

The bill we are considering today contains harmful program cuts that would fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable in our society. And though its sponsors claim it is fiscally responsible, it is part of a budget reconciliation package that adds to the deficit rather than reducing it.

This legislation cuts funding for health care provided through the Medicaid Program, which provides health insurance to poor children, pregnant women, and elderly. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle argue that we must cut waste and fraud in the Medicaid Program. I agree with that. But, what I don't agree with is taking money out of this critical safety net program—without which millions of Americans would be uninsured—and using that money to pay for tax cuts for people with high incomes. This amounts to a direct transfer of benefits that just doesn't make any sense.

In addition, much of the reduction in Medicaid spending comes not from reducing costs but from shifting them to States. The Federal Government can make its books look a little prettier, but one way or the other, taxpayers are still paying the same bill. Some of the cuts also come from reducing important services. For example, under this bill, my home State of New Jersey would lose critical Federal resources that it relies on to provide health insurance to parents of children enrolled in the State Children's Health Insurance Program, SCHIP. And, the State would be prohibited from using any SCHIP funding to expand coverage to other adult populations. In fact, my State has estimated that it will lose \$44.6 million in Federal SCHIP funding. As usual, the most vulnerable in our society will feel the most pain from these cuts, while reaping the least benefit from the associated tax breaks.

The reconciliation bill also includes authorization for oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which I strongly oppose. It is simply unacceptable that the majority is using the protection of deficit-reduction procedural rules to enact controversial, environmentally damaging policy. In fact, the language opening the coastal plain does not even afford ANWR the same environmental protections afforded to every other wildlife refuge or public land that is currently open to oil and gas development.

The cost to our environment is too great to bear and will not improve our energy independence. Drilling in ANWR, by nearly all credible predictions, is expected to yield only marginal amounts of oil that will have little or no effect to reduce our Nation's dependence of foreign oil.

Adding insult to injury, not one cent of the savings achieved from the cuts in this legislation will be going towards reducing the deficit. Instead, they will be used to pay for barely half the cost of the package of tax breaks that will be considered next in the reconciliation process. So it would be

wrong to pat ourselves on the back and misrepresent today's legislation as "fiscally responsible" because that only tells part of the story.

Our Nation faces serious challenges right now, with the war in Iraq, the war on terror, and the need to rebuild the gulf coast region devastated by Hurricane Katrina. We must keep our economy strong by keeping our workforce competitive and investing in our human and physical capital. Now is not the time to be cutting important benefits for those in need.

If we intend to seriously confront these issues, we need to stop with the irresponsible fiscal policies that have driven us deep into deficit. We need to stop with the wasteful tax cut giveaways. And we need to stop forcing the most vulnerable members of our society to pay for the costs of our irresponsibility.

This legislation before us today accomplishes none of these goals, and so I cannot support it. Mr. President, we can do better than this.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, today, I want to discuss the importance of breast cancer awareness. October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and during this time, a concerted effort is being made to bring awareness to the public about the importance of women taking control over their health. As a husband of a two-time breast cancer survivor, I am deeply committed to supporting this campaign and to finding a cure for this awful disease.

I understand that finding out that a loved one has breast cancer is frightening news and one of the most difficult experiences any family can encounter. Unfortunately, far too many families face these challenges each year. In fact, according to the American Cancer Society, one in three women is diagnosed with breast cancer. Yet initiatives, such as the National Breast Cancer Awareness campaign, are working to help to decrease these numbers by educating women about the importance of preventive efforts such as self-exams and mammograms.

Even though we have the most advanced medical technologies and experts in the world, we have continued to face increases in the prevalence of breast cancer in recent years. In fact, research has shown that breast cancer rates have increased progressively since 1998. Though the national rate of breast cancer mortality has fallen since 2002, still approximately 24 percent of South Dakota women diagnosed with breast cancer do not survive.

One of the best ways to decrease the breast cancer mortality rate is through early detection and treatment, which is the fundamental goal of the National Breast Cancer Awareness campaign. Recognizing this goal, each year my wife Barbara and I sponsor a mammogram van at the South Dakota State

Fair. This mammogram van, provided by a local health care facility, offers two days of free mammograms for uninsured, low-income women. We are proud to sponsor such an important service. As we learned with Barbara's case, early detection and treatment is key in beating this disease and that is why women must have access to mammogram exams.

Because of the work of the American Cancer Society, scientists, researchers, and the National Breast Cancer Awareness Month campaign, I look forward to the future when women and families do not have to hear the words "breast cancer." And until that day comes, I will continue to show my support for the goals of this critical campaign for women's health.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, due to my travel to survey the damage caused by Hurricane Wilma, I missed the vote on Senator BYRD's title I amendment on the Labor-HHS appropriations bill. If I had been present, I would have voted to waive the Budget Act and approve Senator BYRD's amendment.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

HONORING FELIPE TRUJILLO ROYBAL, WORLD WAR II VETERAN

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor SFC (Ret.) Felipe Trujillo Roybal and to recognize his lifelong service to this country. His dedication and commitment to this country is to be commended.

Mr. Roybal served 33 years in the U.S. Army and is a veteran of Vietnam, The Korean war and World War II. Mr. Roybal will be honored for his heroic service to our Nation when his name is registered in the National World War II Memorial.

Mr. Roybal joined the Army in 1937 and served in World War II as a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne Division. During World War II he participated in the Normandy drop and received a Purple Heart for bravery, Parachute Wings, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Merit Award, and the European Command Badge. He then served in the Korean war and received his second Purple Heart after becoming a prisoner of war, later escaping. He enlisted his services as a Green Beret in the Special Forces Division in the Vietnam war. Mr. Roybal was assigned to critical defense duty due to his elite training in the Special Forces and was praised for his immense dedication to our country.

Mr. Roybal and his wife, Bertha Morales, are native New Mexicans and have been married for 57 years. They are the proud parents of three daughters and the grandparents of two grandsons. All who have had the opportunity to know them have been touched by their kindness and generosity. So today it is with great admiration that I pay tribute to Mr. Roybal