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

INTRODUCTION OF THE CHRISTOPHER REEVE HEALTH INSURANCE REFORM ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California [Ms. ESHOO] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ESHOO. Madam Speaker, today I introduced a bill in the House of Representatives, H.R. 3030, and it is entitled the Christopher Reeve Health Insurance Reform Act. I think that that name, rather than the number 3030, is a name that Americans know and respect. Christopher Reeve is an accomplished actor, someone that has appeared both on stage and screen in our Nation and, I believe, now is playing one of the great roles of his life as he advocates for the reforms that are necessary to our health system. And so I am very pleased that he would lend his name to this piece of legislation that seeks to reform a very, very important part of our health insurance system in our country.

□ 1930

What this bill would do would be to lift the lifetime cap limit that exists in health insurance policies today. People that own life insurance policies may not be, and most are not, aware of the fine print that exists within that policy.

Back in the 1970's, a $1 million cap was placed on the usage or the ceiling for health insurance policies. One million dollars in 1970 was a lot of money. Today $1 million, when a catastrophic incident happens in an individual's life, as it did and came into Christopher Reeves' life, $1 million will be used up very, very quickly. So I think it is important that that standard lifetime cap on individual health insurance policies be raised. That is what this bill accomplishes.

Specifically, the legislation would prohibit insurers from placing limits on health insurance policies of less than $10 million, so those that insure themselves, their policy would have a ceiling of not $1 million, but $10 million. I think this is an important and necessary reform measure that needs to be accomplished.

Last year, Madam Speaker, in our great Nation, 1,500 individuals exhausted their lifetime caps under their health insurance plans. Price Waterhouse estimates that between 1995 and the year 2000, an additional 10,000 Americans will reach their lifetime caps because they require continual medical care. This legislation will protect frequent users of health insurance from being stranded, because a $10 million limit better reflects today's medical inflation.

The $1 million cap, as I said, was adopted in the early 1970's. That reflected very much the times. But that has never been adjusted with inflationary figures, and we know if there is anything that has inflated, that is the cost of health care. Lifting the lifetime caps. Madam Speaker, would also save the Federal Government money.

Price Waterhouse estimates that removing lifetime caps would save the Medicaid Program $7 billion over 5 years. The American Academy of Actuaries estimates that lifting the lifetime caps will cause only a slight increase in premiums, about 1 percent to 2 percent, for employers. I think we can all agree that the $1 million lifetime cap is something that has outlived itself. That is to say that it does not fit with the times. This bill, H.R. 3030, will accomplish that.

Let me close, Madam Speaker, by paying tribute to Christopher Reeves. As I said earlier, he is a recognized name by Americans because of how he distinguished himself on stage and screen. He has been a great advocate for the arts and the humanities, and now, today, he is moving into a new role, and that is being an advocate for the necessary, important reforms that we can bring to the health care system. His eloquent voice, I hope, will be matched by the eloquent act of this Congress.

That is what I urge my colleagues to support and to cosponsor, so we can correct this in the law, and recognize that Americans will be helped, and that with that, we help move America forward. I salute Christopher Reeves for his courage, and I hope Members of Congress will try to match what he has exhibited by supporting this legislation, and indeed, making it the law.

IT IS THE ECONOMY THAT IS A PRIORITY TO MOST AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina [Mrs. CLAYTON] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CLAYTON. Madam Speaker, after two Government shutdowns and a near default on our obligations, today this House has passed a short-term bill to raise the debt ceiling and to pass a continuing resolution for the work we have not done on four major appropriation bills, bills that contain important funding for domestic programs.

It is important that America pay its bills and meet its obligations. It is also important that we do all that we can to keep the Government running. We do not need a third Government shutdown, but we are now almost halfway through the fiscal year and we have done nothing to bring relief from the daily struggles to make ends meet for working families of America.

today, once again, the continuing resolution cuts education funding. We want to lead the world in education, but we do not want to provide the resources to do so. Because of what Congress did today, there will be fewer teachers, more crowded classrooms, less money for equipment and supplies, and not as much help for those who need a healthy start or a head start.

The answer Congress has been giving to the working families who are working just as hard as ever before is that inflation is low, economic indicators are good, the stock market is rallying, and jobs are on the rise. All of that means nothing to the unemployed father or to the single mother or to the family of four with children in college, or to senior citizens who are now being told their lifetime work has no value.

