

Puerto Rico (Mr. PIERLUISI) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PIERLUISI. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week, I sent a letter to President Obama regarding an approaching problem that is unique to Puerto Rico and the other U.S. territories and that can be called the Medicaid funding cliff. This morning, I rise to advise my colleagues about this cliff, which each territory will reach by 2019 and which Puerto Rico could reach by 2018 or even 2017.

My goal is to ensure that Federal officials have advance notice of the problem so we can begin working together now on a fair, thoughtful, and bipartisan plan to address this problem before it arrives. Timely action is critical. Inaction would be unacceptable from a moral and public policy perspective.

Let me outline the problem. The territories are treated unequally under Medicaid, which is funded in part by the Federal Government and in part by each State or territory government. In the States and D.C., Medicaid is an individual entitlement, meaning there is no limit on the amount of funding the Federal Government will provide so long as the State in question provides its share of matching funds. The Federal contribution, known as FMAP, can range from 50 percent in the case of the wealthiest States to 83 percent in the poorest States.

By contrast, Mr. Speaker, there is an annual ceiling on Federal funding for the Medicaid program in each territory. When I took office in 2009, Puerto Rico—home to 3.5 million American citizens—was subject to a ceiling of \$280 million a year and had the minimum statutory FMAP of 50 percent. Indeed, because of the annual ceiling, our true FMAP was less than 20 percent a year. Puerto Rico was spending more than \$1.4 billion in territory funds each year to provide healthcare services to about 1.2 million low-income beneficiaries and receiving only \$280 million from the Federal Government.

To place this in context, consider Mississippi, which has a 73 percent FMAP. In 2014, Mississippi—home to fewer people than Puerto Rico—paid \$1.3 billion in State funds and received \$3.6 billion in Federal funds. Or take Oregon with a 63 percent FMAP which paid \$1.8 billion in State funds and received \$5 billion in Federal funds. Again, Puerto Rico was receiving just \$280 million a year.

The Affordable Care Act provided a total of \$7.3 billion in additional Medicaid funding for the five territories, with Puerto Rico receiving \$6.3 billion of that amount. Each territory's FMAP was also increased from 50 percent to 55 percent. The result is that, instead of receiving about \$300 million a year from the Federal Government, Puerto Rico now draws down about \$1.1 billion to \$1.3 billion annually.

That is a major increase, and I can not adequately express how hard we

had to fight for it. But let me be clear. Our funding is nowhere close to State-like treatment and remains deeply inequitable.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, this additional Medicaid funding for the territories expires at the end of fiscal year 2019—the only coverage provision in the law that sunsets in this manner. The Puerto Rico Government has less than \$3.6 billion of its \$6.3 billion in funding remaining. This is the cliff. It is coming, one way or another; it is just a question of whether it will arrive in 2017, 2018, or 2019. If this pool of funding is not replenished, Puerto Rico will go back to receiving less than \$400 million a year.

In the coming months, I will continue to brief Federal officials on this subject. I will explain how inaction will deepen the current health, migration, and fiscal crisis in Puerto Rico, and why action is not only in Puerto Rico's interest, but also in the national interest. In short, I will fight as hard to continue this essential funding as I fought to obtain it in the first place.

IN RECOGNITION OF PETER SHIPMAN, CRAFTSMAN FOR THE CAPITOL

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. FOXX). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Peter Shipman and his many accomplishments for this great institution and his community. He is one of the many unsung champions of this body who kept the House running over the course of his career.

Peter began his career for the United States House of Representatives on November 1, 1979, shortly after graduating from VCU with a degree in arts, specializing in furniture making and design.

Peter soon established himself as a highly regarded craftsman among a shop of senior cabinetmakers. As his passion and talent for his craft became apparent, he soon earned the role of producing more high-profile projects.

Peter's drive for perfection, creativity, and attention to unique details were second to none. Many of his co-workers still are using his techniques today. From the time he became shop foreman until his retirement, Peter had a hand in the design of most of the pieces of newly constructed furniture built by the craftsmen in the Cabinet Shop. His hard work and dedication to his craft and to this House earned him the much sought-after job of shop foreman in 2001 and, indeed, manager of the shop in 2007.

Upon his retirement in 2012, Peter was asked about his proudest accomplishments during his service here in the United States House of Representatives. Peter said he was "proudest of the individuals who have made up the Cabinet Shop, Finishing Shop, Drap-

ery, Upholstery and Carpet Shops, and my association with all past and present individuals who have been part of these groups. Sincerely this is my proudest achievement."

A small sample of the projects that Peter was involved with includes the construction of the Speaker's Chair, Madam Speaker. He also designed and managed the construction of the podiums that we are using here on the House floor, the sideboard for Speaker Gingrich, the hand-painted hummingbird desk for Speaker Foley, and the display cabinets for Leader Bob Michel.

Examples of Peter's superior talents, along with his loyalty to this House, will live on for many years in the Capitol and in the House Office Buildings. His artistic approach to furniture design added a special touch that few craftsmen possess. He was truly dedicated to his art and the talented individuals whom he mentored along the way.

Madam Speaker, he will surely be missed by his peers who knew and loved him as well as by the entire House community. Peter is survived by his wife, Jennifer; their son, Walker; stepson, Derek; brother, Tourne; and sisters, Carie, Airlie, and Mellick. Our thoughts and prayers are with his family and his colleagues who continue his tradition of beautiful craftsmanship today.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. PAULSEN) at noon.

PRAYER

Reverend Larry Kendrick, Archer's Chapel United Methodist Church, Brownsville, Tennessee, offered the following prayer:

Father God, we place before Your throne of grace this day the United States of America and its government. Father, in Your Word, we are told that You reprove leaders for our sakes so that we may live a quiet and a peaceable life in godliness and honesty.

O God, as You anointed leaders and called prophets of old, lead us to recognize our true representatives and authentic leaders, men and women who love Your people, who walk with and among them, who feel their pain and share their joys, who dream their dreams and strive to help them achieve their common goal.

In Your spirit, empower us to serve Your people, to bring praise and glory to Your name.