that VA could save money for the Medicare Program while expanding access to care for many of our veterans. A seemingly fair-minded and straightforward proposal to permit higher income, non-service-connected veterans to use their Medicare benefits at VA health care facilities, was dropped from this bill. This legislation was favorably reported by our committee, had the strong support of all major veterans organizations, had 110 cosponsors, and was adopted by the Senate in a slightly modified form.

I very strongly believe that this legislation—H.R. 1362—is at the very least cost neutral and would likely save Medicare money. I regret that the administration did not make more of an effort to signal its strong support for this legislation and failed to counter the misinformed view that VA is not prepared to mount such a demonstration project.

VA should be given the opportunity to establish a demonstration which can not only expand veterans' access to care but potentially save significant sums for Medicare. In that regard, it is ironic, and troubling, to learn from the recent testimony of the HHS Inspector General that the Medicare Program may pay out considerably more in improper payments than the entire VA medical care budget of $17 billion.

What some refer to as ''VA-Medicare subvention'' is not simply a veterans' issue. It can prove beneficial to the Medicare Program as well. We veterans' advocates will, nevertheless, have to redouble our efforts to highlight that veterans who cannot now gain access to VA health care deserve to be able to use their Medicare benefits at VA facilities. I believe that, as more Members come to understand this issue and realize the positive effect it could have on tens of thousands of veterans nationwide, passage can be achieved.

Mr. Speaker, we've taken an important step in our efforts to provide new revenue streams to fund veterans' health care. New and innovative funding mechanisms should be encouraged, studied and implemented. I am confident that, with congressional support, the VA can thrive as it provides needed care to veterans well into the 21st century.

CONCERNING THE DEAL TO BALANCE THE BUDGET

SPEECH OF

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 30, 1997

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I am voting ''no''. Here's why:

1. This deal increases the deficit. We should not un-balance the budget now for the sake of balancing it 5 years from now.

The purpose of passing this legislation was supposed to be to balance the budget. I support that goal. In fact, since 1993, when I supported the Clinton budget package against the vote of every Republican in the House, the deficit has been going down. But if we approve this latest budget deal, we will, according to its authors, make the deficit worse, not better, next year.

But that's not all. It has been apparent to me since March that revenue projections used by both the administration and the Congress have grossly underestimated the amount of revenue flowing into the Treasury recently. The deficit for this fiscal year has been re-estimated twice already, reducing it dramatically from over $100 billion to less than $45 billion. We have not seen deficits this low for 20 years. At this rate, the budget will be balanced in 1998, not 2002. In order to ensure that the final budget agreement reflected a true snapshot of current reality, I asked OMB to provide its overdue mid-year estimates before we had to vote on the agreement. OMB refused. OMB finds the truth inconvenient, but the truth is that we have a better chance of balancing the budget without a deal than with one.

Let's not turn our backs on the goal of a balanced budget just as we are about to reach that promised land.

2. The tax cuts go to the wrong people for the wrong purpose.

Targeted tax credits for worthy purposes can be justified, even in the absence of a balanced budget, as long as they are going to people in need. But the vast majority of these tax cuts will go to people who are not needy. Like Pacman, the wealthiest 5 percent of all Americans gobble up half of the benefits. The wealthiest 20 percent gobble up over 70 percent of the benefits. In fact, the lowest-income Americans are expected to pay more, not less, under this bill. Is this fair? Is this moral? Is this wise?

The only justification for fattening the pocketbooks of the very wealthy has been some notion of stimulating the economy by favoring the tax treatment of long-term investments. But we don't need a stimulus. In fact, any artificial stimulus to this very healthy economy is likely to trigger a move by the Federal Reserve Board to raise interest rates. Higher interest rates are a tax on all of us. We should not ask to be thrown into that briar patch.

3. We are cutting deep so the rich can keep.

The more we give back to the wealthiest individuals in this society the deeper we have to cut in spending programs that benefit everyone else. This is a time to ask those with high incomes to shoulder more of the burden of deficit reduction, not less. As many commentators have noted, we have some major decisions ahead regarding the solvency of Medicare and Social Security as our population ages and our employment pool shrinks. Prudence dictates that we devote resources to solving those intractable problems. Today, we compound them.

In short, there are many good things in this package that I support, and it is always difficult to vote against a package that has much good mixed in with the bad. But I cannot in good conscience engage in the pretense of balancing a budget that is already balanced as a vehicle for a tax cut that is so unfair to average Americans.

4. Telecommunications provisions of the budget.

The telecommunications proposals contained in the budget do not represent good telecommunications policy. In fact, they contain appalling precedents, highly-flawed assumptions, and radical departures from established, sound telecommunications policy—all in the name of raising cash for the U.S. Treasury. The blame for this lies with an overzealous desire to appear to balance the budget at any cost—including the use of highly speculative and likely fraudulent spectrum numbers and the disruption of the universal service system. The blame for this lies with the ranks of ''budgeteers'' who have little knowledge of telecommunications issues and apparently no respect for telecommunications policy.