The fact of the matter is that the quality of life for most Americans is not getting better. The fact of the matter is that most of our citizens have little confidence in the economy, and less confidence in government. The fact of the matter is that while Congress is fighting over balanced budgets and spending limits, the public is losing faith in the American dream. The reason the public is losing faith is because more people have less money, while less people have more money. The rich are getting richer and the working families are suffering more of the losses that we are suffering.

It is by now widely known that the income gap between those with a lot of money and those without much money is growing faster, and is very troubling. This Congress must not ignore these harsh realities, and heed the cries for help coming from all quarters of working America.

It should concern us that the industries that have led this Nation over the last 5 years in job production are temporary employment agencies. It should claim our immediate attention that bankruptcies are skyrocketing and bad credit is more and more common.

What can we do to restore faith in our economy and our Government and recapture the American dream? What can we do to bring some relief to our citizens? We can start by passing the modest minimum wage increase bill that has been languishing in Congress for months and months now. We can go further by treating ordinary citizens with respect and the care with which we treat corporate America. We can do it best by passing a fair tax reform legislation aimed at working Americans and not always only at wealthy Americans. We can move America forward by ensuring quality health care, especially for our seniors, by protecting our environment and preserving education.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, college graduates earn 24 percent more than workers with high school degrees. Why, then, are we cutting education and claiming these cuts are necessary for progress?

High-wage jobs are needed to close the income gap. High-wage jobs require more education, not less education. Why do we think China and Japan and other countries in Asia and other parts of the world are concentrating on sending their young people to America to get educated? They know what Congress seems to ignore, that the key to a better quality of life is through our schoolhouse doors.

Madam Speaker, if Congress does not pass an acceptable continuing resolution, the Government will shut down a third time. If Congress does not raise the debt ceiling permanently by March 29, America will default on its debt. If Congress does not wake up and realize that working America needs this help now, the American dream will drift away.

It is still the economy that means important things to America. It is the economy that is a priority to most Americans.

CRIME OF THE RISE UNDER THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Kansas [Mr. TIAHRT] is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. TIAHRT. Madam Speaker, this country is facing an increasing problem with youth violence and drug abuse. After 3 years of reducing the effectiveness of fighting against drug abuse, Mr. Clinton is trying to salvage his image by appointing a new drug czar. Despite the rhetoric, President Clinton has been unable to win the war on drugs.

When President Clinton swore in his new drug czar, he said a lot of positive things against the country's battle against drugs. But let us not be fooled by President Clinton's claim to have made a sizeable dent in the war on drugs. If he had, we would not have such an increase in drug use and a decrease in drug arrests.

According to Investors Business Daily, two articles, one by Matthew Robinson on September 11, 1995, and John Barnes, June 6, 1995, ''President Clinton has failed to properly fight the war on drugs.'' DEA, our Drug Enforcement Agency, their arrests fell from 7,878 the last full year under the Bush administration to 5,279 in 1994 under the Clinton administration.

Drug-related arrests, made in cooperation with overseas law enforcement agencies, fell from 1,856 in 1992 to 1,522 in 1994. Although 140 new DEA intelligence specialists were trained in 1992, zero were trained in 1994. President Clinton slashed the Office of National Drug Control Policy by 84 percent, cutting the staff from 116 to just 25. He eliminated 355 DEA agents and 102 personnel from the Justice Department's organized crime enforcement task force.

President Clinton dropped the drug issue from the top to the bottom of the National Security Council's list of 29 priorities.

In a household survey on drug abuse, as shown on this chart, it was published in September 1995, the estimated number of 12- to 17-year-olds who have reportedly smoked marijuana grew from 1992, 1.6 million, to 1994, 2.9 million. In the 14- and 15-year-old age group, it saw a 200-percent increase in the use of marijuana.

I have another chart that talks about how drug enforcement has been down under the Clinton administration. This depicts the number of Federal marijuana defendants, which has dropped 18.6 percent, in 1993 it was 5,500, to 4,100 by 1995.

Also, the prison time is getting shorter. In this chart, the average prison sentence for marijuana defendants is down 13 percent. In 1992, the sentence was 50 months. By 1995, it has dropped down to 43 months.

