

was included. Essentially under current law, as of January 1, the part B premium drops from 31 percent, 31.5 percent of the cost, down to 25 percent of the cost, which is what was scheduled under current law.

But the continuing resolution today would put the 31.5 percent back into law as of January 1, which is essentially an increase for millions of senior citizens who simply cannot afford to pay for that increase that would occur if this continuing resolution ultimately becomes law, which I hope it does not.

I wanted to point out—that so far the conferees on the budget—which includes the Medicare part B increases as well as the tax cuts for the wealthy that will be offset for the cuts in Medicare—so far the budget conferees have not met, and what we believe is happening is that the Republican leadership is essentially making Medicare deals in secret, meeting behind the scenes to see how they are going to implement this tax cut for wealthy Americans in order to offset the cuts in Medicare that are going to devastate the Medicare Program.

I was actually appointed by the Democratic leadership to be one of the conferees, but we have yet to have a public session. I think the reason for that is obvious, that they would rather meet behind the scenes. The Republican leadership would rather meet behind the scenes to see how they are essentially going to destroy and make these severe cutbacks in both Medicare care and Medicaid without the public and the media really knowing what is going on.

One of the things I am most concerned about as a conferee, and I hoped was going to take place, is we find some way, when we bring the two budget bills together between the House and the Senate, to continue entitlement status for Medicaid, for disabled people, for children, and also for pregnant women.

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Right now, if an individual meets certain income requirements under Medicaid, they are entitled to Medicaid and they do have their health insurance coverage. Well, the House bill, the House budget bill basically eliminates that entitlement status and just gives money in block grants to the States and hopes that the States will provide Medicare health care coverage for various indigent people. But the Senate bill, fortunately, does continue to provide entitlement status, guaranteed health care coverage for children for the disabled and for pregnant women.

Mr. Speaker, today in the Washington Post there was an article that basically summarized what was in the Journal of the American Medical Association that pointed out that Medicaid has been a significant factor in guaranteeing health care coverage for children. Over the last few years, the number of children that have been provided

with health care coverage, because their parents worked, through additional private insurance, has actually decreased and Medicaid has taken up the slack. The Federal Government has provided for the expansion of Medicaid and given money to the States so that they can provide that coverage for children.

Without the entitlement status, which is what we have in the House bill, without the guarantee that children would be covered, which is in the Senate bill, if for some reason the conference comes together and does not provide that guarantee for children, we are going to see that safety net for children, where they have the guaranteed health insurance, probably continue to be whittled away. Because States with the limited amount of block grant money they get from the Federal Government would not be able to continue to cover all the children that will continue to lose health insurance as the numbers continue to decrease of those who are covered by private insurance.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say lastly that yesterday in New Jersey we had elections at the State as well as the county and local level. It was abundantly clear that the message that Democrats have been trying to make, that Republican Medicare cuts and Medicaid cuts are really going to hurt people, we got that message, because a number of Democrats were elected yesterday because they made the point on the Medicare message and the fact that the Republican leadership is cutting Medicare.

AMERICAN WEST SEEKS TO REDRESS WRONGS PERPETRATED AGAINST ITS CITIZENS

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening on behalf of an oft misunderstood segment of our society, those who live in the American West. I bring before this House tonight a document signed by many of my constituents. The document, on parchment, was taken off the No. 2 liner board machine, which is now out of commission at Stone Container in Snowflake, AZ.

The document starts, in its preamble, with a quotation from our Declaration of Independence and then, in the main portion of this document, a statement of concerns about our freedoms issued October 6 of this year, the following is stated:

In this year 1995, we again find a need to petition our government to redress wrongs being perpetrated against its citizens:

1. Congress has passed laws establishing Federal agencies, then has not monitored the severe impact of regulations put forth by the agencies which go far beyond the intent of the Congress. This represents a usurpation of power by agencies not delegated by Congress nor established by a vote of the people.

