

I am a cosponsor of that bill and I am very proud to do so, because after all, if it is good for America, it really should not matter whether it is a Democratic or Republican idea. I am proud to say that every single Democratic Member of Congress took the same patriotic approach to Medicare subvention. They supported bringing Medicare subvention to the floor for a vote, even though the bill's sponsor is a Republican.

Why then, I ask the people on this side of the room, did every single Republican vote against it? Why did the 98 Republicans who cosponsored Medicare subvention vote against bringing it to the floor for a vote, despite a plea from the Retired Officers Association?

I will read a letter sent to me by the Retired Officers Association:

Dear Representative Taylor: Based on discussions with you, we understand that you intend to make a motion to defeat the previous question, and if successful, to offer an amendment to H.R. 2015, the Budget Reconciliation Act, to allow Medicare to reimburse the Department of Defense for care provided to Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries in the Military Health Services System, a concept we refer to as Medicare subvention. The Retired Officers Association strongly supports this initiative.

Medicare subvention is critical to help honor the lifetime health care commitment. Servicemembers were promised lifetime health care in return for the extraordinary sacrifices of a 20- to 30-year career in uniform. Now, after several rounds of base closures, massive personnel reductions, and the advent of Tricare Prime, most Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries have lost access to military facilities.

Servicemembers did not equivocate when called upon to serve this Nation during years of armed conflict. This Nation should not equivocate on its commitment to provide them lifetime access to military facilities.

This is the list, and I want to submit it for the RECORD, of the 98 Members, Republican Members of Congress, who cosponsored this measure, who will go home and tell their constituents they are for this, they want to help the military retirees, but when the chance comes, the once-in-a-year chance comes to put it into action, voted against it:

HEFLEY, WATTS, NORWOOD, ENSIGN, BONILLA, BARTLETT of Maryland, RAMSTAD, GOODLATTE, LEWIS of Kentucky, BALLENGER, BEREUTER, CUNNINGHAM, HERGER, STEARNS, DAN SCHAEFER of Colorado, MORELLA, YOUNG of Alaska, DAVIS of Virginia, MCHUGH, SENSENBRENNER, REGULA, JONES, SKEEN, SCARBOROUGH, RIGGS, STUMP, MCCOLLUM, CHRISTENSEN, HAYWORTH, WOLF, MCKEON, HUNTER, BAKER, SAXTON, PETRI, SAM JOHNSON of Texas, SHAW, KIM, CALVERT, BATEMAN, SOLOMON, who voted against it in Committee on Rules and on the floor; SHADEGG, MCCREERY, TIAHRT, FOLEY, PORTER, BILBRAY, PRYCE of Ohio, who voted against it in the Committee on Rules and on the floor; RILEY, POMBO, GRAHAM, BONO, CANADY, WELDON of Florida, PARKER, METCALF, WAMP.

Mr. Speaker, I will submit the remainder for the RECORD.

CAMPBELL, KELLY, HASTINGS, WA, SMITH, NJ, SMITH, TX, WICKER, CALLAHAN, KOLBE, BARTON, TX, LINDA SMITH, WA, GRANGER, LAHOOD, COLLINS, PAXON, DOOLITTLE, HANSEN, LINDER, HUTCHINSON, ROHRBACHER, HOSTETTLER, EMERSON, NETHERCUTT, DIAZ-BALART, EVERETT, WELLER, NEY, COMBEST, PACKARD, TALENT, MCINNIS, TAYLOR, NC, BOB SCHAFFER, CO, GALLEGLY, SHIMKUS, HORN, CHAMBLISS, CHENOWETH, FOX, PA, and GIBBONS.

Mr. Speaker, I want to remind people that this is the only chance we are going to get to vote on Medicare subvention. Do not go home for the Fourth of July parades and tell the veterans you are with them because they now know, and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD will reflect, that when given the opportunity to do something for them, or do something for NEWT GINGRICH, you voted for NEWT GINGRICH and against our veterans.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the material referred to earlier during my special order.

THE RETIRED OFFICERS ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, June 25, 1997.

Hon. GENE TAYLOR,
U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE TAYLOR: Based on discussions with you, we understand that you intend to make a motion to defeat the previous question, and if successful, to offer an amendment to HR 2015, the Budget Reconciliation Act, to allow Medicare to reimburse the Department of Defense for care provided to Medicare-eligible service beneficiaries in the Military Health Services System—a concept we refer to as Medicare subvention. The Retired Officers Association strongly supports this initiative.

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Servicemembers did not equivocate when called upon to serve this Nation during years of armed conflict. This Nation should not equivocate on its commitment to provide them lifetime access to military facilities.

Medicare subvention will help honor that commitment while saving money—a “win-win” proposition for Medicare, for taxpayers and for those who served.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL A. NELSON,
President.

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

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

CUTTING MEDICARE BENEFITS TO THE ELDERLY TO PAY FOR TAX CUTS FOR THE WELL OFF

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

Mr. OLVER. Mr. Speaker, the fat is in the fire. Today this House passed, with an almost unanimous vote on the part of the Republican Members, a bill that is going to cut \$115 billion out of Medicare, which is going to end up producing lower-quality health care at higher costs for my mother, for all of the Members of this body for their mothers and grandmothers and grandfathers as well.

Tomorrow we are going to end up debating the tax bill, which the Republicans paid for today by the cuts in Medicare, and in the process of passing that bill they refused to protect, to renew, to affirm the promise that had been made to our veterans of a lifetime of health care for people who had served in the military services, and that is particularly important for the 12 million or so, or the remainder of the 12 million American veterans of the Second World War.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the more things change, the more they are the same. As Yogi Berra once said, *deja vu* all over again. That is what has happened here. Throughout the 104th Congress, the fight in this House of Representatives and in the Senate was over the massive cuts in medical care for senior citizens that were virtually equivalent to the total amount of the tax cuts that were going to be given, and here we are again, cutting Medicare, and that is rather similar, very similar to the amount of dollars that are needed to pay for the tax cut that comes next.

Mr. Speaker, the President and the Congress have made a balanced budget agreement, and there are going to be tax cuts as a part of that agreement. There will be tax cuts.

But the question that we are going to be deciding tomorrow, who is it that are going to get the tax cuts? The question is, who do Members of the Republican Party care about and defend and fight for, and who do Democrats care about and defend and fight for?

Well, the Republican plan for tax cuts and the Democratic alternative tax cut plan show clearly who Republicans and Democrats care about and fight for, and we will see that very clearly tomorrow, and in the days ahead. We will see it again and again in the days ahead.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans have called their tax plan good for the middle class, and they say that their plan gives tax breaks to working families who really need it. This chart tells a somewhat different story.

The Republican plan, which is the plan that is in blue, gives almost two-thirds, 64 percent, of the tax reduction to one family out of six in America, those families, the 19 million families that already earn more than \$100,000 a year. The Republican plan gives that one family out of six 64 percent of the tax reduction. Over here, the other five out of six families get 36 percent of the tax reduction, including that great middle class who have incomes between \$25,000 and \$100,000 a year, that