

COMMENDING THE WORK OF WILSON HOSPICE ON ITS 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. JIM JORDAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride that I recognize the staff of Wilson Hospice in Sidney, Ohio, as they mark 20 years of service to the region.

As part of Wilson Memorial Hospital in Sidney, Wilson Hospice provides invaluable care to the people of Shelby, Auglaize, Champaign, Darke, Logan, and Miami Counties. The hospice's professional and volunteer caregivers take great pride in helping those with terminal and other challenging illnesses in the final stages of their lives.

Wilson Hospice offers a wide range of assistance, from in-home care to aid in nursing facilities and other assisted-care centers in the region. Hospice staffers tailor care to each patient's needs, working in concert with families and doctors to provide pain management, spiritual and emotional care, and whatever other support is required. Because catastrophic illnesses frequently come with significant financial burden that harms quality of life, no one in need is ever turned away from Wilson based on an inability to pay.

The hospice excels in the outstanding grief support services it provides to families—including a phenomenal program targeted at teens and children, who often have the most difficult times dealing with the loss of a loved one. For more than a year after a loved one's death, family members may receive personal and group counseling and support services through the hospice. Those who have participated in these programs never forget the commitment and compassion of the many caregivers who help them cope with their losses.

Madam Speaker, Wilson Hospice will celebrate its 20th anniversary with an event this Monday, October 22. I look forward to attending and joining people throughout the region in applauding the dedicated staff of the hospice for all they do to provide comfort and peace to patients and their families.

TAX COLLECTION RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 10, 2007

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Tax Collection Responsibility Act of 2007. This legislation will put a stop to the use of private debt collection agencies to collect federal income taxes and ensure that this critical government function is performed by public servants on behalf of American taxpayers.

The small proportion of individuals who do not pay their taxes does increase the burden for the rest of the responsible, law-abiding Americans. In 2004 Congress attempted to

hold these people accountable by authorizing a pilot private debt collection program for debts owed to the Internal Revenue Service. While this program was intended to be a more efficient way to collect unpaid taxes, it has proven to be a failure.

We have found that some of the private debt collection agencies are nothing short of bounty hunters, who use harassment to collect debts. Our constituents deserve to know that the person contacting them on behalf of the Federal Government is a public-servant, who is held to the highest standards of accountability and confidentiality, not a person whose paycheck depends solely on the number of collections they make.

In addition to the use of heavy-handed and abusive tactics to collect unpaid taxes, private tax collection agencies have also shown themselves to be significantly less efficient than the IRS agents who should be doing this work in the first place. This program has cost the American taxpayers \$71 million, but has only collected \$20 million, for a net loss of over \$50 million. The IRS's National Taxpayer Advocate testified that for the same \$71 million investment, the IRS would have collected around \$1.4 billion. It simply does not make sense to waste public funds in this manner.

The Republican motion to recommit on this legislation would add to the bill a wholesale repeal of the estate tax. Repealing the estate tax would be fiscally irresponsible and break the promise this Congress made to the American people to work towards a balanced budget. Since its adoption would make the bill violate the House PAYGO rules, this motion is clearly nothing more than a political move to kill the underlying bill. This motion to recommit shows where the Republican Party's priorities are; the estate tax currently affects less than two percent of the wealthiest estates. A full repeal would require that taxes on millions of working Americans be raised and that Social Security and Medicare benefits for American seniors be reduced. I will continue to support a responsible approach to reducing the estate tax that provides relief for families without burdening future generations with additional deficit spending.

Mr. Speaker, it is unacceptable that the IRS outsources a function as central to the Federal Government as tax-collection. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 3056.

COMMEMORATING PHOENIX HOUSE'S 40 YEARS OF COMMITMENT TO SERVING THOSE STRUGGLING WITH ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 16, 2007

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commend Phoenix House, an honorable organization that has been an outstanding member of my community and many other communities nationwide for 40 years. The praise is well-deserved, and I am proud to recognize its invaluable service to our country.

Phoenix House is a provider of substance abuse treatment and prevention services oper-

ating in nine states across the country. In my district alone, it provides critical services to nearly 600 people each year. Phoenix House utilizes an approach based on mutual support and success through community. Today, we celebrate Phoenix House's 40 years of commitment to and success in serving those struggling with addiction and substance abuse.

Six heroin addicts started the Phoenix House in 1967 when they came together at a dextoxification program at a New York hospital. Today, it is the nation's leading nonprofit substance abuse treatment and prevention agency—operating more than 100 programs in New York, California, Texas, Florida, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Maine, and Vermont.

Over the years, Phoenix House has treated approximately 150,000 substance abusers and currently cares for nearly 6,000 men, women, and teens each day. Phoenix House operates more than 100 programs including residential centers for adults, as well as outpatient, and prison programs—at close to 120 locations in nine states. It also provides education and prevention programs, with in-school and after-school programs that reach more than 30,000 young people every year.

Moreover, for more than two decades, Phoenix House has operated the Phoenix Academies, where teens can make up schooling lost to drugs and recapture opportunities for higher education and careers. As a result, thousands of at-risk youth every year are given the tools and support they need to leave drug abuse behind and become contributing members of their communities. There are now eleven Phoenix Academies operating in seven states, and they were designated by the U.S. Department of Justice as a "model program" in 2005.

A 2004 study by RAND Corporation, a respected research organization, found that adolescents treated at a Phoenix House Academy demonstrated substantial reductions in drug use and unlawful behavior and improvement in psychological status—and that the Academy outperformed other juvenile programs in achieving these objectives.

Phoenix House is also the leading research organization among treatment providers. Its expanding research agenda reflects the broad array of services it provides; its growing number of research partners; and the historic imperative of Phoenix House to improve, refine, and innovate to make its services better, stronger, less costly, more accessible, and more predictably effective. I believe that those are objectives that all of us, as a Congress, can support.

Phoenix House was recently featured in an HBO documentary series titled *Addiction*. The project is one of the most ambitious efforts ever undertaken to educate the American public about drug addiction as well as recent advancements in treatment. *Addiction* aired on HBO in March, April, and May of 2007. I am honored to join Phoenix House in celebrating its 40 year commitment to fighting the war on drugs. I want to thank Phoenix House for the lives it has touched and its leadership in battling this harmful addiction that affects every family.