2. Congress has passed laws which are severe and inflexible, causing major economic

and social damages to our citizens and to our communities. The Endangered Species Act is one such law.

The Endangered Species Act is being used to stop all natural resource development; mining, oil, timber, farming and ranching. Destroying the wealth of our Nation and breaking economic hardship upon Americans.

The Endangered Species Act is being used to close our forests, denying access to all people in Arizona for wood products necessary to sustain their families. Leaving our forests without the tools necessary to thin and maintain forest health.

The Endangered Species Act is being used to deny citizens the right to protect their property from flooding.

The Endangered Species Act is being used to take patented water rights and to stop development on private property.

The Endangered Species Act is being used to close land to livestock use.

At every stage of these oppressive actions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble of terms. Our repeated petitions have been answered by repeated injury. We, therefore, the undersigned citizens of the United States of America, appealing for the rectitude of our problems, do solemnly publish and demand that our rights be restored and that the abusive power of the numerous Federal agencies be curtailed and brought into conformity with the law; that severe and inflexible laws such as the endangered Species Act be reformed.

We do declare this day that we the people will use every lawful means to bring our elected officials to accountability.

As one of those elected officials, Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to sign this document, because I believe it resonates with the freedoms outlined in this document, the Constitution of the United States, a document sacred in the eyes of many which is a document of limited and enumerated powers. And this Congress must stand, as we prepare to face a new century, to recognize the fact that, as this document outlines, quite often regulatory agencies have overstepped their bounds, especially in the western United States.

Mr. Speaker, I said at the outset that the citizenry of the western United States is oft misunderstood; that their intent is often maligned. It comes as no great surprise. Indeed, one such person, once called an advocate for Arizona, has become a disciple of the District of Columbia. The Secretary of Interior has told the American people at least on two occasions, once at Tufts University, he said and I quote, "Those holding opinions of the environment different from ours", and he was addressing people who felt as he did about the environment, and this is a direct quote, "are guilty of the worst sneak attack upon America since Pearl Harbor".

Mr. Speaker, that type of extremist rhetoric has no place in this debate. Good people can disagree, but there is no sneak attack being launched by the citizenry of the western United States. Instead, by regulatory fiat self-appointed legislators, both in the regulatory agencies and, indeed, on the Federal bench, have stepped forward to declare a war on the way of life, to declare a war on the hard working law

abiding citizens of the western United States.

Friends, this is not about extremism, at least not from the standpoint of rural westerners. This is about what is reasonable and what is rational, not what is radical. Indeed, the radical talk comes not only from the Secretary of Interior but from the President of the United States, who, in his radio address last Saturday, used the most demagogic of terms to mischaracterize the plight of westerners.

Friends, what we seek is balance. Economic balance, environmental balance, and true conservation for the United States of America.

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

[Mr. FOLEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

SAFETY IN OUR SKIES

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

Mr. MASCARA. Mr. Speaker, as a new Member of Congress I sought a seat on the important Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and was fortunate to be appointed to the committee in July by my Democratic colleagues. I pursued the committee because I believed that a strong transportation system is the first step to a positive and sound economic growth. In fact, many studies around the world have shown a strong correlation between infrastructure and economic development and sustained economic growth.

I was on the board of county commissioners in Washington County, Pennsylvania, and was a proud participant of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Regional Planning Commission, which played an integral role in developing seriously needed infrastructure projects in southwestern Pennsylvania. I am working with my colleagues on the committee, including the gentleman from Pennsylvania [Mr. SHUSTER], the chairman, to promote vital transportation projects in my State, including the Mon-Fayette Expressway and other such programs around the country.

But, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to address the House on a matter which is of extreme importance to thousands of Americans who fly in this country everyday, safety in our skies. Safety is and should be the No. 1 concern of all who oversee the management of our Nation's air transportation services, the Federal Aviation Administration; namely, the FAA.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the air traffic control tower at Greater Pittsburgh International Airport, which is in the 20th Congressional

District. What at first was a tremendous opportunity to see the activities at such a busy FAA site and to meet the dedicated people who man the tower soon turned into an eye-opening experience. A very scary experience.

