

the Constitution, who voted against the continuing resolution 2 nights ago. Forty-eight Members voted for it, but 24 of the ones that had voted for the BBA back in January voted against this continuing resolution. I mean how do you explain that?

Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania. Reclaiming the time, I appreciate the comments of my colleague.

The fact of the matter is a balanced budget is going to help everyone in every region of the country, all ages, and the fact is by decreasing the cost of mortgage payments for the balanced budget, decreasing costs for car payments, decreasing costs of college tuition, we are going to do what every other government is required to do, school government, local government, and families.

So the balanced budget is an idea whose time has arrived. We need to have the political will to make sure we talk to the White House, that we have more of both sides of the aisle working together.

Mr. HOKE. Well, we clearly have the political will, and the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. ANDREWS] clearly has the political will, but you are trying to get to the question of what is really going on, and you are saying, if we reduce some of the tax cuts, reduce some of the tax cuts and tinker a little bit with the environment and some of these educational things—I do not know who else has time here.

WE HAVE TO LEARN TO WORK TOGETHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine [Mr. BALDACCI] is recognized for five minutes.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, the resolution that I put forward is a resolution so that the Congress could continue to work on Sunday, that we not take the day off, that we continue to do our work.

There are thousands of seniors who are qualifying for disability, veterans disability. There are many people who are trying to visit our national parks at Acadia and other national treasures who have been told that it is closed, and we have our work to do because we have not yet been able to open the Government back up again.

We put this together as members of the freshman Democratic Party, but we reached out in a bipartisan way to continue working, to do what is in the public interest, not in the party interest.

Mr. Speaker, as we argue the balanced budget and as we argue the balanced budget over 7 years, I stand before you as somebody who has supported a balanced budget over 7 years and supported the particulars of that balanced budget over 7 years. I voted for it twice.

The problem with what is being offered in the Congress is, is a balanced budget that incorporates \$245 billion in

tax cuts. People who are earning over \$200,000 are going to get a check for \$14,000. You are going to have to make deeper cuts in Medicare and Medicaid. You eliminate a disproportionate share from hospitals that serve communities where the poorer people are being taken care of. It eliminates and annihilates a lot of rural hospitals throughout our country. In my State of Maine we lose \$187 million over 2 years. The senior Senator from the State of Maine did not vote for the budget that was put forward by the Republicans, voted for a balanced budget that did not have tax breaks. That is the responsible approach, but that approach is not being put forward by the majority.

So do not ask us to support a balanced budget that has \$245 billion in tax breaks over 7 years. It is causing too much pain and suffering on the seniors. It causes too much pain and suffering for children. You are cutting student aid deeper than you have to.

When we put forward the balanced budget over 7 years, we took \$100 billion of the \$245 billion, put it back into Medicare, we put it back into Medicaid, student financial aid, and veterans benefits, and we did it over 7 years. So we were able to come up with a framework that got us to a balanced budget, but that did not do it with as much pain and suffering on the seniors, on health care, on kids and on people with disabilities as much as what is being proposed by the majority.

I do think that we can reach a compromise on this particular issue, I do not think we are that far apart, and I truly believe, as the gentleman has stated here before, that we can work together in that regard. There is significant support in both Chambers for that. But I think we have to work together at it. It cannot be your way or the highway. In the same way on our side it cannot be this is it or else. We truly have to communicate regularly because we have to understand that the Congress is being controlled by the majority and that the administration being controlled by the President, and they are going to have to learn to work together in the public interest.

□ 2330

We really need to force those lines of communication to open up and to continue, but I really have to tell you, the budget that has been put forth is not a good budget for America. It rolls back environmental standards. I believe that what the majority is proposing, and what I have seen people talking about, is going backwards. We want to go forward, not backward. We do not represent Government as it is, but we represent environmental standards and an easier way to get to it. We represent a student financial aid program that does not have as much regulation to it, but that gets resources out there.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BALDACCI. I yield to the gentleman from Ohio.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield for a question, I think what the gentleman is saying is absolutely right. We have very honest differences about these things. Maybe some of the differences get exaggerated for political effect on both sides. What I do not understand is why you would be opposed to the continuing resolution that very clearly clarifies the only difference is in committing to a 7-year balanced budget scored by CBO. Why not that?

