both the House and the Senate to pass an unbalanced budget or to raise the debt limit. It would allow certain exemptions in time of war or national security threat. I voted for this amendment, and am disappointed that it failed in the Senate.

DOWNSIZING GOVERNMENT

With my support, Congress voted in 1994 to cut more than 270,000 federal positions by 1999. We are significantly ahead of schedule, with more than 160,000 positions eliminated, leaving the federal workforce smaller now than at any time since the mid-1960s. We should continue this course, focusing particularly on top-heavy bureaucracies that have the bulk of their employees in Washington, D.C. It has been my personal practice each year to reduce administrative spending for government programs and agencies to lessen the opportunity for waste. During the appropriations process for fiscal year 1996, I supported many amendments to reduce overhead in certain government agencies and programs.

REFORMING GOVERNMENT PURCHASING

Too often we hear about outrageous government purchases of $600 toilet seats or $100 screwdrivers. Centralized management is often inefficient. Last year, with my support, Congress passed legislation to streamline the wasteful government procurement process. The new law reduces paperwork burdens, streamlines acquisition procedures, and cuts government purchasing costs. It encourages federal employees to act like private businesses and purchase certain supplies at a local office supply store if it saves money. It also expands the bidding process to make it more competitive and efficient.

SIX-YEAR BALANCED BUDGET

I voted for a plan to balance the budget in six years. This conservative ''Coalition'' budget asks all Americans to do their fair share with equitably distributed savings. This plan would cut spending by more than $700 billion. It reforms welfare, protects Social Security, preserves Medicare and Medicaid for the future, maintains investments in education and job training, and cuts corporate subsidies. The Coalition budget would reduce the deficit by $9 billion in 1997, $25 billion in 1998, and continue on a glidepath to a balanced budget in 2002.

Unfortunately, the House defeated this budget and passed a version that would increase the deficit in 1997 and 1998. This is the plan that was supported by House Speaker Newt Gingrich. I voted against increasing the deficit. The main difference between this plan and the Coalition budget is that the Speaker's plan borrows an additional $150 billion to expand certain tax breaks. As a result, the national debt would be billions of dollars higher in 2002 than under the Coalition budget. The Coalition budget demonstrates that it is possible to make tough budget choices while reflecting the values American cherish: responsibility, honesty, fairness, and the promise that the future will be better for our children. The problem with the budget supported by Speaker Gingrich is that increasing the national debt would leave even more of a burden on our children.

It is correct that both the Speaker's plan and the Coalition plan balance the budget on paper, but the Speaker's plan postpones 82% of the deficit reduction until after the 1998 elections. In fact, the President's separate plan makes a similar mistake. History shows that such an approach is a recipe for failure. Time and time again Congress has passed ''deficit reduction'' plans that postpone serious spending cuts for several years. My position is that we should use the Coalition approach and pay our bills now, and not just promise to pay them later. We should continue reducing the deficit, year by year, in a disciplined, methodical manner.

Unless significant changes are made, the final budget plan is expected to be vetoed by the President. Although the differences between the sides are significant, I think the American people want Congress and the President to continue negotiating to reach agreement on the budget. It is the responsibility of leaders in both parties to put aside partisan differences for the common good of the nation.

Over the past year, both the President and the congressional leadership have moved towards the Coalition budget. There is still time to unite the American people behind a tough, honest, and fair balanced budget that reflects basic American values and invests in our future. It would be a tragedy if the progress that has been made since 1992 is reversed with a budget that increases the deficit in 1997 and 1998. I will continue to urge all of my colleagues to seek a final agreement.

TRIBUTE TO HUGH B. MITCHELL, FORMER MEMBER OF CONGRESS

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a former Member of both Houses of Congress, Hugh Burnton Mitchell. Mr. Mitchell died on June 10, at age 89, and his family and friends are gathering at Daybreak Star Center in Seattle to remember him today.

Hugh Mitchell was a true son of the Northwest, and true Democrat. His belief, that government could help people realize their dreams, was at the core of his public service. He was born in Great Falls, MT in 1907, grew up on a dairy farm, and attended public schools. After graduating from Dartmouth College, he engaged in editorial work at an Everett, WA newspaper. In 1933, he joined the congressional staff of U.S. Representative Monrad Wallgren, and extended his service on the Hill for 12 years, including Wallgren's term in the Senate.

When Wallgren was elected Governor of the State of Washington, he appointed Mitchell to serve the balance of his Senate term. Hugh Mitchell was just 37 years old when he was sworn on January 10, 1945—the second youngest U.S. Senator at the time. He was defeated for election in 1946, but was elected to the House in 1948 and served in the 81st and 82d Congresses. He was not a candidate for renomination in 1952, but mounted an unsuccessful bid for the governorship of Washington in 1952.

