

other coverage and showed proof of that coverage. As such, parents would retain the choice to enroll eligible kids in private plans or other Government programs such as Medicaid or SCHIP. However, if a lapse in the other insurance coverage occurred, MediKids would automatically fill in the gap.

MediKids doesn't have complicated enrollment and eligibility hoops. Instead, it assures that families will always have access to affordable health insurance for their children, and it ensures that all children get a truly healthy start in life.

MediKids was originally written in close collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics. They have endorsed MediKids as the best way to provide health coverage to all our children. The bill has also been endorsed by the Children's Defense Fund, Families USA, the National Association of Children's Hospitals, and other organizations advocating for better health care for America's children. As we work on health care reform, we need to pay particular attention to the unique needs of our Nation's children. MediKids is a model that accomplishes that goal.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE MEDICARE ACCESS TO REHABILITATION ACT OF 2009

##### HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. BECERRA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 with Representatives ROY BLUNT and MIKE ROSS. This important bill repeals the monetary caps that limit beneficiary access to medically necessary outpatient physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology services. Senators JOHN ENSIGN and BLANCHE LINCOLN are introducing this legislation in the Senate.

To remove all uncertainty for Medicare beneficiaries about being able to receive the appropriate therapy, the bipartisan Medicare Access to Rehabilitation Act of 2009 creates a stable payment environment so that health professionals can focus on providing quality health care. Rehabilitation services provided by physical therapists, occupational therapists, and speech language pathologists are essential to assisting individuals reach their highest functional level possible and the monetary caps are inconsistent with this objective.

A March 2008 Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) study provided evidence that enforcement of the monetary caps could cause Medicare beneficiaries harm since it may require them to delay necessary medical care, force others to assume higher out-of-pocket costs, and disrupt the continuum of care for many seniors and individuals with disabilities. Specifically, the study provided data that the sickest patients who suffered from Parkinson's disease or who have multiple medical problems were most likely to exceed the monetary caps.

Since inclusion of the caps in the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, both Democratic and Republican Congresses and administrations have interceded to prevent their implementation and enforcement citing the negative impact the caps would have on elderly patients' access to

necessary services. Most recently, Congress extended through 2009 the existing medical exceptions process that gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services the authority to allow patients to exceed the monetary caps if deemed medically necessary.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to continue ensuring that Americans have access to the highest quality physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech and language pathology services by supporting this legislation.

#### HONORING SUPERVISOR ED ROBEY OF LAKE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

##### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Supervisor Ed Robey on the occasion of his retirement from the Lake County Board of Supervisors. Supervisor Robey has served the citizens of Lake County honorably for 28 years, the last 12 as a County Supervisor.

Supervisor Robey has had an illustrious career in public service. Since he was first elected to the Clearlake City Council in 1980, Supervisor Robey has consistently gone the extra mile for his constituents. The list of boards and commissions he has served on during his career is overwhelming. It includes LAFCO, the Area Planning Council, the Regional Council of Rural Counties, the California State Association of Counties, the Committee working with the Yolo County Flood Control District in regard to Clear Lake water rights issues, the Proposition 10/First Five Commission, the PEG Board of Directors, North Coast Emergency Medical Services, the Lake County Community Action Agency Board of Directors, the Area Agency on Aging Board of Directors, the North Coast Opportunities Board of Directors, the Caltrans DEAL Committee, and the County Reclassification Committee, among many others.

Supervisor Robey will be remembered for his great sense of humor and superior accessibility to his constituents. His legislative and community accomplishments are much too numerous to be noted here; however, the true test of any elected official is if his constituents are better off when he retires than when he first took office. This is unquestionably the case for Supervisor Robey. The citizens of Lake County owe him a great debt.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Supervisor Ed Robey for his years of dedication and service on behalf of Lake County and beyond. He has been a model of dignified and effective public service. I join his wife Beth, his son and two stepchildren in thanking Ed and wishing him a lifetime of fulfillment.

#### PROTECTING IMPACT AID FOR NORTH SUBURBAN SCHOOLS

##### HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing a bill to ensure the federal govern-

ment fulfills an important obligation to the families of service men and women in my district. In 1950, President Harry Truman established the Impact Aid program to assist school districts and communities that lose their property tax base because of the presence of the federal government. Without this federal money, the burden would fall to the remaining residents whose property taxes would continue to rise while impacting the quality of education which can be provided. The Impact Aid program helps to alleviate this problem by directly reimbursing public school districts for the loss of traditional revenue sources.

For years Impact Aid was fully funded and offered some of the strongest direct assistance to military families across the Nation. Unfortunately, over the last decade we have fallen behind on this commitment, and it is time to reverse this trend.

While I support fully funding the Impact Aid program, I believe the situation in my district warrants special attention. In order to ensure that our students most in need continue to receive necessary resources, I have introduced this bill to help North Chicago to continue to qualify for heavily impacted payments, and Glenview and Highland Park receive fair compensation.

Due to a unique housing situation for the Great Lakes Naval Training Facility, Impact Aid funding should be higher in five of my school districts. This Naval base is located in North Chicago, one of the poorest school districts in my state. However, some service members and their families live in Navy housing obtained when Ft. Sheridan and Naval Air Station Glenview, located in other suburbs, were closed in the 1990's. These former bases are located within the boundaries of other school districts that now must bear the economic cost of educating children from a base, but receive none of the economic benefits a base provides. Thus, it is vitally important that we both ensure North Chicago continues to receive heavily impacted payments for the benefit of students living there, and that the surrounding communities are more fairly compensated for their loss of property taxes.

By passing this bill, the federal government will be fulfilling its responsibility to these communities, and giving our military families the support they deserve.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE BALANCED BUDGET CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT

##### HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise to re-introduce legislation that will amend the United States Constitution to force Congress to rein in spending by balancing the federal budget.

It is common sense to American families that they cannot spend more than they have—yet far too frequently, this fundamental principle has been lost on a Congress that is too busy spending to pay attention to the bottom line.

Our federal government must be lean, efficient and responsible with the dollars that our Nation's citizens worked so hard to earn. We