It is not just confined to drug abuse, either, Madam Speaker. We have a problem with violent juvenile crime. The juvenile crime clock, which is published by Crime Strike, says that a juvenile is arrested for murder every 2 hours and 10 minutes; for rape, every 51 minutes; for robbery, every 13 minutes; and an aggravated assault, every 8 minutes.

Juveniles are not tried as adults as often. Despite the increasingly violent nature of juvenile crime, as well as the increased number of juveniles involved, the percentage of juvenile cases referred to adult courts has actually declined. In 1984 it was 5.2 percent, approximately 54,000 cases out of 1 million. By 1993, a decade later, the adult court referrals had grown to 61,000, approximately, but it was just 4.8 percent of the 1.29 million offenders taken into custody.

I believe the liberal Clinton administration is part of the basic problem. In our war on crime, the liberals have become soft on criminals, and it is making it hard for the rest of us. I think this is why many Americans are losing faith in our court system. One of the most recent examples is an appointee by President Clinton, Judge Harold Baer, a liberal judge in New York City.

I have two articles I would like to refer to. One is in the Columbus Dispatch. It was published on February 5. It is entitled ''Outrage in New York.'' To give you kind of a background, I will just take some excerpts from this article.

> Judges routinely make close calls in dispersing justice. Sometimes, though, a judge makes a decision so mind-boggling, so dumb, that it makes people wonder what planet he is living on.

Such has been the case in New York City, where on January 24, U.S. District Court Judge Harold Baer, Junior, let a confessed drug courier walk free after police officers observed 80 pounds of cocaine and heroin being loaded into the trunk of her car. The mayor, the police commissioner, and nearly everyone else in New York is up in arms over this nonsensical ruling.

I have a chart here that just kind of depicts how many drugs were in the trunk of that car when the arrest was made. There was 75 pounds of cocaine, and actually 4 pounds of heroin.

□ 1945

That was heading toward Michigan, according to the confession of Carol Bayless, who was at the wheel of the car. That is enough so that every school child in Detroit would have one dose of cocaine. This appeared to be an open-and-shut case, but in a bit of twisted reasoning, Judge Baer said that the officer had no reasonable suspicion to pull over Bayless. He excluded the drugs and the confession, a videotaped confession where Bayless admitted that she was paid $20,000 to take the drugs to Detroit, something she had done at least 20 times before, either for her son or for other dealers. But this evidence was thrown out. No drugs, no case.

Bayless was facing the possibility of life in prison. She whooped in celebration. If this was not bad enough, Judge Baer's written decision reeked with contempt for the police, particularly Officer Carroll who made the arrest, who has 10 years of experience on the street and a spotless record.

Senator DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN, who got President Clinton to appoint Baer to the bench, has had some buyer's remorse, according to the article. He suggested Baer be sentenced to live in that neighborhood for a year to see if that would change his mind.

Federal prosecutors are pondering appeal. They hate to overturn a judgment based on a subjective matter like reasonable suspicion, but in this case prosecutors should appeal, and the courts should overturn Baer's judgment and put Bayless on trial because justice demands it.

On ''ABC World News Tonight'' at 6:30, February 8, eastern time, there was an article run. Part of it was talking about this same ruling. Part of the report said: ''Last month Federal Judge Harold Baer ruled that neither the woman's confession nor the drugs found in her car could be used in court because police lacked sufficient reason to stop her or search her car.''

Here the police saw four men dumping duffle bags into the woman's car at around 5:00 in the morning and when the men saw the police, they ran away. This was not sufficient suspicion for Judge Baer, who wrote that in Washington Heights residents regard police officers as corrupt, abusive, and violent. Had they not run when the cops began to stare at them, it would have been unusual.

Well, in Wichita, KS, the fourth district of Kansas, I think that type of behavior would have been reason to stop someone, and I think that the abuse that has occurred from the excessive amount of drugs in our society justifies having this ruling overturned.

Mr. SHADEGG. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. TIAHRT. I would be glad to yield to the gentleman from Arizona.

Mr. SHADEGG. I just listened to this story, and it kind of amazes me. If you would be willing to, I would like to enter into a little colloquy to see if I really understand this and see if we can flesh this out a little bit.

You are telling me that the essence of this judge's ruling was that the