Mr. Speaker, our country has changed dramatically in the 40 years since Hugh Mitchell graced the floor of this Chamber, but the principle that animated his public service is timeless: that government could and should aid the people he represented. He listened to the people, and tried to put government to work for them.

Hugh Mitchell's congressional career began as World War II was ending; the country's agenda then was similar to that which faces it today in the post-cold war era. Mitchell urged conversion of America's war-related industries to peacetime infrastructure-building, both to put people to work, and to prevent a reversion to the hardships of the Depression.

America's hard-won superiority in science and technology, he believed, should be used to relieve the tensions and miseries of the war-torn world. He supported the Marshall plan for Europe, but also proposed a similar program of engagement in Asia. Had the Congress heeded his prophetic advice, we might have avoided the disastrous route that took our country into conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. ''We must make allies in Asia,'' he warned, ''or we are doomed to protracted, costly, and indecisive wars.''

His ideas about cultivating constructive cooperative relationships with Pacific Rim countries were part of the long tradition of trade and friendship among the people of the Northwest and their neighbors to the East. Our APEC program today is a culmination of the vision of Washington State advocates such as Warren Magnuson, Henry Jackson, and Hugh B. Mitchell.

Mitchell's legislative agenda also included the careful stewardship of the abundant natural resources of the Pacific Northwest. Adoption of his plan for comprehensive management of the Columbia River Valley by the Congress might have averted the ecological crisis we now struggle to overcome.

Hugh Mitchell's reputation as a far-sighted intellectual is complemented by his legendary attentiveness to the wisdom of his constituents. His civility of discourse and equanimity in the face of adversity sprang from his faith in the democratic process. His pragmatic vision of government of, by, and for the people is a legacy that enhances this body, Mr. Speaker, and I commend it to you.

AMERICA WANTS HEALTH CARE REFORM

HON. RON PACKARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. PACKARD. Mr. Speaker, America's wait for health care reform is nearly over. My colleagues in both the House and the Senate have reached agreement on the Health Coverage Availability and Affordability Act of 1996. This is the health care bill the American people have wanted for years.

The Republican health care reform plan is portable and affordable. Despite the extremist efforts of the Clinton administration to nationalize this Nation's private health care system, the long wait for portable and affordable heath care is over, and, it took a Republican Congress to get it done. Our plan ensures portability, fights fraud and abuse, cuts red tape, increases access, and enhances affordability.

For the first time, working Americans will be able to leave their jobs without having to worry about losing their health care insurance due to preexisting conditions. Up to 25 million Americans per year will benefit from this agreement, which eliminates preexisting condition exclusions for persons with prior health insurance coverage. An additional 4 million job-locked Americans are freed to job hunt because insurance companies will be required by law, to accept persons who had prior health insurance coverage.

This agreement fights fraud and abuse by creating new penalties against those who engage in health care fraud. It creates a national

health care fraud and abuse control program to coordinate Federal, State, and local law enforcement actions and funding is increased for investigation, reviews, and prosecutions.

To provide greater access to health care, the agreement fights discrimination in the Tax Code against millions of small, self-employed business men and women by giving them virtually the same rights as large corporations to deduct their health insurance costs. It allows tax deductions for long-term health care needs, and it allows terminally ill patients and their families to receive tax-free accelerated death benefits from their insurance companies.

The President and his liberal allies insist on perpetuating big Government policies and socialized heath care. America rejected it in 1993, and they do not want it today. The Health Coverage Availability and Affordability Act of 1996 ensures portable, affordable health care for working Americans.

It is time the Clinton liberals stop dragging their feet and came to the negotiating table.

DO NOT PUT HARD-WORKING AMERICANS AT RISK

HON. GREG LAUGHLIN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. LAUGHLIN. Mr. Speaker, like other Members of this body, I abhor terrorism and support ongoing efforts to reduce the spread of weapons of mass destruction. But I also want to be sure that we do not hurt hard-working Americans in our efforts to achieve foreign policy objectives. From the outset, I have been particularly concerned that enactment of this bill might hurt the citizens of the 14th District of Texas and American families throughout the country.

As the chairman of the Trade Subcommittee knows, I was particularly concerned that the bill, as reported by the International Relations Committee, could have two potentially harmful effects. First, the initial bill would have put at risk the jobs of Americans at totally innocent U.S. subsidiaries of foreign companies. Second, the initial bill could be read to apply retroactively to investment commitments made and contractual obligations undertaken many years ago.

