

Shortsighted has more than one meaning here. In the near term, we are being destructive and wasteful by forcing Government agencies to limp along on partial funding, continuing to operate, but unable to give full service to the American public. In the long term we are hurting our investment in that most basic and important of all services, public education.

Today we voted on an 11th continuing budget resolution to keep the Government going. This resolution was for 7 days, it was for 1 week. Underneath the new majority we have become a government by the week, for the week, and of the week. I voted "no" on this continuing resolution because of the drastic cuts in education, not only title I, not only Head Start, but also, as I said earlier, the drug-free safe school zones have been cut.

Here are some facts I would wish that the majority will remember:

A recent Gallup Poll showed two-thirds of all Americans ranked the quality of education as their top priority over such issues as crime, health care, and the deficit.

A January Wall Street Journal poll says 9 of 10 Americans favor the same or increased spending on education.

The January Washington Post poll says 8 out of 10 Americans oppose cutting education. Yet the current budget resolution, which was continued today, if extended for the year, will cut \$3.1 billion from education, the largest education cut in our Nation's history.

Are such cuts in step or out of step with the will of the American public? The polls I cited would indicate that such cuts could not be more out of step.

If we extend this continuing budget resolution to the year's end, more than 1 million young people will be deprived of services in the title I program alone.

Here are some other ways to view the problem:

Failure to have assured funding in place is affecting the operations of America's 110,000 elementary and secondary schools that serve roughly 50 million students. State legislators and school administrators in all 50 States and in more than 14,000 school districts are unable to develop detailed financial plans for the coming year. Without these plans in place, this affects the hiring of teachers, the signing of contracts. Impact aid districts are squeezed by partial payments. This will affect roughly 2,000 school districts, including those in my home State of Michigan, and 1.3 million children. The Brimley School District in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan is looking at a \$600,000 shortfall because title I has not been completed. Antrim County stands to lose \$100,000; Benzie County schools, \$58,200; Charlevoix schools, \$77,700; Cheboygan schools, \$140,200.

□ 1615

Crawford County will be over 70,000, Emmet County over 67,000, Grand Traverse, over 200,000.

Mr. Speaker, unless the Department of Education can make full payments, many schools will receive impact aid or run out of funds later this spring and will be unable to pay teachers' salaries. People with disabilities will not receive rehabilitation services. Vocational rehabilitation programs prepare some 1 million individuals each year to get a hold of and to hang onto their jobs.

This is only a partial look at the problem, but it lets us draw some sad conclusions. One of the tragedies of this Congress is that we have gotten away from rational discourse and debate. We have gotten away from the notion of agreeing to disagree, while completing the basic business of the people of the United States. There certainly can be rational debates over the long-term or long-range value of programs like drug resistance education, drug-free school zones, title I, and other specific education programs. In fact, having a debate over these programs is an excellent opportunity to restate their value and their importance to the American people.

However, Mr. Speaker, this process of destruction by attrition, of week-to-week continuing budget resolutions, of the slow wearing down of those who struggle in the field of education, is not rational, and it is not a debate. It is irrational, and the American people recognize it as the wrong way to do business.

Mr. Speaker, we would ask that when we come back next week and work on a continuing budget resolution, that we take into consideration the cuts we have made in education, the cuts we have made in the environment, in the enforcement of the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the gutting of the Clinton COPS Program. We ask that these be put forth in a continuing budget resolution, and we stand ready to work with the minority and the majority to work together to find the \$8 billion we need to cut.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FOLEY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan [Mr. EHLERS] is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

#### MEDICAID BUDGET CUTS THREATEN TO IMPAIR THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR MANY AMERICANS

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

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, balancing the budget is important, but the debate has taken the wrong turn. We should be focusing on saving lives and the quality of care, not just balancing the budget, balancing the budget at the expense of losing people, and at the ex-

pense of creating turmoil in the lives of so many.

For the past 30 years, Mr. Speaker, America has prided herself on protecting those vulnerable populations who, because of many circumstances, are not able to afford the health care they desperately need.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Commerce which I serve on, held a hearing on the Medicaid proposal by the National Governors Association. During the recess, we had a hearing in which six Governors came to testify. Due to the fact that many Members could not be there, we required another day of hearings.

The Governors' proposal is a bipartisan consensus which I must admit has done a lot to contribute to the debate and finding solutions to reforming the Medicaid program. I applaud them, Mr. Speaker, for trying to help. However, I am still concerned with several very, very important issues which, in my opinion, must be further reviewed.

Under the NGA proposal, not only will the recipients of the Medicaid safety net program suffer, but so will the inner cities, which house many of our great teaching institutions that train the majority of our Nation's physicians. New York alone trains 15 percent of the Nation's physicians. Public hospitals which care for over 30 million uninsured will also suffer much more than ever imagined.

If enacted, Mr. Speaker, the Medicaid cuts would deliver a blow to New York City that is double its proportionate share. Over the next 7 years, cuts to New York hospitals will total approximately \$12 billion, that is B as in boy, billion, in New York City, and billions more in New York State. Payments for long-term care and personal health services will decline by approximately \$7 billion in New York City, and \$1 billion in New York State.

Furthermore, the Medicaid cuts will reduce needed service levels, and access to care will also suffer, as well as reduced projected employment by over 100,000 in New York City and 200,000 in New York State, and cause the personal income of New Yorkers to decline by at least 2.7 percent.

While the debate over Medicaid reform has largely focused on cost savings, it is important to refocus the debate on saving lives and quality of care. Mr. Speaker, let me just say that we need to recognize the fact that people are living longer, and as they live longer, they will need additional care. In order for them to have that care, we need to make certain that the resources are there to provide that care.

People in nursing homes today are doing a fantastic job. For a long time, we did not have standards like we have today. Of course, we had a mess. We had some nursing homes that were creating all kinds of problems for our elderly. However, we were able to get some statutes in the law that sort of turned that around. We now seem to be moving back toward where we were before those statutes came into being.