

Medicaid eligibility is determined. My legislation would expand this presumptive eligibility option to make it more flexible and attractive to the States. The presumptive eligibility period is normally sixty days and gives States sufficient time to complete the Medicaid eligibility determination process. If a state ultimately determines that the child is not eligible for Medicaid, none of these entities would be penalized or lose funding due to a negative determination. Under this legislation, we would be enrolling children on an expedited basis and could reach some of those three million children who are eligible but not enrolled.

While some would argue that there will be a cost associated with increasing participation in the Medicaid program, it is important to remember that when Congress enacted Medicaid, it assumed that these children would be covered. I would argue that adding these children is not only morally right, but also cost-effective in comparison to letting these children receive health care on an ad hoc basis. Many of these children will simply go to hospital emergency rooms for treatment and will not be able to pay for these services. In the end, we will pay the cost. With Medicaid coverage, our public institutions will be reimbursed and these children will receive better care through primary care providers instead of high-cost, emergency-care based services.

This legislation is also fiscally responsible in that it would require a state to deduct from their state allotment any funding used for this program. I believe that the small cost associated with this outreach effort will not adversely impact States' ability to provide health care for low-income children and in fact could reduce the States' disproportionate share expenditures.

We know that these children are not being properly served now and we must find innovative way to ensure that all eligible children are enrolled in Medicaid. My legislation would simply accelerate the application process while maintaining sufficient safeguards to prevent fraud and abuse. My legislation would give States greater flexibility to determine which entities can make these determinations, and States are authorized to apply certain limitations in order to prevent fraud and abuse. My legislation would also permit the Secretary of the Health and Human Services to review States' decisions and ensure that the appropriate entities are allowed to enroll these children. None of these entities could immediately offer these services until their state and the federal government has deemed them to be eligible to undertake preliminary determinations.

I believe this is an important public policy matter which we need to address. My legislation would enroll more children in Medicaid while ensuring that appropriate entities are reviewing the applications. I believe it is more cost-effective to enroll these children and ensure that they are receiving the primary care services they need, rather than sending these children to emergency rooms where they will be sicker and taxpayers will end up paying more. I also believe that we need to improve our current Medicaid presumptive eligibility law by including these new entities which were not included in the Balanced Budget Act. I strongly urge my colleague to support his critical legislation.

AMERICORPS PROGRAM

HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is truly tragic that some Members of this body do not fully recognize the outstanding record of contribution of the AmeriCorps program.

In community after community, across the entire nation, AmeriCorps volunteers are providing a wide range of essential services that are truly making a difference in people's lives. And, at the same time, these young people are making a difference in their own lives. They are becoming leaders who understand the importance of giving back to the community around them. They are earning a valuable educational benefit that will help them achieve their goals for the future.

Yesterday, we saw another unconscionable attack on AmeriCorps' funding by Members who have yet to acknowledge AmeriCorps' record of success. I am confident that these Members would not launch these politically motivated attacks if they would simply look at the successes around them—and admit to the important contributions that AmeriCorps is making in almost every community in the nation.

These members should talk to their local nonprofits. They should talk with their community leaders. And they should read their local newspapers. Because all around them is the evidence that AmeriCorps is making this nation a better place to live in and is cultivating an ethic of civic responsibility and community.

Mr. Speaker, I submit for the record one piece of this evidence—a news article from one of my local newspapers, the San Rafael/Terra Lina News Pointer, from February 4, 1998. This article demonstrates, once again, how AmeriCorps has become an important community resource in Marin County, California, which I am privileged to represent.

Recently, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress joined First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton in endorsing new legislation to reauthorize our nation's national service programs, including AmeriCorps. I urge all members of Congress to join together, in a bipartisan fashion, to reject politically motivated attacks on AmeriCorps' funding, and to pass essential reauthorization legislation that will preserve AmeriCorps and other essential national service programs well into the future.

PARTNERSHIPS THAT PAY OFF

MARIN.—AmeriCorp, praised by President Bill Clinton in his 1998 State of the Union address, is an important community resource in Marin. The Marin Conservation Corps (MCC) is one of 1,500 designated AmeriCorps sites nationwide. To date MCC has trained and graduated three classes of AmeriCorps volunteers who have in turn provided valuable volunteer service to Marin's non-profit agencies.

Full-time corpsmembers commit to one-year of service to their community in exchange for job training and employment opportunities. Ten individuals, who worked at least 1,700 hours, participated in the Marin Recycling-Education and summer camps programs. These AmeriCorps volunteers taught environmental education, mentored kids

after school and served as role models for at-risk youth. Hand-on activities included bottle biology, reusable art projects, a peek at packaging, and making your own paper.

Ardis Ashton, Ricardo Diaz, Juanita Edwards, Ryan Holland Russel Lamerson, Erick Linares, Beau Siebler, Buna Soma, Gina Watkins and Walter Williams gained valuable job skills and work experience. In addition, they received \$4,725 education scholarship, which they can use to pursue educational goals or vocational training.

And thousands of Marin school children learned the "three r's"—Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!

TRIBUTE TO CHARLES BUTTON

HON. JOHN JOSEPH MOAKLEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, April 1, 1998

Mr. MOAKLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Charles (Charlie) Button who is leaving the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority, the state agency that is overseeing the clean up of the Boston Harbor. The \$3.7 billion project is near completion and has been extremely successful in cleaning-up the harbor.

Over a decade ago, the harbor was so dirty it smelled like rotten eggs. But today, people have returned to the beaches to fish, swim and sail. The harbor has been successfully transformed from one of the dirtiest harbors in our nation to a sparkling body of water. Much of the success of the clean up of the harbor can be attributed to tireless efforts of Charlie Button.

In 1988, Charlie Button joined the MWRA's Program Management Division as the Director of Construction for the harbor project. He has a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Tufts University and an M.S. in Environmental Engineering from the University of Connecticut. Prior to joining the MWRA, he served as Chief Engineer for the Boston Water and Sewer Commission and helped to develop wastewater treatment projects in Hartford, Connecticut.

Charlie has done an incredible job managing the project. He oversaw the construction of a state-of-the-art sewage treatment facility for 2.5 million residents of 43 cities and towns in Massachusetts. The court-ordered project was completed on-time and under budget. That is what I call success!

Doug McDonald, MWRA Executive Director, said,

Charlie Button is extraordinary at moving complex projects forward in a logical, cost-effective, and smooth fashion. In addition to possessing the engineering skills and knowledge of the finest tradition he also showed poise and grace under pressure. Everyone here admires and respects Charlie Button.

Charlie Button has been in the public sector for the entire engineering career. He has given some of the best years of his life to the harbor project, and as a public spirited kind of guy, more than a few others to coaching Little League and youth hockey. I know that I speak for all of Charlie's colleagues, at the MWRA, and throughout the project, when I say thanks for everything, Charlie, the best of everything to you and Godspeed.