Mr. BALDACCI. Just to complete the question, the problem is that you take a continuing resolution, which is really, because Congress has not finished its work, and, how, I have not been here before, and they have had continuing resolutions; but because we did not finish the work, you added these items to it, which were like you were trying to do your budget approach through reconciliation and a continuing resolution. That is what made it very difficult to support that methodology. I think that had more to do with that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BARR). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. GUTKNECHT] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

WHY WILL THE PRESIDENT NOT SIGN THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION?

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

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I would continue my question to the gentleman. My question is simple. What makes this complex, to simply cast a "yes" vote, an "aye" vote on the CR? It is a clean CR as the President asked for, with one sentence. I read that sentence. It is a short sentence. It is a benign sentence. It says that the President and the Congress will honestly and sincerely work together to come up with, that they will be committed to balancing the budget in fiscal year 2002 under the scoring of CBO.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, all I am saying to him is that I do not think we are that far apart. The problem we have is that in a continuing resolution, which is because the work was not finished on time, we needed to pass it for a couple of more weeks. A lot of things, including that, were added into it, and it really was not the proper vehicle.

We have the reconciliation budget, which we voted on today, which really is the proper vehicle. That needs to go through the process, and then we should demand that the President, the Speaker, and the majority leader negotiate that budget reconciliation and work out those differences over that

budget and then come back to the Congress.

Mr. HOKE. Reclaiming my time, I do not necessarily disagree with the gentleman, but you cannot have it both ways, then, and then blame the shutdown of the Government on the Republicans because, in fact, it is the President's veto that is shutting down the Government. And he has vetoed it, he said he has vetoed it, strictly because it has this 7-year balanced budget language in it.

Mr. BALDACCI. Mr. Speaker, I just want the gentleman to understand, I am not blaming anybody for the shutdown. I am blaming all of us. The resolution was to keep working together. It was not making any claims about the Republicans or the Democrats, but it was stating we should work together to get through this.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOKE. I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, if I could offer my own observation as to why we are at this point of stalemate, in all candor, I think the first continuing resolution failed because your party chose, for whatever reason, to attach issues regarding environmental regulation and Federal criminal appeal habeas corpus review, and some other things.

Mr. HOKE. It had the Medicare Part B premium. I thought that was the one the President really hung his hat on.

Mr. ANDREWS. He did, but the party chose to put veto bait on the bill.

The failure of the second resolution is the fault of our party, frankly, because I think the President chose to send a political signal to his democratic base that he would not buy into your 7-year number because that was an important symbol for his base, so strike one on you, strike two on us, so here we are with nothing.

It just occurs to me that if the five or six of us here at 11:35 tonight had the power to make this decision, I think we would make a decision that would be fair and reasonable and probably get the people back to work by Monday. I do not see why we cannot do that.

Mr. HOKE. Reclaiming my time, I think what you have said is quite fair and correct, but I really do think that ultimately it boils down to the President not being able to live with a 7-year balanced budget and maintain his political base, and that is really what is going on. What we are talking about is \$800 billion of difference. That, really, is finally what it boils down to.

Mr. ANDREWS. If the gentleman will continue to yield, Mr. Speaker, I agree with the gentleman that there is a philosophical divide here that has to be dealt with. I think the proper place to deal with that is on the debate over the reconciliation bill. I think we ought to have that debate while the Government is running.

Mr. HOKE. Exactly. I totally agree with that.

Mr. ANDREWS. And we should make that resolution. Between now and Monday, and I hope we can for family reasons finish by then, but we ought to make it our mission to get that done by Monday, and I think the 300 of us who want to see a 7-year balanced budget will win, which is as it ought to be.

