

would not make sense for States to not prosecute murderers and rapists who are 15-, 16-, and 17-year-olds, especially if they are repeat violent offenders, as adults, because if they do not prosecute them as adults and they did it as juveniles, they will be back on the streets when they do reach the age of adulthood.

The second myth that we are hearing a lot about is that H.R. 3 allows youths as young as 13 to be confined in adult jails and prisons. This also is absolutely false. Nothing in H.R. 3 authorizes or even encourages housing of juveniles with adults. In fact, H.R. 3 prohibits such housing in the Federal system and does nothing to change current laws and regulations affecting State housing policies.

Current Federal law explicitly prohibits housing juveniles with adults in the Federal juvenile justice system. The standard has long been codified in Federal law. It is unchanged by H.R. 3. It is one that prohibits any regular contact between juveniles and adult criminals during any stage of the justice process, pretrial, presentencing, or postsentencing.

So the myth that is out there is that somehow those of us who support H.R. 3 are not concerned with prevention. Well, that is not the purpose of the juvenile crime bill that came forward this time, prevention, but we are concerned with it. Trying to stop and interdict the young person before they get involved with a juvenile offense, misdemeanor or otherwise is very important. There are \$4 billion of Federal at-risk grant programs already available out there and existing, and we are going to be reauthorizing one of them here very shortly dealing with OJJDP, which is the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Mr. Speaker, 4 billion dollars' worth of prevention programs, 131 of those programs in 16 different agencies.

But what H.R. 3 is all about is an effort to try to fix the broken juvenile justice system of this Nation. Some critics are saying this is a State responsibility and the Federal Government does not have any business there. And that I would suggest is not the right way to look at this. Yes, juvenile justice types of programs are in the States, not the Federal system, but the system is broken and there is a Federal responsibility to deal with it.

Today, if a young person comes in contact with the law by having vandalized a home or a store or by spray-painting graffiti on a warehouse, well, the chances are the police will not even take that young person to a juvenile court. And when they do see a juvenile judge, it is often 10 or 12 appearances before they receive any kind of punishment at all. That is not a working juvenile justice system.

Is it any wonder that when a juvenile, having experienced that and some day does pick up a gun in a situation where he might use it, that he thinks about pulling that trigger, believing

there are no consequences? There have to be consequences in the juvenile justice system of this Nation. We need more probation officers, more juvenile judges and more juvenile detention facilities so we can treat juveniles the proper way, and to put consequences into the juvenile justice system again so that there is punishment from the very first juvenile delinquent act.

It is a very important part of what we passed here on the floor with H.R. 3, because it is a requirement in order to get the \$500 million a year authorized by that bill to improve the juvenile justice systems of the States that the State demonstrate to the Justice Department of the United States that they will have in place, and do have in place, a system to sanction the very first juvenile misdemeanor crime of every juvenile who commits one, and graduated, increasing sanctions for every one thereafter.

It is also important, and we have in place as part of this incentive grant program, that records be kept of those who commit felony crimes for the second offense.

H.R. 3 is a good bill. It is a juvenile crime bill. Prevention is also important. The myths about this bill are wrong, and we are proud we passed it. We look forward to seeing the bill from the other body so we can get one to the President shortly.

MEDICARE AND THE BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HEFLEY). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997 the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, let me take my colleagues back to 1995. Congressional colleagues passed and sent to the President a balanced budget plan that slowed Medicare spending in order to perpetuate and preserve the program. Of course, it being before an election year, the President promptly vetoed the bill, citing, quote, "excessive cuts in Medicare," unquote, as the primary reason for his veto.

Amazingly, the President and his Democrat friends went even further. They based their entire campaign for the Presidency in 1996 and for Congress on the Medicare cuts, the so-called Medicare campaign.

Of course, most Americans knew that the Democrats' fear tactics were baseless, that there were no cuts in Medicare spending. In fact, the budget we passed 2 years ago contained \$1.252 trillion in spending on Medicare for the next 5 years, an increase in funding that more than exceeded twice the rate of inflation.

I call the attention of my colleagues to the first chart on my left. In 1996, the President said, "you remember that budget I vetoed last year because it had excessive cuts in Medicare?" Well, 8 months later the President changed his tune on Medicare, but of

course that is not surprising; the election was over.

In 1997, the President said, "America needs a balanced budget that is in balance with our values, that protects Medicare. That is exactly what this budget does. It keeps our fundamental commitment to our parents, preserving and protecting Medicare."

My colleagues, we may be having a heat wave here in Washington, but it just cannot compare with the President's hot air. Look at this second chart. Under our 1995 budget plan, the one of course that was vetoed by President Clinton because it claimed it had excessive Medicare cuts, total spending on Medicare would have exceeded \$1.25 trillion from 1998 to the year 2002. The balanced budget agreement reached this year between the President and Congress has total Medicare spending of less than \$1.25 trillion over those same years.

The 1995 budget plan, the one which proposes excessive cuts in Medicare, had more funding than the current budget plan. In 1996, \$1.25 trillion in Medicare spending was labeled as having excessive cuts. This year, less than \$1.25 trillion in Medicare spending, is used to preserve and protect this program. As the chart shows, the 1995 budget plan would have provided \$4 billion more in Medicare spending than the current budget. Let me repeat, we spent more on Medicare in the 1995 plan than this 1997 plan endorsed by the President.

I am glad that the President has joined us in an effort to save Medicare, but I hope that he also realizes that Medicare is just too important a program for political theater. If he and his supporters had put politics aside, had rejected petty demagoguery and had rolled up their sleeves to work with us in saving Medicare, he could have put the program in place back then on the path to financial security 2 years ago.

My colleagues, there is no room for partisan games when the health of 30 million Americans is at stake. I am proud of our efforts to protect, preserve, and strengthen Medicare in 1995. It is sad, unfortunately, that others jeopardize the future of Medicare to score political points. We owe it to our 30 million fellow citizens to work together to ensure the solvency of the Medicare Program. Let us put our duty ahead of politics and build a brighter future for all Americans.

STOP TAX HIKES ON GRADUATE STUDENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 21, 1997, the gentleman from Massachusetts [Mr. MCGOVERN] is recognized during morning hour debates for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, a terrible miscarriage of justice is taking place in the House Republican tax bill, an attack on graduate university students across this country. At a time