I was struck first by the age of some of the equipment, certainly not state-of-the-art by any stretch of the imagination. Although the airport is a new facility, with close to \$900 million in investment, some of the equipment in the tower is from the old Pittsburgh tower.

We have all heard recently of the problems experienced at several air traffic control towers around the country, such as power failures, equipment breakdowns, and computer outages. Unfortunately, while I was in the Pittsburgh tower observing the radar room, the system experienced a brief but serious power outage. The back-up system kicked in, but for several seconds the controllers lost visual contact on their monitors and scrambled to establish verbal contact with each plane in the sky to try to determine their altitude and their speed.

Mr. Speaker, while power problems are not new to air traffic controllers around the country, the Pittsburgh tower has experienced roughly six power interruptions of various lengths over the last few months. Unfortunately, I am told this is not an isolated problem.

I have sent a letter to Secretary of Transportation Pena requesting that Pittsburgh receive funding to install a UPS system, an uninterrupted power supply system, which would eliminate any visual suspension of radar. I will also work with my colleagues on the Transportation Committee, Mr. Speaker, to remedy other problems at air towers around the country. Remember, a problem at Los Angeles causes a problem in Chicago, which, in turn, forces backlogs in New York and Pittsburgh.

Though the system is in a partial fix mode for some of the problems experienced by the FAA system, we need a long-term solution to the problem. We know there is a problem with some major radar systems in this country and they still use, remember, vacuum tubes to keep their screens operating. Some towers actually are using new ground radar systems which have yet to be authorized, even after several years of testing and millions of dollars in cost. These pieces of equipment are used simply to detect fog on the ground.

I am pleased that the FAA Administrator, David Hinson, has recently restated his commitment to providing modern equipment and computers to the busiest air traffic centers in the Nation. This is a step in the right direction. We need to continue those efforts which will lead to increased public confidence in our air traffic controller system.

The FAA procurement system must be revamped and reformed. We must

work together, Congress, the FAA, and the airline industry. We must all work together to solve these problems, both Republicans and Democrats, on a bipartisan basis. The money is there. A 10-percent surcharge is assessed on all tickets purchased by airline passengers and is dedicated to the aviation trust fund. Funds amounting to approximately \$4 or \$5 billion are available, and I urge the Congress to correct the errors associated with the radar in the air traffic control system.

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

[Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.]

DEATH OF YITZHAK RABIN A TRAGEDY FOR AMERICANS AS WELL AS ISRAELIS

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

Mr. FOX. Mr. Speaker, the death of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin is a tragedy, not only for Israelis, but indeed for Americans and all those who strive for peace throughout the world.

The United States and Israel are partners in world affairs. As partners, we have built a foundation based on years of mutual respect and trust. Together, we share risks, rewards and losses as we strive to make this world a better, safer place.

One of the rewards came just a month ago when Israel and the Palestinians signed the second phase of the Oslo accord. That document was the direct result of the hard work and dedication to peace that was the hallmark of Prime Minister Rabin. Now, sadly, we must share the loss of having him taken from us so prematurely and so violently.

In the long run, I believe those who resort to violence will find that it accomplishes little. Often, it spurs people on to completion of the task at hand—in this case, peace in the Middle East. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. once said:

The ultimate weakness of violence is that it is a descending spiral, begetting the very thing it seeks to destroy. Instead of diminishing evil, it multiplies it * * *

Like others, I found the Prime Minister to be brilliant man whose compassionate nature was tempered by the fire of battle, tested by the trials of leadership and, ultimately, expanded by the promise of peace.

Prime Minister Rabin spent his life strengthening the State of Israel. He fought heroically in Israel's war of independence in 1948 and led Israel to victory in the Six-Day War in 1967. Yet despite his background on the battlefield, his vision of peace and security for Israel brought him to Washington 2