Mr. BALDACCI. If the gentleman will continue to yield, I do not think the President opposes a balanced budget over that period of time.

Mr. HOKE. Why do you say that?

Mr. BALDACCI. Let me just say, I do not think he does. When you start adding tax breaks to it—

Mr. HOKE. That is not in there. It is not in the CR.

Mr. BALDACCI. You know it is in the budget reconciliation.

Mr. HOKE. It does not go to the details, it does not say how. It just says that we will.

Mr. BALDACCI. Let me say honestly to you, so we can cut down to the chase, when you add the tax breaks to it, even among us, it makes it so that you push it so it would have to be 8 years, because you really cannot do any more in 7 years and balance the budget and make the cuts. We have through it with the gentleman from Texas [Mr. STENHOLM] and others, and it cannot be done.

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I do not doubt that we disagree about these things, profoundly, and that they could be real problems. Maybe that means the President will veto this and we will never come to an agreement, and we will just have to keep running the budget or the Government by a CR, but the fact is that the CR does not say that. It does not say how you get there. It just says that you are committed to it. The President refused to sign that, or he says he is going to veto it. He has made it very clear.

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

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

THE BUDGET AND THE MEDICARE PRESERVATION ACT

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

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to vote for the Balanced Budget Act today, which included the Medicare Preservation Act. I do not want to sound like a broken record, but this bill does not cut a dime of spending on Medicare or Medicaid. In fact, both programs, in both programs, spending increases every year. Medicare spending will increase by 45 percent over the next 7 years. That is more than twice

the rate of inflation. Medicare spending in the last 7 years was \$926 billion. Over the next 7 years, we will spend \$1.6 trillion on Medicare. I defy any of my colleagues to explain to the American people how that is a cut.

The same is true for Medicaid, which has grown an astronomical 11,000 percent in the last 30 years. Medicaid spending over the last 30 years was \$443 billion. Over the next 7, we will spend almost double that amount, \$785 billion. I renew my challenge to the other side: Tell the American people how that is a cut.

Mr. Speaker, in April the six Medicare trustees, concluded that Medicare is going broke. The trustees included three Members of the President's Cabinet: Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services; Robert Rubin, Secretary of Treasury; and Robert Reich, Secretary of Labor, and the President's appointed head of Medicare, Bruce Vladek, they all concluded that Medicare is going bankrupt in the year 2002.

Now, what does the Medicare Preservation Act do and what does it not do? Mr. Speaker, the Medicare Preservation Act will not raise Medicare copayments and deductibles, other than an increase in premiums for the very wealthy. It will not reduce services or benefits in the Medicare program. It will not force anyone to join an HMO.

The Medicare Preservation Act will retain the current fee-for-service plan, which means that beneficiaries can retain their choice of health providers and not be forced into an HMO. It will insure the solvency of Medicare, until at least the year 2010. It will increase the average annual spending per beneficiary, from \$4,800 this year to \$6,700 in the year 2002. It will require Part B beneficiary premiums to cover 31.5 percent of the program costs, the same that it is doing today. It does ensure that core benefits in the current Medicare program will be retained and must be offered to all beneficiaries, regardless of health status or age.

□ 2340

It will increase the amount to be spent over the next 7 years by \$659 billion over that spent in the last 7 years, and it will attack fraud and abuse in tough new programs that have criminal penalties.

The Medicare Preservation Act will provide new and attractive choices for beneficiaries, provider-sponsored networks, medical savings accounts, but, Mr. Speaker, the plan will provide for significant patient and consumer protections.

Many have raised questions regarding increases in their Medicare Part B premiums. In 1988, Medicare Part B premiums were \$24.80 per month. This year the premium is \$46.10 per month. Premiums have doubled in the last 7 years, and if nothing is done, they will increase to \$87 in the year 2002. But, Mr. Speaker, let me also add that