

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to please join me in this crusade for action.

HCFA INTERPRETATION OF THE BALANCED BUDGET ACT AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE HEALTH CARE INDUSTRY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. FLETCHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. FLETCHER. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to speak after the gentlewoman from Connecticut (Mrs. JOHNSON), and I certainly concur with the things that she said.

I am getting ready to catch my flight back to Kentucky, actually, just in probably about an hour.

Madam Speaker, I just got a call from one of the nursing home companies back in Kentucky, and I have visited multiple of these nursing home units in Kentucky, as well as our rural hospitals and our teaching hospital at the University of Kentucky.

I think as we look at what interpretation HCFA has taken of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, I think we have some critical problems that are facing our Nation, especially in the care of our elderly. We see that our rural hospitals are having trouble; several of them are looking at the possibility of closing their doors. We have nursing homes that are going bankrupt; even nursing homes that are run by faith-based organizations, church groups where they really have contributions in addition to what they receive from reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid.

Yet we found that, with the very draconian interpretation of the Balanced Budget Act of 1997, we have such a reduction that even these operations that have operated very efficiently, not trying to defraud in any way, have been unable to really provide the services or to continue to provide the services that are needed for our senior citizens.

So I think it is incumbent upon us in Congress and to call upon HCFA and the President to make sure that they relook at the Balanced Budget Act of 1997 and HCFA's interpretation of that. I would also like to work with the Congress and make sure that we address this very critical problem, that we address the needs of our senior citizens.

As I talked to this one business owner who was very distraught, they have worked very hard at a family business to provide the kind of care that is needed for our senior citizens; and yet, when I see what a misinterpretation of the balanced budget has done in their capability of providing a business, they provide over 1,900 jobs in a business that has grown over several years to provide excellent health care in the long-term care business.

And I see that what the interpretation has done is caused the possibility

of driving that company into bankruptcy, affecting the care of a number of people, especially in my district, in the 6th district of Kentucky, and it has certainly affected their ability to provide the jobs and to provide the care that is needed.

Madam Speaker, I just wanted to take this opportunity to share my concerns that I certainly share with the gentlewoman from Connecticut that have been stated here previously.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. GOODE (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and August 2 on account of a death in the family.

Mr. LUTHER (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of a family commitment.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today on account of personal reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FILNER) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TANNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FILNER, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. HOOLEY of Oregon, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. TURNER, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. FOSSELLA) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. KASICH, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. FOSSELLA, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. FLETCHER. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 4 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the House adjourned until Monday, August 2, 1999, at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour debates.

EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

3275. A letter from the Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Tart Cherries Grown in the States of Michigan, et al.; Additional Option for Handler Diversion and Receipt of Diversion Credits [Docket No. FV99-930-1 FIR] received June 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

3276. A letter from the Assistant Secretary, Pension and Welfare Benefits Administration, Department of Labor, transmitting the Department's final rule—Interpretive Bulletin 99-1; Payroll Deduction Programs for Individual Retirement Accounts (RIN: 1210-AA70) received June 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

3277. A letter from the Acting Director, Professional Responsibility Advisory Office, Department of Justice, transmitting the Department's final rule—Ethical Standards for Attorneys for the Government [AG Order No. 2216-99] received June 24, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on the Judiciary.

3278. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; Boeing Model 777 Series Airplanes [Docket No. 99-NM-113-AD; Amendment 39-11230; AD 99-15-10] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3279. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; deHavilland Inc. Models DHC-2 Mk. I, DHC-2 Mk. II, and DHC-2 Mk. III Airplanes [Docket No. 99-CE-05-AD; Amendment 39-11226; AD 99-15-07] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3280. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Airworthiness Directives; MD Helicopters, Inc (MDHI) Model 369D and E Helicopters [Docket No. 99-SW-40-AD; Amendment 39-11228; AD 99-13-09] (RIN: 2120-AA64) received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3281. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Amendment to Class E Airspace; Ottawa, KS [Airspace Docket No. 99-ACE-21] received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3282. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Revision of Class D and Class E Airspace; Cannon AFB, Clovis, NM [Airspace Docket No. 99-ASW-02] received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3283. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 29642; Amdt. No. 1940] received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3284. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the Department's final rule—Standard Instrument Approach Procedures; Miscellaneous Amendments [Docket No. 29641; Amdt. No. 1939] received July 22, 1999, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

3285. A letter from the Program Analyst, Office of the Chief Counsel, FAA, Department of Transportation, transmitting the