THE HEALTH CARE SAFETY NET AMENDMENTS TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS ACT OF 2003

HON. MICHAEL E. CAPUANO

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. CAPUANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 3038, the Health Care Safety Net Amendments and Technical Corrections Act of 2003. This bill makes small but significant technical changes to the Health Care Safety Net Improvement Act that I cosponsored in the 107th Congress.

As a co-chair of the Community Health Centers Caucus, I would like to recognize a fellow co-chair of the Caucus, and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Health, Mr. BILIRAKIS, as well as the Ranking Member, Mr. BROWN, for their work in bringing this bill to the floor.

In the 107th Congress, this body passed the Health Care Safety Net Improvement Act of 2002 with strong bipartisan support, demonstrating a continuing commitment to the work of community health centers and the National Health Service Corps. The technical amendments in this bill ensure that the original goals of that legislation will be realized.

It is fitting that we consider this bill today, as new Census Bureau figures released this week show that the number of uninsured Americans has increased at an even greater rate than anticipated. Community health centers play an invaluable role in serving this medically underserved population.

In addition, a recent study by the George Washington University confirmed what many of us who have personally witnessed the work of health centers in our districts have long known, that the presence of community health centers in medically underserved communities reduces racial and ethnic disparities in key measures of community health. Researchers showed a clear association between the high penetration of community health centers in a state and narrower rates of disparity in infant mortality, access to prenatal care, and total death rates.

The Health Care Safety Net Amendments and Technical Improvements Act will ensure that this essential work can continue. I urge my colleagues to support community health centers and vote yes on H.R. 3038.

GONE WITH GLOBALIZATION

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday, September 30, one of our nation's most thoughtful commentators on public policy, E.J. Dionne, Jr., published a very important article about globalization. E.J. Dionne is an enlightened and sophisticated student of world affairs, and he has been a consistent voice against isolationism, xenophobia, or any other prejudice against the rest of the world. So it seems to me particularly worth noting when he questions some of the assumptions that have long governed the opinion of many of the most highly educated people in this country about globalization. E.J. Dionne is not an opponent of increasing global economic integration, but like many of us who understand the inevitability of this, in this column he makes some extremely important points about how it has played out, and, what thoughtful public policy ought to be to deal with the downside of globalization. Indeed, the very fact that he here describes that downside makes this an important article, because too many of those who have embraced international economic integration have done so through an excessively rosy set of glasses.

It is not coincidental, Mr. Speaker, that both Mr. Dionne and I have a very important connection to the city of Fall River, Massachusetts. He was born and grew up there, and his family remained an important part of that city's cultural, religious and educational life for decades after he moved to Washington. I have had the privilege of representing Fall River in this body since 1982, and he and I have thus both had a chance to see first hand what the downside of globalization has been among many of our more vulnerable, hardworking citizens.

The balanced view of globalization which E.J. Dionne takes in this article is one that is sorely lacking in many quarters, and because this is one of the most important public policy issues confronting our country, I ask that E.J. Dionne's article be printed here.

[From the Washington Post, Sept. 30, 2003]

GONE WITH GLOBALIZATION

(By E.J. Dionne Jr.)

Except for the saints in our midst, everyone has prejudices including the well educated and well-to-do: But when upscale folks have prejudices, they usually call them ideas, convictions or principles.

So how can you tell when a principle is merely a prejudice? When someone keeps making an argument even though the facts suggest it no longer holds up.

It is time to ask whether the overwhelming support for free trade and globalization among well-off, highly educated people is more a prejudice rooted in their own self-interest than a matter of high principle.

Okay, maybe that's too harsh. So try this: Even if globalization made a lot of sense during the buoyant 1990s, shouldn't the troubling economic developments since 2000 force people to modify their views? Is it not now undeniable that globalization has serious costs that are not merely ''transition problems'' and that these costs are borne disproportionately by certain parts of the country and the society?

Now, I don't want to be accused of prejudice myself, so let me stipulate that most educated folks really believe on principle in free trade. They can rely on reams of writing by intelligent economists to support their view.

Moreover, no one likely to hold power in our country would return us to the days of William McKinley and high tariff walls. The globalizers are right when they argue that too many Americans are now reliant on the global economy for such policies to work.

But it ought to be equally obvious that the globalizers in both political parties were too carefree when they asserted in the 1990s that, well, yes, there are ''losers'' from globalization, but there are so many more ''winners'' that we really shouldn't worry. Those who lost out in this grand process would eventually find their footing, the argument went, and government could help them make the transition. By the way, where was all that help? In any case the prophets of our bright future said the United States shouldn't worry about ''old'' industries such as steel or apparel. It should worry about leading the way in all that is ''new'' and ''high tech.''

Having grown up in Fall River, Mass., a place whose job base was once rooted in the apparel industry, I've always felt that writing off an industry as, ''old'' is a lot easier for people who never depended on it. Maybe, that's an ''old economy'' prejudice on my part, especially since my home town has been remarkably inventive in giving birth to new enterprises.

Still, it's not a form of prejudice to cite statistics showing that the sharp decline in manufacturing jobs over the past few years has been accompanied by a decline in overall family incomes.

Consider the Census Bureau's report for 2002 showing that U.S. household incomes had declined for the third year in a row and that the number of Americans living in poverty had increased by 1.7 million in a year. The old manufacturing states—including Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and Missouri—were among those hit, the hardest. (Politicians take note: These are swing states.)

The economists reassure us that the poverty rate is a ''lagging'' indicator and that a robust recovery will start lifting people up again. But will it? Is it not just as plausible to worry that the flight of jobs to China and elsewhere, courtesy of globalization, has combined with big improvements in productivity to create an economy that leaves many of our fellow citizens behind even in flush times?

The Institute for Supply Management, which keeps some of the best numbers on manufacturing, pleased the stock market earlier this month with report showing that economic activity in manufacturing grew in August, as it had in July. But its manufacturing emplopment index actually fell and remained below the 50 percent break-even point for job creation for the 35th consecutive month

If supporters of globalization really do hold principles and not prejudices, they should admit that the facts make it increasingly difficult to say that everything will eventually get better for everyone and that changes in the system will only make it worse. Worse for whom exactly?

Our tax and social policies are supposed to respond to inequities as they arise. But our current approach seems based mostly on begging China to fix its currency and praying for 5 percent growth. Michigan, as it sometimes has in the past, will just have to rely on a pass and a prayer.

The evidence suggests that we're not in the New Economy anymore but in a New New Economy with problems that weren't supposed to arise. The real lagging indicator is our economic thinking.

IN MEMORY OF BARRY BERINGER, CHIEF SCIENCE COMMITTEE COUNSEL, 1989–2003

HON. NICK SMITH

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 2, 2003

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of Barry Beringer, Chief Cousel of the House Science Committee, who passed away last week at the age of 57.

Originally from New Jersey, Barry graduated from Dickinson College in Carlisle, PA in 1968 with a bachelor's degree in political science.