

The MPA requires the Department of Health and Human Services to identify and eliminate these huge losses, including financially rewarding Medicare recipients who report abuses. It makes doctors and hospitals accountable for their actions and imposes stiff new penalties on anyone caught defrauding Medicare.

Another important point is that the portion of Medicare part B costs paid by seniors through premiums, currently 31.5 percent, will not change. Over the past 7 years, part B premiums have nearly doubled, rising from \$24.80 in 1988 to \$46.10 today. Current law, the MPA, and the president's plan all assume similar increases over the next 7 years.

Let me also emphasize that every additional premium paid by Medicare recipients will go directly to Medicare part B, not, as you may have heard, to pay for middle-class tax relief. It can't. It's impossible. It's illegal. Premiums and payroll taxes paid into the Medicare trust funds can only be used for the Medicare Program.

Finally, the wealthiest 2.9 percent of seniors, those single taxpayers with incomes above \$75,000 and couples with incomes above \$125,000, will be required to pay higher part B premiums.

That is the Republican plan. It is innovative, responsible, and cost-effective. Unfortunately, the congressional minority and the president have embarked on a partisan medicare campaign meant to frighten and exploit seniors for political gain. It appears they have their sights set more on the next election than the next generation. Not only is that bad policy, it's also bad politics.

One of the major factors in last November's electoral sweep was that Americans want Representatives who aren't afraid to tackle the tough issues. With our Medicare preservation plan, we have shown that we are willing to do exactly that.

This plan ends a decade-long habit of applying only band-aid solutions to Medicare's fiscal woes. It uses common sense and market forces to save Medicare and bring the program into the 21st century, giving seniors more choices and better care at lower costs. But just as important, it is one more confirmation that the era of politics as usual is over.

#### A DEMOCRATIC VIEW OF REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

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

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, they are back in the back room again. The last time the Republicans went in the back room, the AMA got a fat check and the seniors got left out in the cold.

I do not know how the previous speaker could define what was in the bill because it is my understanding that at this point there is no bill, that

the Republican leadership is somewhere in this institution huddled away in a back room of the Committee on Rules trying to write a new bill to buy enough votes to get it on the floor and pass it tomorrow.

What are they trying to achieve? Well, if you think that the Republicans, who have opposed Medicare from its inception, have been opposed to it at every step of the process, are really trying to save it, then you can agree that they are trying to save it. But if you listen to the majority leader of the House, the gentleman from Texas [Mr. ARMEY], you will find out what they really want to do. He says if he had his way, he would not have to be part of Medicare. If you are not part of Medicare, it means seniors get to go out and choose their own program.

My father is 84 years old. Last year he had a heart attack and a stroke and a hernia operation and we are going to give him a check not enough to buy any private health care plan after he has paid for decades into the program, and wish him good luck to buy a plan in the private sector. People in their mid 40's and 50's cannot buy health care on their own. The chances of senior citizens having that freedom means that they will not be covered by health care. Mr. DOLE, the majority leader, voted against health care when it came before him when he was in Congress the first time.

If this was an honest debate, most of the people on the other side of the aisle would say they do not believe government ought to be guaranteeing health care to anybody and not even seniors, and they would be for ending the program. But rather than that, they want to bankrupt and destroy the program through subversion.

Let us ask the fundamental question. They keep quoting that the trustees said there was a problem. Indeed, the trustees did say there was a problem, and if they would bother to listen to those trustees for the other half of the sentence, the trustees will tell you that it is an \$89 billion problem. How do you get from \$89 billion to \$270 billion in cuts? It is because you want a \$245 billion tax cut.

Let us take a look at how you manage a society, how you manage a business, how would you take care of your family? Because we remember the contract that was signed on the back side of the Capitol. The contract was they were going to protect family. We now know what family it is. It is the GOPAC contributor's family. If you make \$350,000, the Republican budget says that you need a \$20,000 tax cut. If you live on Social Security, they say you need to spend another \$1,000 and get less coverage in your Medicare.

Is that what government is supposed to be all about? Are we supposed to come here and make it more difficult for the people who fought World War II, who saved democracy for this country and the world, and as they come to the point where they need health care cov-

erage, which we guaranteed them, that you are going to pull the rug out from under them?

Oh, yes, you are going to give them choices. You can have a medical savings account. I know a lot of seniors that can save up \$26,000 to \$30,000 for a 1- or 2-day visit to the hospital. If you are in the \$350,000 category, yes, you can have a medical savings account. If you are living on Social Security and even a small pension, that savings account does not do anything for you. This is about taking from the needy to pay for the greedy. The honest debate here is where should this society go? This society needs to go by providing for senior citizens.

The debate here is very simple. Is this society going to take care of the needs of the greedy, those who can afford to contribute to GOPAC, those who make \$350,000 a year? Are we going to go back in the back rooms as the Republicans are back there tonight trying to buy a few more votes?

Last time it was the AMA at the cost of the seniors. My doctors do not want that deal. My hospitals do not want a deal that will leave seniors further out in the cold. They want to have a health care system that protects seniors and working men and women in this country.

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

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

#### REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO ADDRESS THE HOUSE

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for 5 minutes.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, I object.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Objection is heard.

#### ON MEDICARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas, Mr. GENE GREEN, is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield, I will yield back when my time comes to repay him.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I know there was an objection for a Member, and I hope that we do not see that because there was an agreement earlier tonight. But I would hope we would be able to proceed with the order.

If the gentleman would like to have someone to stand up over there and ask to speak now, I will wait my turn.