Through the strong leadership and personal intervention of the chairman of the full committee and of the Trade Subcommittee, these concerns have been addressed. I am gratified that the unprecedented innocent subsidiary provision was dropped in its entirely. That change alone will ensure that workers in my district will not have their livelihoods affected by the actions of others that were well beyond their control. Moreover, the bill was redrafted to ensure that the long-standing principle of contract sanctity is preserved. To eliminate any possible interpretive ambiguity, the definition of investment makes clear that the legislation applies only to activities undertaken pursuant to an agreement entered into with the Government of Iran or the Government of Libya (or nongovernmental entities formed by those governments) after the date of enactment. Thus, for example, companies can continue to honor their contractual obligations under existing contracts without fear of being sanctioned. As a result, the supply of services and other subcontracts, farm-in arrangements, and the like in connection with contracts entered into prior to the date of enactment will not expose companies to potential sanctions. Similarly, companies may continue the development of oil resources as contemplated under exploration and production-sharing agreements signed long before introduction of this legislation. By addressing these legitimate concerns of the business community, our committee has preserved an important principle while reducing the likely exposure of U.S. companies and U.S. workers to foreign government retaliation.

As the administration made clear in its testimony before the Trade Subcommittee, it too shares my concerns about the potential unintended consequences of the legislation. I was pleased that the administration indicated that the bill should apply only prospectively, to future contracts and to future investments. With the bill before us today, the administration should be in a better position to ensure that hard-working Americans in the 14th District or anywhere in our great land will not be put at risk.

In closing, I wish to again commend our Committee leadership for producing a bill that maintains long-standing principles, reduces the risk of harmful retaliation, and provides the President with the flexibility needed to ensure that the American economy is not adversely affected by our pursuit of foreign policy objectives.

HONORING ''OLD'' JOE CLARK

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. ROGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor one of southern Kentucky's country music legends, ''Old'' Joe Clark.

''Old'' Joe recently celebrated his 50th year of performing at Renfro Valley, Kentucky's premier country music venue. He has been making us laugh with his unique brand of country humor and skillful banjo-picking for the last half century. He is a true treasure of the Commonwealth.

''Old'' Joe came to Renfro Valley after entertaining folks in and around his home of Johnson City, TN. After sharpening his talents in Tennessee, ''Old'' Joe attracted the attention of Renfro Valley's founder, John Lair. And, as they say, the rest is history.

It did not take long for ''Old'' Joe's fame to spread throughout southern Kentucky. And, he was soon a part of the national country music scene. He appeare at the Grand Ole Opry and performed with some the Nation's top country stars.

''Old'' Joe Clark talents are legendary at Renfro Valley. For 50 years, he has set the standard for an entire generation of country musicians and comedians. Without a doubt, ''Old'' Joe has left his mark on the Renfro Valley community.

Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to honor ''Old'' Joe Clark on his 50th anniversary at Renfro Valley. I know that the people of southern Kentucky love Joe and appreciate his lifetime of service to entertain us.

TRIBUTE TO WENDY GUEY, 1996 NATIONAL SPELLING BEE WINNER

HON. MARK ADAM FOLEY

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to salute an exceptional student from Palm Beach County, FL, Miss Wendy Guey. At 12 years old, Wendy attends the Palm Beach County School of the Arts and was the winner of the 1996 Scripps Howard National Spelling Bee.

Not only a talented pianist and violinist, Miss Guey is also a bright, young lady who calmly spelled vivisepulture to become a national champion. To get through the early rounds, she spelled correctly—parquet, multifarious, and gesticulate. Aside from a small shopping trip, she donated $200 to her school while the rest of the prize money has been put away for college.

This was Miss Guey's fourth National Spelling Bee. In 1993, she came in fourth place at the unbelievable age of 9. This year, she came back after missing two words in previous rounds to win the championship.

Perhaps most importantly, Miss Guey has reached a level that all American students should strive to achieve. Education cannot be emphasized enough; our children need to be prepared to attain the skilled positions that will await them in the future. For the United States to compete on the international level, young individuals such as Miss Guey need to become the role models for all students.

I am proud to recognize Miss Guey for her victory as well as her parents Mr. and Mrs. Ching and Susan Guey of Palm Beach Gardens. We should all be proud to salute Wendy for her achievements and wish her the best of luck in her future endeavors.

POSTAL REFORM

HON. JOHN M. McHUGH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 19, 1996

Mr. MCHUGH. Mr. Speaker, the following letter by Postmaster General Marvin Runyon was published in the June 1, 1996 Washington Post as a rebuttal to an earlier Washington Post column calling for the creation of a Government commission to address the complex issues of postal reform. The authors of the original article—Messrs. David Ginsburg, Murray Comarow, Robert Hardesty and David Harris—argued in their guest column, ''Delivery for the Postal Service,'' that postal reform would best be addressed through the creation of a Government commission to report and analyze these important public policy issues. While I do not embrace that conclusion, I included their column in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD of June 6.

In his rebuttal, Mr. Runyon argues to the contrary and says that the Postal Service cannot wait for results of findings of a commission. Mr. Runyon stresses that the Postal Service has begun to meet the demands of today's mail delivery and that legislative reforms are needed to keep it thriving for years to come. I will be introducing such legislation in the next few days.