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House of Representatives

The House met at 11 a.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Rev. James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

We are reminded by the Psalmist that Your Word, O God, is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. In these times when there are many options available to people in their lives and diverse opinions and ideas, we pray for lamps to lighten our way and show us the course to follow. We recognize that we can communicate with all the authorities from every background and attempt to gain all knowledge, and yet we know that to be touched by Your spirit is the beginning of wisdom. May that spirit, O God, that is new every morning, encourage and lighten our path, now and evermore. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. CLAYTON led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES ON AMENDMENT PROCESS FOR THE BUDGET RESOLUTION

(Mr. SOLOMON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOLOMON. Mr. Speaker, the Rules Committee is planning to meet on next Tuesday, May 16, to grant a rule which may limit the kind of amendments offered to the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 1996.

Members are strongly advised to submit only amendments in the nature of a substitute which provide for a balanced budget not later than the year 2002.

Any Member who is contemplating an amendment to the budget resolution should submit 55 copies and a brief explanation by 5 p.m. on Monday, May 15, to the Rules Committee, room H-312 in the Capitol.

Members should use the Office of Legislative Counsel and the Congressional Budget Office to ensure that their amendments are properly drafted and should check with the Office of the Parliamentarian to be certain their amendments comply with the rules of the House.

A FAILURE TO ACT

(Mr. DELAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, as we start the budget process today, we will hear many doomsday predictions from liberal Democrats about the Republican approach to balancing the budget.

Sadly, we will not hear a thing about the Democrat approach because there is no Democrat approach to balancing the budget. That failure to act is a monumental decision.

A failure to act on the budget means higher interest rates, slower economic growth, and less job opportunity for working Americans.

A failure to act means higher taxes and more wasteful government spending. A failure to act means less buying power for American families, a heavier burden on our middle class, less stability for our senior citizens.

A failure to act means a bankrupt Medicare system. A failure to act means a less secure future for our children.

Mr. Speaker, the Democrats have failed to act, and that failure is completely irresponsible. I urge the American people to keep that in mind as House Democrats come to the floor with their hysterical charges.

CUTTING MEDICARE AND MEDICAID SO THE WEALTHY GET A TAX BREAK

(Mr. VOLKMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. VOLKMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, the 126th day of the imperial speakership, to protest the proposed Gingrich Republican budget plan. This plan would cut Medicare and Medicaid Programs by over \$400 billion so that the wealthy can have a tax break.

Two months ago, Mr. Speaker, the Gingrich Republicans voted to cut benefits for children in the School Lunch Program. Then they attacked the Student Loan Program. Now it is the elderly through cuts in Medicare and Social Security. The Republicans have stated time and time again they would not touch the Social Security system, but their proposed fiscal year 1996 budget would decrease cost-of-living increases for Social Security recipients.

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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There is no reason that we should be making these cuts that will hurt the elderly, the young, and those hoping to lead our country during the next century, our college students, so that those making over \$200,000 a year can be given a big tax break. That is right. Those 1 million fortunate Americans who make over \$200,000 a year will be getting a \$20,000 tax break while 37 million seniors are losing \$900 a year.

THE REPUBLICAN BUDGET IS A CONTRACT WITH OUR CHILDREN

(Mr. TIAHRT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, once again we are experiencing a historical day. Today the House Committee on the Budget will submit a plan to balance the budget by 2002. It is the only plan around today to balance the budget, and it has been since 1968 that the Federal Government has balanced its budget resulting in almost a \$5 trillion debt. Common sense tells us that we can no longer afford such irresponsibility. We can no longer put the burden of this debt onto our children. The budget Republicans will introduce is a contract with our children. We must balance the budget so our children's future will be free of debt and full of opportunity.

This budget and the debate is not about money as much as it is about our children. We cannot allow an out-of-control Federal budget to rob our kids of freedom and economic security. It is just plain wrong to make them responsible for our mismanagement.

I ask my colleagues to join together on this historical day and help restore the American dream to our children.

BALANCING THE BUDGET ON THE BACKS OF SENIORS

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning, as the Committee on the Budget is meeting and deliberating. But more importantly, as we are instructed to keep close to our constituents, I have come back recently from interacting with the constituents of the 18th Congressional District in Texas, and what I have heard most of all is that we should work together, that we should focus our issues not as Democratic or Republican, but as American issues, and yet, as the Committee on the Budget deliberates, they now talk about cutting Medicare spending between \$270 and \$280 billion over the next 7 years and \$184 billion for Medicaid.

