as last October that indicated that the situation was far worse than predicted.

While the administration had estimated a projected surplus in the Medicare trust fund of \$4.7 billion for 1995, in fact the balance in the trust fund fell by \$35.7 million; as I mentioned, the first time since 1972 that the trust fund has lost money. So clearly we now know Medicare is headed for bankruptcy even earlier than 2002, and the President and the liberal House Democrats have no plan to save it.

In fact, they have done virtually nothing to address the problem. For 10 months the President and the liberal

House Democrats have ignored the warnings of the Medicare trustees regarding the system's impending bankruptcy, and instead they have played politics with Medicare, exploiting and twisting the issue to deceive and scare senior citizens, which is particularly, I think, despicable, given the fact that so many of our senior citizens are frail and elderly and vulnerable, and the President has submitted a string of budget plans that all fail to, again, deal with Medicare's financial crisis.

Unlike the President and the liberal House Democrats, Republicans listened to the Medicare trustees' warnings, and we passed a plan that would have saved Medicare for another generation.

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Our plan increases Medicare spending per beneficiary, per Medicare recipient, each year from \$4,800 last year to more than \$7,100 by the year 2002. That is a total Medicare spending increase of 62 percent. So we increased Medicare spending, increased Medicare health care choices by introducing the concept of managed care, physician service organizations and of medical savings accounts, while saving the program from bankruptcy.

Unfortunately, as I mentioned, this is the legislation that the President vetoed last November.

In addition to saving Medicare from bankruptcy, we Republicans are taking steps to aid senior citizens despite the President and the liberal House Democrats. As part of our Contract With America, we repeal the tax increase by the Clinton Democrats on social security benefits, a tax increase that takes affect on social security beneficiaries earning as little as \$3,400 per year. We offer tax relief for long-term health care insurance premiums and a \$1,000-tax deduction for elder care as part of the GOP Balanced Budget Act. Again, these are proposals the President vetoed.

We have passed legislation to increase the social security earnings test so that older Americans can continue to work without punitive taxation, and we passed a law that the President did sign protecting the rights of seniors to live in senior-only housing.

Clearly, colleagues and Mr. Speaker, saving Medicare is not one of the President's priorities; getting reelected is. Rather than preventing or joining with us to prevent Medicare's bankruptcy, the President and the liberal House Democrats prefer to play politics. They seized on this issue to try to win back control of the House of Representatives. They are only interested in using this issue, exploiting it for naked political gain. This is a transparent grab at political power, regaining political power.

As much as the President would like it, Medicare's problems will not wait a minute until after the November election to be solved. We Republicans have a plan that will save the system for future generations of senior citizens, and

the only person standing in the way of their health care security, the only persons standing in the way of health care security for elder Americans, is, in fact, President Clinton and the liberal House Democrats.

TEENAGE PREGNANCY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, teenage pregnancy is a condition that can be controlled and prevented in many instances.

Yet, 30 percent of all out-of-wedlock births are to teenagers, below the age of 20.

That astonishing reality should be alarming to all in Congress.

No other industrialized nation, with a population comparable to the United States, has a problem of this magnitude.

On the issue of teenage pregnancy, we have the dubious distinction of leading the world.

Why, you may ask, is this problem out of control?

Simply put, it is out of control because we have not taken steps to control it.

That is changing.

In January, President Clinton announced a bipartisan "National Campaign To Reduce Teenage Pregnancy."

The mission of the campaign is, "To reduce teenage pregnancy by supporting values and stimulating actions that are consistent with a pregnancy-free adolescence."

The goal of the campaign is, "To reduce the teenage pregnancy rate by one-third by the year 2005."

Neither party, nor politics, nor philosophy should stand against this vital mission and this critical goal.

This is an issue that we should be able to work together regardless of our party affiliation. The mission is difficult, but it can be done. The goal is demanding, but it is within our reach.

As we consider how and where to reduce spending, we must not forget that teenage pregnancies cause a heavy burden on the Federal budget.

Medicaid funds, food stamps, and AFDC funds are especially hard-hit by the teenage pregnancy problem.

If we want to balance the budget, let us begin by working to bring some balance to the lives of thousands and thousands of our teenagers, involved in premature childbearing.

Teenage pregnancies cause a heavy burden on society and it robs teenagers of their youth and robs their children of the benefit of mature parents.

A recent report to Congress on out-of-wedlock childbearing indicates that 35 percent of all out-of-wedlock births are to women over age 25; 35 percent are to women 20 to 24 years of age and 30 percent are to teenagers.

Thirty percent of all out-of-wedlock births are to teenagers.

One objective of welfare reform, shared by both political parties, is to reduce teenage childbearing.

Pending legislation on welfare reform, however, embraces an unreasoned approach to reduce the number of out-of-wedlock births, by denying cash benefits to unwed teenage mothers.

This unreasoned approach is based on the perception that the current system has failed and contends that any proposed change, such as denying children food and medical care, must be a good change. Thus, those who propose eliminating welfare benefits to young unwed mothers argue that their approach can't make matters any worse than they already are.

Change for the sake of change is empty.

We need change, but we need change for the better. Such proposals appear premised on the belief that if Government ignores teen parents, they will go away or get married.

There is little or no research to support such contentions.

Reason, on the other hand, suggests that even if the belief held true for some, there would be many young children and mothers left destitute.

Reducing teenage childbearing is likely to require more than eliminating or manipulating welfare programs.

The underlying causes are economic and social poverty, lack of education, family and community support, adult guidance, and violence are all linked together.

These are not problems isolated to the very poor, but rather problems that cut a wide path across the entire spectrum—very wide and very deep.

There is considerable evidence that life skills training in combination with other social prevention programs have been very effective with young people who use alcohol, drugs, and tobacco and engage in other destructive behavior.

As a society we must consider an array of programs that foster positive and responsible development of our youth.

URGING SUPPORT FOR THE COMMUNITY RENEWAL PROJECT

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

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, this morning I attended a press conference held by JIM TALENT and J.C. WATTS to announce a community renewal project that will empower low-income communities. This bill was formulated and designed by the communities that it will effect. Congress went to the community leaders and asked them what will help them in their renewal projects. This initiative is what came out of those conversations.

I want to first of all commend JIM TALENT and J.C. WATTS for meeting with these community leaders and for