

Medicare program costs, which exist because of the alternative being hospital care or long-term care.

While this legislation is not a perfect solution, it does represent a step in the right direction. Congress knew that this payment system was flawed in the home health care area and assured our senior citizens that there would be a short-term fix. We now know that this new "short-term fix" will last a long time, causing continual problems for home health care agencies and the people that they serve.

This new payment system that we are told is waiting in the wings is now not going to be ready until next year and perhaps not even until the following year.

We simply cannot afford to close this session of Congress without the Senate addressing the bill that the House has already passed, without incurring dire consequences to the citizens of this country.

The Medicare home health care patients in this country and in Kansas desperately need reforms. I urge the Senate to join the House in passing this bipartisan legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. McNULTY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McNULTY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

A WORLD SERIES CHALLENGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, the 17th congressional district in New York covers a large part of Bronx County. We affectionately call Bronx "the Bronx," it is one of the only places in the country where we put the "the" in front of it. I am Bronx born and bred. The Bronx is not only famous for the Bronx Zoo and for the Bronx cheer, but it is also famous for the Bronx Bombers, notably the New York Yankees.

And last night at the close of the last vote, I flew back to New York to be at Yankee stadium and watch the New York Yankees win the American League pennant and now the World Series will begin Saturday night at Yankee stadium.

I was raised just a few blocks from Yankee stadium. When I was boy I used to walk to Yankee games. Now I look forward, Saturday night, to seeing the Yankees march on to win the World Series.

This year, Mr. Speaker, the Yankees set an American League record, winning a record 114 games. And, of course, this week's Baseball Weekly has a picture of Bernie Williams on the front page, and it says, Bronx Battlers, and so we are very, very proud of that in the Bronx.

I take to the well today to issue a challenge to my colleagues from both San Diego and Atlanta. We do not quite know who is going to win the National League pennant, but it will be decided in a day or two. I would like to issue a challenge to them. I would like to bet them on the eventual winner of the World Series for 1998. I have no doubt that it will be the New York Yankees.

And let me say that I would be more than willing, when the Yankees win, to take them on a tour of the Bronx. The Bronx has come back after many years and we are very, very proud of the 1.3 million people living in the Bronx and very, very proud of what the Bronx Bombers, the New York Yankees, have accomplished.

So since we probably will be out of session by Thursday or Friday and we might not know who the Yankees will face, I want to issue a challenge again to my colleagues from both Atlanta and San Diego. I would be very happy to take a tour of their district, if their team wins, but of course their team will not. So I want to invite them to take a tour of the Bronx after the New York Yankees win the World Series.

□ 1630

LEAVE THE RUNNING OF SCHOOLS TO THE SCHOOL BOARDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. METCALF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. METCALF. Mr. Speaker, I am a former teacher from Everett, Washington. Over the 30 years I have taught in Everett, there are now thousands of former students in Washington State and scattered across the Nation. I know how crucial the education improvements in this budget are.

We must now make education one of our top priorities. Yet, we are all well aware that Washington, D.C. cannot run our schools. It would be a disaster for us to try. Our mission is to support education but leave maximum power and authority at the State and local levels.

Our school systems worked so well when the parents and the local school boards had full responsibility for local schools. However, the financing of education has not kept pace, so our best course now is to provide all the money possible and leave the actual running of the schools in the hands of the local school board and of the teachers, remembering, however, that the parents must retain ultimate control of schools or the system will fail the students.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. MINGE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MINGE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mrs. CLAYTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mrs. CLAYTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FOX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FOX of Pennsylvania addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

THE TRUTH NEEDS TO BE TOLD ABOUT HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 1997, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. HASTERT. Mr. Speaker, I just want to weigh in with the previous speaker. I did also teach for 16 years in Illinois, and I see the rhetoric and have heard the rhetoric that has been flying across the room these last couple of days, and it amazes me too a great deal. When I think about education, I think about putting good teachers in the classrooms. All the other folderol and bells and whistles, sometimes it helps but it does not make the difference whether kids are learning or not.

I think the effort that we have put into this bill, that we anticipate to have moving forward, to put the responsibility back home with local school boards and with moms and dads and teachers and school board members so that they can do the best job and decide who the teachers are that should be in their classroom, instead of having somebody in Washington, D.C., in the Department of Education, deciding which school district should do which and how many people they should have in every classroom, let us keep that decision back home.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss another issue, and I think it is an issue of great importance to the people of this country, and that is HMO reform, or managed care reform. Over the last days also I have heard great partisan rhetoric on this floor about this issue, and I rise today, Mr. Speaker, with some of my colleagues who are also concerned about the truth, to set the record straight.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that this is a political time of year. People are running for election. They are looking for political issues, and I know that we will listen to all kinds of exaggerations and partisan debate on this floor but there is no excuse, Mr. Speaker, for the kind of nasty and misleading information I have heard over the last few days. The truth needs to be told.

For six months, 15 of my colleagues and I sat down around a table and considered the problem of HMO reform.