

against rising rates of teen pregnancy. Preventing unintended pregnancies among sexually active teens through counseling and education is the highest priority of Federal family planning programs.

Community based teen pregnancy prevention programs place a strong emphasis on avoidance of unprotected sex, or avoidance of sex completely during the teen years. The community level is where we all need to get involved to assist young people through the difficult prospect of growing up in this uncertain world we have made for them.

We can offer teens activities like summer youth employment, like school-to-work programs, like after school programs and activities. We can encourage them to become involved in their communities—to volunteer their services to help the lives of others, rather than creating a life in a difficult environment.

And we can definitely help by refusing to make out-of-wedlock childbirth and pregnancy the scapegoat in the welfare reform debate. Denial of AFDC benefits to unwed adolescent mothers is cruel. This is not the way to deter teen pregnancy. This is the way to increase the number of poor women and children in this Nation.

We can achieve a significant reduction in teen pregnancy the same way we can achieve real welfare reform—by offering positive, long-term solutions.

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON].

Mrs. CLAYTON. Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank the gentlewoman for joining me. I will have the opportunity to address the House for 5 minutes, but I think your approach is correct, that to indeed approach the community and raise their awareness as to their opportunity to encouraging young people to be positive, and at the same time, we provide the young people with the option of development skills and life skills that they would elect to go forward with their lives and develop, and would not, perhaps, engage in destructive behavior.

I would say part of this is economic, and the other is social. All of us have the responsibility. Finally, to the extent I do have a moment, I would say this is not something that Congress itself can do, this is something that all society has to be part of. I would encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle that this is an opportunity where we work can work together. It does not make any difference of party affiliation or politics or philosophy. I think all of us would rather see young people develop their skills and be mature when they became parents. It would give an opportunity for our society to be better. Thank you for allowing me to participate as well.

Ms. PELOSI. It is under your leadership that we are here today.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that in addition to what the gentlewoman is saying, we must do all we can in succeeding to foster the self-esteem of our young women and actually our young men today. We are responsible to let each of them know there are people who love and support them,

that love and support does not have to come from a child of their own, and that love is something they can give to themselves, a feeling of self-worth that will allow teens to say no in the face of great decisions or pressures. That sense of self-worth comes from the family, from school, and from the community.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, unless the gentlewoman from North Carolina would like this time, I would like to yield back the balance of my time. I have spoken on three issues: Supporting the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] on the subject of the environment and the gentleman from Minnesota [Mr. VENTO] on the importance of the environment to the health of the American people; and on the subject of teen pregnancy.

In my close, I would like to say, once again, thank you to Edmond G. Brown, Junior, for the—Edmond G. Brown, "Pat," Senior, for his contribution. I know I speak for every member of the California delegation when I say to the Brown family that we are grateful for their unselfishness with "Pat" Brown in making him part of our State's history, and his great legacy is one that will live for a long time to come, and extend on behalf of our delegation condolences and deepest sympathy to Mrs. "Pat" Brown.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. TAYLOR of North Carolina). The gentleman will state it.

Mr. WELDON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, is it not correct under special orders, the individual managing the time is supposed to be here in the Chamber when the special order is underway?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is correct, ordinarily, but during the first hour the minority leader and the majority leader may reallocate the time as they see fit.

Mr. WELDON. I thank the Speaker. I just asked that question in case it arises again. We did not object, and I would not object, but I just wanted that clarified for the RECORD.

DEMOCRATS CONTINUE TO IGNORE IMPENDING MEDICARE BANKRUPTCY

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

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, Medicare is in critical condition. For nearly a year now, the President and the liberal House Democrats have refused to address Medicare's impending bankruptcy. In fact, they have ignored the warnings of the Medicare trustees and instead demagogued this issue, waging a campaign of fear and misinformation.

When the Republican-led Congress sent a bill that passed the House and

the Senate to the President which would have saved Medicare from bankruptcy and preserved it for future generations, the President vetoed the bill. Yet, 3 weeks ago yesterday, new evidence revealed that Medicare is indeed going bankrupt faster than the Clinton administration admitted. Three weeks ago yesterday, there was an article in the New York Times, not exactly a conservative publication, that said the Medicare insurance trust fund lost money in 1995.

This little article reads: "Medicare's Hospital Insurance Trust Fund lost money for the first time since 1972, 2 years earlier than officials in the Clinton administration had predicted." That is what the New York Times reported, again, 3 weeks ago yesterday. "We had projected that 1997 would be the first fiscal year with a deficit," said Richard S. Foster, chief actuary of the Federal Health Care Financing Administration, which runs Medicare. "Once the trust fund starts losing money, the losses are expected to grow," the New York Times reported.

Then the next day the Washington Post reported the following: "The White House confirmed a report yesterday that suggested the Medicare hospital trust fund may be hemorrhaging even faster than previously expected—ending fiscal 1995 with a balance that was \$4.7 billion lower than predicted."

In April 1995 the Medicare Board of Trustees, including three Clinton Cabinet officials and the commissioner, or the Director, of the Social Security Administration, warned Congress and the President that Medicare would be bankrupt by the year 2002 unless it took steps to preserve Medicare from bankruptcy and to reverse the soaring spending rate, the exponential spending rate path Medicare was on to bankruptcy.

The Clinton administration, of course, tried to sweep these findings under the rug. When the President spoke to the White House Conference on Aging just a month later, in May of 1995, he never mentioned the Medicare trustees' report. Instead, the President and the liberal House Democrats spent most of last year, and again, the early part of this year, blasting Republican plans to save Medicare. But as I mentioned earlier, according to the New York Times, the Clinton administration had data as far back as last October that indicated that the situation was far worse than predicted.

While the administration had estimated a projected surplus in the Medicare trust fund of \$4.7 billion for 1995, in fact the balance in the trust fund fell by \$35.7 million; as I mentioned, the first time since 1972 that the trust fund has lost money. So clearly we now know Medicare is headed for bankruptcy even earlier than 2002, and the President and the liberal House Democrats have no plan to save it.

In fact, they have done virtually nothing to address the problem. For 10 months the President and the liberal