

determining how legislation will move through the House. I am very privileged to do this job for our esteemed Speaker, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT).

Speaker HASTERT perhaps, more than any other in recent history, is uniquely qualified to bring a historical perspective to his job as Speaker as he was, as we all know, a government and history teacher at Yorkville High School in Illinois.

Because of his deep-rooted interest in the history of our Republic, it is my pleasure to announce to our colleagues that Speaker HASTERT, along with former Speakers Jim Wright, Tom Foley, and Newt Gingrich, will be participating in an event entitled, "The Changing Nature of the House Speakership: The Cannon Centenary Conference." This conference, named for Joseph Cannon, is being held on November 12 and is jointly sponsored by the Congressional Research Service and the University of Oklahoma.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all of our colleagues to take the time to participate in this conference and perhaps learn something new about the history of this great body and the institution of the Speakership.

Mr. Speaker, I have a copy of the program here, and I will include it in the RECORD at this point.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF THE HOUSE SPEAKERSHIP: THE CANNON CENTENARY CONFERENCE

A HISTORIC EVENT FEATURING ALL THREE LIVING FORMER SPEAKERS AND THE CURRENT SPEAKER

The Speaker of the House is second in line only to the Vice President to succeed to the presidency. Few lawmakers can be said to possess the visibility and authority of the Speaker.

The role of the Speaker has been shaped largely by history rather than by constitutional definition. The Speakership has been influenced by the individuals who have held the post and the circumstances in which they have operated; formal obligations that have been assigned to the office by House rules and by statute; the character of the House as a political and constitutional institution; and the traditions and customs that have evolved over time.

We invite you to attend a one-day conference examining the changing nature of the speakership—a historic event featuring the current Speaker and all three living former Speakers and commemorating the centenary of one of the most noteworthy Speakers in the history of the House: Joseph G. Cannon, Republican from Illinois, who served as Speaker from 1903 to 1911.

This conference will explore the evolving nature of the speakership and discuss the key forces and factors which influence the ability to lead a large and complex institutions like the House of Representatives.

8:30 am Registration

9:00 am Welcome and Introduction—Daniel P. Mulhollan, Director, Congressional Research Service

9:15 am The O'Neill Speakership, 1977-1987—John A. Farrell, author, "Tip O'Neill and the Democratic Century" Comments by Hon. Mickey Edwards and Hon. Dan Rostenkowski

10:45 am Hon. James C. Wright, Jr., Speaker, 1987-1989—Comments by Hon. David E. Bonior and Hon. Tom Loeffler

Noon-1:45 pm Hon. J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker

2:00 pm Hon. Thomas S. Foley, Speaker, 1989-1995—Comments by Hon. Vic Fazio and Hon. Bill Frenzel

3:30 pm Hon. Newt Gingrich, Speaker, 1995-1999—Comments by Hon. Leon E. Panetta and Hon. Robert S. Walker

4:45-5:15 pm Conference Summary—Robert V. Remini, author of books on Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. PEARCE). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

REPUBLICANS SEND WRONG MESSAGE TO AMERICA'S VETERANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, with Veteran's Day nearing, I am ashamed, frankly, of how little this House of Representatives has done for the men and women who have served our country. There has been lots of talk, good talk, especially in the early days of November, but not much real action. In honor of our veterans, the men and women who are risking their lives today, tonight, and tomorrow in Iraq and Afghanistan, the many who have lost and continue to lose their good health and even their lives, our message should reflect our admiration for their commitment. It does not.

In July, House Republican leadership, through a procedural maneuver, struck down an attempt to restore \$1.8 billion, just to restore \$1.8 billion in veterans health care funding when they forced the House to vote on a bill with inadequate funding for veterans' health. Democrats and veterans' groups opposed the bill and demanded that the Republican leadership restore funding to the Veterans Administration. Now, it appears the VA-HUD appropriations bill will come out of conference \$500 million short of the VA funding level that we demanded and the Republicans promised in their budget resolution.

What kind of Veteran's Day message is that sending?

In light of the inadequacy of the majority's VA spending bill, Democrats fought for consideration of other solutions that would make up for those shortfalls that Republicans offered. Over 200 Democrats signed a discharge petition offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. MARSHALL) that would force the House to consider legislation to eliminate the discriminatory disabled veterans tax. Responding, finally, to this pressure, Republican leaders offered a proposal that would only reach 50 percent of those veterans unfairly affected by this tax. Because this pro-

posal would be phased in over 10 years, reduction of the tax would be very small in the early years of the proposal and veterans would not even receive their full benefits. This is the best Republicans could offer: Veterans would not receive their full benefits until 2014, 11 years away.

This so-called solution pits one group of veterans against another group of veterans, hardly something we should do any time, but especially something we should not do in wartime. That is some message.

Democrats have offered a legislative package that does the right thing. Our proposal increases veterans' health care over the next 10 years by \$10 billion. It would end the disabled veterans' tax and pay veterans \$500 a month if their disability claim has been left pending for longer than 6 months. It would give \$1,000 bonuses for those soldiers returning home from Iraq and from Afghanistan. It would make military pay increases permanent for those in imminent danger and away from their families.

The Republicans have offered so much less; in fact, they have taken away. As soon as President Bush took office, he raised the copay at veterans' clinics across the country by 350 percent, from \$2 to \$7 per veteran per prescription drug per month. He has since proposed to raise that to \$15, from \$2 to \$7 to \$15; in effect, slashing the drug benefit that veterans have deservedly gotten in this country.

The President and Republicans have also cut education benefits.

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Why are they cutting education benefits to veterans? Why are they cutting prescription drug benefits to veterans? The answer is simple. It is to make room for the Republican tax cut. The tax cut, everyone knows that by now, the tax cut, that if you are a millionaire you get \$93,000 tax savings. Half of the people in my district in Ohio, northeast Ohio, in Akron and Lorain, Northridge, half of them get zero. Half the people in my State get zero while the "leave no millionaire behind" tax cut from the President goes forward, making it not just unfair in terms of the taxes that the wealthy get benefits from in a tax cut, and the middle class and working families do not, but also that is why he has cut veterans benefits, that is why the President has cut education benefits.

This was all topped off, Mr. Speaker, by the actions early this fall where almost 200 Members of Congress on the Republican side voted for a \$3,500, in fact, pay increase for themselves and voted against a \$1,500 pay increase for our troops overseas. That is the height of hypocrisy. We do tax cuts for millionaires, we do pay increases for ourselves, then we turn around, my friends on the other side of the aisle, and do not vote for a pay increase for our young men and women in uniform.

Our young men and women were sent to Iraq on the promise that when they