Mr. Speaker, these are not working-class/middle-class issues. These are issues of the American working people who want to confront better health care for their citizens.

My seniors have said to me, "Don't cut Medicare, make it more efficient. Cut the waste, but don't cut Medicare."

Now we find that the new budget plan is on the backs of seniors in America. But it is not only on the backs of seniors. It is on our medical facilities, our community hospitals. It is on our physicians who dedicate their lives to serving American working people.

We must confront this as an American issue, and we must not turn our backs on our seniors. I will not let Texas down. I will not let the citizens of the 18th Congressional District down by recklessly cutting Medicare and Medicaid for an ill-conceived budget.

WE ARE NOT CUTTING MEDICARE

(Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to respond to the allegations that this budget cuts Medicare and cuts Medicaid; that just is not true. Just look at the budget, and look at the figures in the budget. Today every Medicare recipient, the average across the country, gets \$4,700. At the end of this budget process that will have risen to \$6,300. That is not a cut.

What we are going to do is to preserve the Medicare system. It is now doomed unless one does something about it going bankrupt by 2002. We are not cutting Medicare. It will increase from \$4,700 to \$6,300 per every recipient; that is not a cut.

Let me say it again: When you go from \$4,700 to \$6,300, that's not a cut.

Please be productive. Please join us in this process to perfecting a budget that is going to save our country for our children. Do not continue with these misstatements of fact.

REPUBLICAN TAX CUTS FOR MILLIONAIRES WILL LEAD TO RATIONING OF HEALTH CARE

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, Republicans love to say that they are not cutting Medicare and Medicaid, they are only slowing their growth. What they do not tell us is that Medicare and Medicaid reform is actually health care rationing. House Republicans want to cut Medicare and want to cut Medicaid to pay for tax cuts for the wealthy, for wealthy special interests and to pay for star wars. Republicans want to force the elderly into HMO's and to health maintenance organizations which will only lead to rationing of health care and will lead to taking away of physician choice. Republicans want to do that all because some people in this House want to cut taxes on millionaires, cut taxes on millionaires forcing Medicare and Medicaid patients into rationing and taking

away their physician choice. Mr. Speaker, it simply does not make sense.

WASHINGTON PHILANTHROPY

(Ms. PRYCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. PRYCE. Mr. Speaker, in the early 1990's, a study was completed by political scientist James L. Payne. Mr. Payne tabulated the witnesses who appeared before congressional hearings. The findings are astonishing. He found that 95.7 percent of those who appeared came to urge more spending. Only 0.7 percent came to urge against more spending.

Washington has created a culture of spending. People come to Washington, perhaps with good intentions, and are sucked into this philanthropic swirl, where problems somehow go away if more tax dollars are spent.

Well, the game is up. Last November, the American people said "enough" and put Republicans in charge of Congress to put an end to the 40-year-long philanthropic tendencies of our friends on the other side.

If spending tax money truly solves problems, America would be the most trouble free society in the world. But we're not. Today, America is facing a \$4 trillion national debt in the face of some of the worst societal conditions we have ever witnessed. It's time to break Washington's spending culture. Philanthropy is a wonderful thing, but not with tax dollars.

MEDICARE AND MEDICAID CUTS WILL PUSH MANY SENIORS BELOW THE POVERTY LINE

Mr. WAXMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, the level of Medicare and Medicaid cuts would gut health care for the elderly and the poor leading to rationing of health care to those people to whom we promised health security: \$400 billion over 7 years; that is a breathtaking amount. That will mean cuts in Medicaid for the frail, elderly, and nursing homes, leaving them to languish there without care, if they are lucky enough to get into a nursing home at all. Community, at-home-nursing services will be cut, denying them that assistance as well. Hundreds of hospitals and clinics will be forced to close because they will not be able to afford care to the newly under-insured as well as all the uninsured of which there are 42 million in this country, a problem the Republicans even refuse to acknowledge exists. Doctors will turn Medicare patients away as their payment levels to them start resembling those for Medicaid, and greater costs will be borne for the elderly who live on fixed incomes,