The telecommunications budget proposals accelerate the dumping of more spectrum on the market in the immediate aftermath of having already sold airwave frequencies for PCS, paging and other wireless services. It should be clear that much of the money that is expected from the auctions that we have already had may not ever show up in the Treasury because multitudes of winning bidders are already struggling to find the capital to build out their networks.

In a recent FCC auction forced by budget priorities, many wireless franchises covering entire States sold for a mere dollar. That auction raised only $13 million out of the $1.8 billion it was expected to raise. And today we have another budget-driven proposal that attempts to raise billions and billions more from the sale of the airwaves. It is pure fantasy.

Moreover, this policy will adversely affect our ability to democratize the holding of radio licenses. In the 1993 Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act [OBRA 93] we built in provisions to help minorities, women, and entrepreneurs to gain access to the airwaves. By placing the highest societal value on the highest amount of cold hard cash that can be raised at auction we are subverting other important telecommunications policy objectives.

On July 23, eight Democratic members of the House Telecommunications Subcommittee joined me in writing the FCC about this issue. We wrote that we are concerned about the increasing emphasis placed upon spectrum auction revenue to assist in balancing the Federal budget and that that placing budgetary priorities foremost in Commission licensing decisions ultimately shortchanges the American public because spectrum allocation and licensing decisions must encompass a broad interpretation of the public interest, of which taxpayer interests are but one part. In our view, a short-term, temporary injection of cash into the Federal treasury for the purpose of achieving revenue goals for an arbitrary 5-year budget target serves budgetary interests, but it does not necessarily serve the broader public interest.

In particular, we wrote that budget policy pressures may unwittingly work to thwart the ability of women and minority-owned firms to become spectrum licensees. Diversity in mass media licensing has been shown to play an important role in providing programming that reflects the community and its interests. In our letter we noted that this fundamental goal is not only supported by Congress, but also by President Clinton. As he recently said in his commencement remarks at the University of California-San Diego June 14: ''We must continue to expand opportunity. Full participation in our strong and growing economy is the best antidote to envy, despair, and racism. We must press forward to move millions more from poverty and welfare to work; to being the spark of enterprise to inner cities . . . We should not stop trying to equalize economic opportunity.''

Third, I want to mention the spectrum sale and its dubious budgetary numbers. The sale of frequencies from the returned analog broadcast TV channels is scheduled for the year 2001. The actual return of that spectrum to the

FCC will not occur until 6 years later—in 2007. The proposal then allows broadcasters to continue to operate on their analog channels if the FCC grants waivers. Think about that—that's the equivalent of asking business and entrepreneurs to pony up money today for airwave rights they won't see until 2003 and then in 2003 a determination may be made to extend that indefinitely. Who is going to bid anything for these frequencies?

At the subcommittee and committee markup on the legislation, I offered an amendment to try to achieve greater certainty to the broadcasters, the spectrum bidders, and to consumers. The amendment would have required that after 2001, when the so-called returned analog spectrum has been auctioned, that all TV's sold in the United States must be dual use capable. In other words, they have to be able to pick up and display both analog and digital signals. This will make the transition in the consumer market to digital technology more rapid. This in turn, would increase the likelihood that bidders in 2001 would get the airwaves they won at auction sometime during their lifetimes.

The legislation also contains policy changes that promote media concentration at the local level. As many of my colleagues know, during consideration of the Telecommunications Act, I battled the mass media concentration provisions of the bill and successfully amended the bill on the House floor to help protect localism and diversity. The budget provisions will allow local broadcasters to bid on the spectrum that is returned even if this returned spectrum were to be reallocated for broadcast use.

During consideration of the Telecommunications Act, Congress rejected repeal of the TV duopoly rule, which had been part of the House-passed legislation. The conference committee on the Telecommunications Act refused to accede to repeal of the duopoly rule because of concern from many members and the administration about the very real threat to localism and diversity posed by deregulating in this manner. This concern, incidentally, has been borne out by the experience in the radio market in the aftermath of the sweeping deregulation of radio ownership rules contained in the Telecommunications Act. The NTIA has noted that adverse effects on minority ownership, and diversity in general, that has resulted from the radio ownership provisions.

I strongly oppose the provisions in the budget agreement that would allow stations in the top markets to bid on returned spectrum reallocated for broadcasting. The budget agreement waives the duopoly rule to allow broadcasters to bid on spectrum and thereby own two TV stations in a local market. It is important to note however, as the FCC considers regulatory rules governing local TV ownership, the intent of Congress in this area. First, the conference committee on the Telecommunications Act duly considered and rejected repeal of the TV duopoly rule just over a year ago. Second, the budget's telecommunications provisions only permit a waiver of the TV duopoly prohibition at a point 4 or 5 years from now, and then, only in the largest TV markets. Moreover, this future waiver of the rule is quite limited in that it reflect's Congress' intent to only allow such limited waivers in the largest markets when we are adding outlets to the market. Even so it represents, in my opinion, unfortunate telecommunications policymaking.

