

to the physical or mental health of the individual, or is related to payment for the provision of health care to the individual.

## CONCLUSION

As the number of elderly in our society increases, the number and proportion of drugs used by these older Americans will also increase. It is true that drugs, when used appropriately, can reduce or eliminate the need for surgical and hospital care, prevent premature deaths, and improve quality of life. Unfortunately, a good deal of drug use among older persons is inappropriate, often resulting in hospitalization. While some drug-related hospital admissions are unavoidable, many can be attributed to errors in prescribing. By implementing the Medicare Medication Evaluation and Dispensing System Act, we could greatly improve the quality of care received by our Nation's elderly. I look forward to receiving any comments and feedback from interested parties.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4,  
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND  
WORK OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1995

## SPEECH OF

HON. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 27, 1995

Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Republicans' welfare reform proposal. Welfare reform should promote self-sufficiency in a way that does not compromise human dignity and self-respect, the cornerstones of the American tradition.

Tragically, the Republican proposal does little to promote self-sufficiency. It fails to provide specific resources for job training and placement which are necessary to help recipients become productive members of the work force. Yet it punishes those who, although willing, are unable to find work.

The Republican plan violates the basic principles of human dignity and self respect. It punishes poor families, especially our children, by eliminating the guarantee of health services for poor families and denying critical health care to millions of women and children. In addition it allows States to deny benefits to innocent children who are born into families currently receiving assistance.

Equally as tragic, the Republican bill eliminates our country's long-standing commitment of a guaranteed safety net for people living in poverty. In Los Angeles County alone, thousands of children will join the nearly half a million children who already live below the poverty line.

And it eliminates the safety net for all Americans who experience economic hardship resulting from the loss of their jobs and who depend on this safety net to protect their family until they can find other employment.

The Republican plan does not do what it claims. It does not encourage responsibility and self-sufficiency. It will not help people to help themselves and worse, it severely punishes the most vulnerable among us, our children.

While we can all agree on the need for welfare reform, the American people do not want a plan which violates the basic American principles of fairness, human dignity, and self-respect; the Republican bill violates all of these.

## TRIBUTE TO LOUISE WOLFF KAHN

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 22, 1995

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in remembrance of one of the great women of Dallas who reflected the true meaning of giving.

Her name is Louise Wolff Kahn and she was given with unswerving dedication in support of the arts, education and historic preservation in Dallas.

In Dallas, we enjoy a rich heritage of philanthropy. We live in a giving community, and if Louise Wolff Kahn believed in a program, institution, or building project, she would devote herself to making it successful. She dedicated herself to many important endeavors such as the Dallas Symphony, breathing life into the organization during some of its darkest financial days. Much of her work has gone without any publicity, but publicity is not what she wanted; she to create a wonderful learning environment for children of low income families. It is evidenced by her devotion to the East Dallas Community School and the Dallas Public Library systems.

With her passing, Dallas has lost one of its greatest philanthropists.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4,  
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND  
WORK OPPORTUNITY ACT OF 1995

## SPEECH OF

HON. NEIL ABERCROMBIE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 21, 1995

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the welfare reform conference agreement. Instead of addressing the causes of poverty, this bill penalizes people for falling on hard times.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, we do need to change the welfare system; but it is cruel and mean-spirited to dismantle altogether the safety net and basic services for poor families and disadvantaged children.

The Republicans' answer to welfare reform is to deny basic assistance to lawful immigrants who pay Federal taxes, pit foster children against victims of domestic violence for the same scarce funds, eliminate assistance to disabled kids, and cut programs to reduce child abuse.

The reductions in basic programs for low-income children, families, and elderly and disabled people contained in the conference agreement on welfare reform total nearly \$80 billion over 7 years, compared to what the programs would cost under current law.

As a result of these reductions, the legislation would increase poverty among children. An Office of Management and Budget [OMB] analysis found that the welfare conference agreement would add 1.5 million children to the ranks of the poor.

Furthermore, these figures understate the bill's overall impact on child poverty. These figures reflect the legislation's impact just on children whose incomes would exceed the poverty line without the legislation but who

would be pushed below the poverty line by the legislation. Yet, the conference report also would have a second major effect on child poverty—it would make large numbers of children who already are poor still poorer. According to the OMB study, the depth of child poverty would be increased by one-third.

The deep benefit reductions in the welfare reform conference report extend far beyond single-parent families on welfare. The large food stamp benefit cuts affect the working poor, the elderly and disabled poor, and welfare recipients alike. The changes in the SSI program adversely affect large numbers of low-income disabled children as well as elderly poor individuals. Changes and reductions in the child protection area will result in fewer services for abused and neglected children. These changes have little to do with reducing out-of-wedlock births or moving welfare families to work.

Unfortunately, certain members of the Republican Party have perpetuated the myth that welfare recipients do not want to go to work, leading to a feeling of resentment toward recipients by the American public. This is simply not true. Forty percent of single mothers combine work and welfare or cycle between these two income sources while on welfare. The majority of people who cycle on and off welfare have substantial work experience—on average about 6.5 years.

However, there are many barriers facing poor American families that prevent them from holding down a permanent job. The primary barriers are lack of medical coverage and lack of adequate child care services. Single-parent families, making up the vast majority of families on AFDC, cannot leave welfare because many jobs do not offer health insurance. AFDC recipients lose their Medicaid benefits when they accept a job and there is no safety net coverage to fill this important need if their new job does not include health insurance. In addition, in every State, including Hawaii, there are waiting lists of up to several years for guaranteed child care for the children of poor families who seek work after welfare. Welfare reform should ensure that these two major barriers are addressed.

Furthermore, many AFDC recipients do not have adequate education or job skills to find a job which would earn them a family wage. Most jobs available to unskilled and uneducated head of households pay the minimum wage, currently \$5.25 an hour in Hawaii. With a minimum-wage job, an individual in Hawaii would earn approximately \$10,000 each year. This is not adequate for a family to survive. It is also important to remember that our economy does not generate enough jobs for all the people who want them. Today approximately 8 million Americans are currently unemployed and looking for work. Criticizing families on welfare without keeping in mind the limits of the job market condemns them for the failings of the economy.

Many welfare reform advocates have suggested that by eliminating benefits or enacting punitive measures we can solve the problem of welfare dependence. Welfare reform including punitive measure such as cutting off recipients at 2 years or cutting off benefits for additional children would be devastating to poor families in America. According to recent studies, welfare programs are not the reason for rising births to unmarried mothers. Similar