

together with business leaders, parents, teens, clergy, law enforcement, and school officials to implement antidrug initiatives, and has become a model for dozens of communities nationwide. I know that there are similar coalitions in more than 5,000 communities nationwide doing this good work and they need our support.

The positive results highlighted today indicate that prevention tools like community coalitions work to create safe neighborhoods and a better future for our young people.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SOUDER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on the subject of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Indiana?

There was no objection.

□ 1545

PROVIDING HEALTH CARE FOR ILLEGAL ALIENS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BISHOP of Utah). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend my colleagues for that last special order, for the way that we are going to make sure that the young people in this country understand that drugs pose a threat to them is to have just this type of presentation in Congress and this type of discussion, serious discussion, with them as to the threat that drugs pose to their well-being.

With that, however, I would like to now, in my hour, raise a discussion on another issue that I believe is perhaps the most serious threat to the well-being of the American people. I have introduced a bill today that will give my colleagues a stark choice. They can do what will help big business, but will, at the same time, do great damage to the American people as a whole; or they can support the legislation that I am proposing, which will be a big step toward eliminating the greatest threat to the well-being of the American people.

Drugs is certainly a threat, but I will tell you that I believe the greatest threat to the American people as we stand here today is the still uncontrolled flood of illegal immigration into our society. All the other problems that we have, including drug use in our own country, are exacerbated by this uncontrolled flow of illegal immigrants into the United States of America. If we do not get control of this, it will surely destroy our country as we know it in the years ahead.

Yes, we can absorb legal immigrants in a fairly high number. I am proud

that we have a little more than 1 million legal immigrants coming into our country every year, one-half of one percent of growth or so of our population. Certainly we can absorb that kind of immigration flow. But what we have had in these last 15 years, and especially in the last 10 years, is a massive increase in the flow of illegal immigrants into our country.

Perhaps it can be traced back to the 1986 amnesty bill that passed through this Congress and was signed into law, unfortunately, by my President, President Ronald Reagan. That bill was hard-fought on this House floor, and I understand that my colleague, Mr. Dan Lundgren, is the father of that portion of the bill that insisted on amnesty for those illegal immigrants that were already in the country.

Once that amnesty took place, once this legislation was passed in 1986, the word went out throughout the whole world that if you get to the United States, you are going to get the benefits of the people of the United States, and you can outwait the American people because we have such good hearts that there will be another amnesty, and yet another. The flow of illegal immigration after 1986, instead of decreasing, dramatically increased. Surprise, surprise.

No, the people who passed that need to take responsibility for their actions. That piece of legislation has caused great damage to us. In California, our schools, the education system, is under incredible pressure. Our criminal justice system is almost breaking down under the weight of illegal immigrants, with 30 and 40 percent of those who are held in incarceration at times being illegal immigrants. Our healthcare system, our emergency rooms are breaking down under the pressure and the strain of illegal immigrants. And that is what leads me to the legislation which I introduced today.

This legislation that I introduced today flows directly from a confrontation that I had with the leaders of this body over whether a provision should have been included in the Medicare reform bill that provided \$1 billion in order to pay for the emergency healthcare for illegal immigrants in those States where illegal immigration is most prevalent.

I opposed that and I was not going to vote for the Medicare bill because of that, but the leadership in the House agreed that if I would vote for the Medicare bill, that I could write legislation that would, in some way, mitigate the damage that I felt was inherent in providing U.S. tax dollars officially to pay for services, health services, for people who have come to this country or are currently in this country illegally.

I voted for the Medicare bill. I voted for it before it went to the Senate. When it came back from the Senate I only voted for it with this understanding. So today the bill that I place into the hopper is in direct relationship

to the Medicare bill that passed through this House, that, yes, indeed, took care of the prescription drug needs of many of our seniors, but, at the same time, did include an extraneous provision for providing \$1 billion in healthcare for illegal immigrants.

With that, I would say that the hospitals and emergency rooms on our Nation's borders, especially those in California, are certainly now going broke trying to treat illegal aliens who are streaming into their facilities. And there is no doubt about this pressure. There is no doubt about the horrible impact that it is having.

But the reasons are twofold for the pressure on these hospitals and emergency rooms. Illegal aliens, first of all, normally, or at least quite often, if not normally, we do not have the exact statistics because they are operating in a black area of our society, we do not know all of the statistics about what illegal aliens have or do not have, we assume they are normally working at jobs with no healthcare benefits. Couple that with the fact that Congress insists and the law now insists that hospital emergency rooms treat every patient who walks through those doors of their emergency room, that they must be treated according to law.

America, with those two realities facing us, number one, that people who come here illegally generally are working at jobs without healthcare benefits, meaning the people who run the businesses do not provide them healthcare, but the taxpayers end up providing the health care, coupled with the fact that the emergency rooms feel that they are required by law to take care of anyone who walks through the door, what we have done is created a situation where America has now become the HMO to the whole world.

We are taking care of illegal immigrants, any illegal immigrant, who can get to our country and get to that emergency room. Sometimes we are not talking about just emergency treatment, about what common sense would tell us is emergency treatment; we are talking about extended cancer treatments, we are talking about treatments for diseases that are congenital, we are talking about diseases that someone clearly had when they came to the United States. We are talking about diseases that require hundreds of thousands of dollars, and sometimes even up to \$1 million, in treatment.

With this Medicare bill that we provided, \$1 billion for the emergency healthcare for illegal immigrants, that is the first time any money has been spent to provide services for illegal immigrants in our country, so this is a watershed. This is that moment.

In doing that, did that same bill try to fix the situation by enforcing our immigration laws on the border and insisting that these immigration laws be enforced if we provide that \$1 billion? No, that was not in the bill. Did Congress try to fix the situation by saying that emergency rooms can turn away