Finally, the budgetary legerdermain entailed by tampering with the universal service system to cynically pretend to balance the budget is terrible policy and precedent. This will directly affect telephone ratepayers around the country adversely. The universal service system was created to ensure that affordable telephone service would be available to all Americans. It has successfully resulted in achieving a 93-percent phone penetration rate in the Nation—the highest in the world. I strongly oppose this unprecedented gimmick of utilizing the universal service system as a budgetary gap-filler.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID F. ''BUD'' WILSON ON HIS INSTALLATION AS PRESIDENT OF THE INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENTS OF AMERICA

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend a fellow California and good friend, David F. ''Bud'' Wilson of Chula Vista, CA, who will be installed as president of the Nation's largest insurance association, the Independent Insurance Agents of America [IIAA], next month in Hawaii. Bud is chairman of the board of Wilson Insurance Agency, Inc., an independent insurance agency located in Chula Vista.

Bud's career as an independent insurance agent has been marked with outstanding dedication to his clients, his community, IIAA, the State association, the Insurance Brokers and Agents of the West [IBA West], his colleagues, and his profession.

On the State level, Bud served IBA West on various committees and as president in 1981. From 1983 to 1986 he served as the IIABC representative on IIAA's Board of State National Directors. In 1987, Bud received the P.S.W. Ramsden Memorial Award, the highest honor bestowed by the California State association.

Bud's love of politics and legislative affairs served him well during four highly successful years as chairman of IIAA's Government Affairs Committee. In recognition of his outstanding work on behalf of all independent agents as Government Affairs Committee chairman, Bud was bestowed IIAA's Sydney O. Smith Legislative Award in 1994.

Bud was elected to IIAA's Executive Committee in 1994. In the time since, he has exhibited a spirit of dedication and concern for his 300,000 independent agent colleagues around the country.

Bud's selfless attitude also extends to his involvement in Chula Vista-area community activities. He is past-president of the Chula Vista Rotary, the Chula Vista Rotary, the Chula Vista Jaycees, the Chula Vista Community Hospital Board of Trustees, and the Chula Vista Salvation Army. He also has been involved in numerous other Chula Vista community projects.

I have complete confidence that Bud will serve with distinction and provide strong leadership as president of the Independent Insurance Agents of America over the next year. I wish him and his lovely wife, Sandra, all the best as IIAA president and first lady.

TRIBUTE TO HOLLY L. GARLITZ

HON. MICHAEL F. DOYLE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. DOYLE. Mr. Speaker, today I pay tribute to a courageous Pennsylvanian, Holly L. Garlitz, a 22-year-old resident of Pittsburgh.

On September 17, 1996, Ms. Garlitz, then a student at Penn State University, placed herself in extreme danger to protect fellow student, Nicholas K. Mensah, who had been seriously injured by a woman who had opened fire on Penn State campus while students were walking to and from their classes.

Mr. Mensah was seriously wounded when he was struck by a bullet fired by the sniper. After being struck, Mensah fell to the ground. Ms. Garlitz, who had been walking on the same path when the shots were fired, took cover behind a tree. However, seeing that Mr. Mensah remained vulnerable while laying on the ground, Ms. Garlitz left her cover and came to the aid of Mr. Mensah. Ms. Garlitz grabbed the young man by the arm and dragged him to safety while they were both in clear view of the sniper.

For her brave and heroic actions, Ms. Garlitz has been awarded the Carnegie Medal by the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission. This bronze medal is awarded to citizens who risk their lives to save the lives of others.

I am greatly pleased to see such an act of bravery and humanity on the part of Ms. Holly L. Garlitz, who is one of my constituents. Her action to help a fellow human being is one that we all can be proud of and should commend.

A TRIBUTE TO WALTER D. WHITE

HON. JAMES A. TRAFICANT, JR.

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 31, 1997

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, on July 25, 1997, Walter D. White retired after 20 years with the U.S. Capitol Police. Over the years, I had the privilege of knowing this fine man. He was an outstanding member of the Capitol police force and he worked hard to create a safe environment for Members, staff, and all visitors to the Hill. With a smile always on his face and in his voice, he would never hesitate to go out of his way to assist members of my staff or to give my constituents impromptu tours of the Capitol building. I can remember many occasions when he would make special arrangements to accommodate groups of handicapped schoolchildren from my district. It was important to him that their tour be as exciting and memorable as possible. He would do all of this and never ask for anything in return. Walter was one of those wonderful people who derived great pleasure simply from helping others. Seeing the smile on a young child's face was reward enough for his efforts.

Walter's kindness and dedication will not soon be forgotten. While he will certainly be missed, I am glad that he is now going to take time to relax and enjoy himself. He deserves nothing but the best and I wish him luck in all of his future pursuits. May God bless Walter D. White in the years to come.