

substance called thimerosal. Thousands and thousands and thousands, probably millions of children, but thousands of children have been adversely affected by the thimerosal, which is 50 percent mercury; and these are the faces of children who were normal one day, and after receiving several shots in one day that contained mercury, they very rapidly deteriorated to where they could not talk, they could not look one in the eye, they would flap their arms and run around screaming, and they had chronic constipation and diarrhea alternately.

These parents of these children and thousands more like them have had a similar experience to my daughter and my grandson. He received nine shots in one day, seven of which contained mercury. He got 40 times the amount of mercury that is tolerable in an adult in 1 day, and within 2 days he was autistic. A very normal child like these were normal children. He was a very happy child, a very talkative child, and he went into silence. When we started getting him out of it finally, he could not talk clearly. He had to have all kinds of speech therapy. He ran around on his toes, flapping his arms, banging his head against the wall like all of these children did. And scientists that we have had before our committee and doctors from throughout the world who are very competent have said that in large part that was caused because by the mercury that was injected into these children from the preservative called thimerosal which was in almost all of the children's vaccinations until just the last 2 or 3 years when we had hearings on this, and, thankfully, most of those vaccines no longer have mercury in them except maybe one which is the flu vaccine for children.

So, Mr. Speaker, if any parents would be watching this, I would like for them to remember to very quickly and very thoroughly look at the insert in the vaccination case when their children are vaccinated and make sure that they do not have an adverse reaction.

The reason I am bringing this up and I am coming down here every night is because there is an attempt by the pharmaceutical companies through Members of Congress to eliminate any possibility of lawsuits against them caused by these vaccinations which had mercury in them.

We have what is called the Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund, which was supposed to be a nonadversarial procedure to compensate these people for damage to their children caused by vaccines; but it has become very adversarial, and it was only a 3-year period within which people had to file. That 3-year period passed before many of these people knew that they could try to get compensation for their child's damage; and as a result, they were left out in the cold. So they filed a class action lawsuit, and there has been an attempt last fall and again this year they are going to attempt to stop those class action lawsuits which would leave

these parents out in the cold with no recourse. They are mortgaging their homes. They are going bankrupt. They have no place to go. There is a fund set up to help them, but they cannot get into the fund because that statute has run out and they cannot even go to court to file a class action lawsuit if this language that is in the Senate bill right now is passed into law; and that simply is wrong. We created that fund so those people, those children, could be compensated.

I want to read a letter of a former colleague of ours, Dick Chrysler, who was a Member of this Chamber who has a grandson who is 6 years old that is autistic. He received several vaccinations in the 1997-1999 period, many of which contained the mercury, and here is what his mother said: "He then continued to regress from being alert and happy and beginning to talk to total regression and not talking until after age 3 with speech therapy. He also became a very aggressive child who did not know how to play or interact properly with others." That is what happened to my grandson as well.

"These and many other much more severe behaviors such as seizures with severe breakdowns and explosive behaviors which have caused injury to our other children from broken bones to stitches have become a part of our life due to autism. This has made our life incredibly difficult as one can imagine. As we have taken this past year and a half focusing on whatever treatments we can do to help our son's autism improve and therefore our family's life as well, it has cost us more than we could ever have imagined. Treatments, which have helped but are not covered by any insurance, have amounted to thousands of dollars, and this expense has no end in sight."

□ 1715

Remember, there is a fund out there that they cannot get into. They cannot go to court, and yet the vaccines, they believe, and thousands like them believe, and I believe, and scientists and doctors believe it was caused by the mercury in these vaccines.

Autism does not just affect the poor thousands of children inflicted with this dreadful disease. It affects every person in the world, since ultimately this epidemic is like a chain reaction.

They go on to say 10 to 20 years from now when these are not just little children, who is going to take care of them, especially when we die? This is something that my colleagues and I have to deal with, and we have to deal with it quickly.

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

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

EXPRESSING STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE HOUSE REPUBLICAN BUDGET RESOLUTION

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

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my strong opposition to the House Republican budget resolution. I believe our national budget should be a statement of our country's values. It should reflect the priorities of the American people for good jobs and safe communities, quality education and access to health care.

Unfortunately, the Republican budget fails to fund these national priorities. The Republican budget has only one clear priority: To fund the President's \$1.6 trillion tax cut, and the Republicans fund this tax cut at the expense of the social and economic interests of the American people.

The Republican budget provides \$1.6 trillion for the President's tax cut, but only provides \$28 billion for a prescription drug plan. This will only cover 1.5 percent of our country's seniors' prescription drug costs over the next 10 years. Any additional funds spent to provide a prescription drug plan would have to come at the expense of other Medicare benefits. So Republicans are essentially offering our seniors the following choice: Prescription drug coverage or benefits. Pick one or the other, but you cannot have both.

The Republican budget cuts \$9.7 billion from the mandatory education programs. These include student loan programs and child nutrition programs. In 2004 alone, these cuts could push nearly 1/2 million poor children out of child nutrition programs. Republicans are eager to fund the President's \$1.6 trillion tax cut, but cannot seem to find the funds necessary to provide a school breakfast or lunch for our Nation's low-income children. For many of these children, access to school meals may be the only one assured source of good nutrition each day.

Mr. Speaker, there are millions of Americans today whose parents cannot afford prescription drugs, whose children attend classes in bungalows, because their schools are run down and old. There are millions of Americans who are struggling to find work and provide for their families in the midst of our struggling economy. Yet Republicans are offering us a budget this week that cuts funding for every single domestic priority in order to fund a \$1.6 trillion tax cut that will only help a small percentage of Americans. These tax cuts are even more inappropriate when you consider the fact that our country is about to embark on a war that will strain our already weakened financial resources.

Our national budget should be a reflection of our priorities and values. It should be a budget based on making the right choices. Do we make room for