

□ 1600

Do people care about it? Do they care about how much they pay in their utility bills? Do they care who is polluting their air? Do they care whether or not their schools are of a good quality? All of these issues are influenced by big-money players in the political arena. Those are issues that they care about. Fundamentally I think we are never going to get to deciding on the basis of what is right, what is wrong, what is best for people unless we take the element of big money out of our election campaigns.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. I thank the gentlewoman very much for those excellent comments.

Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that either one of my colleagues may want to engage me in, is an important issue. There were people in the past that have shone the light. The gentlewoman mentioned Paul Simon from her great State. I know two individuals, one, Senator Proxmire from Wisconsin who took the attitude that he was not going to take any money, and he sent money back, actually. What he would do is every time he would go out to Wisconsin, he would get out at the professional football games, stand in line and shake 40,000 hands. He figured that was the way to get reelected. Back in those days, he did a good job of it and people loved him. And Representative Pat Williams, I think, was asked when he left Congress what he was going to miss, and he said that the one thing he had never gotten into was making telephone calls for fund-raising. He said, "Somebody else can do that."

Clearly we are in a different time because of the mistrust and because of all of the issue ads and everything else that is out there, but we need to try and move back, I think, to the point where there is more of that. Their real purpose in doing that was saying, "I want to focus on my job. I don't want to take one minute away from my job."

Mr. BAIRD. Let me share with my colleagues an example actually from our recent experience. We had a very expensive campaign, I will admit it, because we were getting attacked heavily, one of the number-one targets in the whole country. But we also had a grassroots campaign. That is what we need to have more of. We had 1,100 volunteers in the field on the day of the election, 1,100 people going around the district working telephones, saying why they cared so much about that election. I know my good friend from Illinois had a similar organization. That is politics at its best. Politics at its best is people working in the field for people they believe. Politics at its worst is when people pay telephone solicitors to call with smear campaigns. Politics at its worst are last-minute \$100,000, \$200,000 and \$300,000 TV attack ads.

What I am hoping we can do is inspire the young people who come watch us each day and watch us on TV and who are in our schools today to be a part of politics at its best. This bill will help reduce the impact of politics at its worst and maybe inspire people to do more.

I know my good friend from Illinois has had similar work with people in the field.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. During the election campaign, I spent about 25 hours a week on the telephone, as they say, dialing for dollars, asking people if they would contribute to my campaign. Those are 25 hours a week that I could have been learning more about issues, attending meetings with community representatives, out shaking hands, going to grocery stores, meeting with constituents, learning about the real issues that affect people in my district and not calling name after name of people who might be able to contribute to the campaigns. But worse than that, it seems to me, what they want in a Member of Congress, when we reach for our voting card to put it in a slot and vote on an issue, I think what the voters want us to be thinking about is them, what is good for them, not making a calculation in our minds, "If I vote yes, which of my major contributors is going to be upset?" Or "how am I going to explain this to somebody who has given me a lot of money?"

I know from being in the State legislature that unfortunately these kinds of calculations are made. I think anyone who says otherwise is simply not telling the truth about how it works in terms of money. And so I think that it is not only the candidate's time but also the candidate's vote that is at stake here.

Mr. BAIRD. If I could echo that a little bit. One of the things that is frustrating about some of these discussions of reform, people have come and said that the politicians are corrupt. People need to understand that I do not know a single person who says, "Gosh, I'm so excited because there's 5 hours of call time on my schedule today."

We need to understand that money does not come to the candidates. It goes to your campaign fund, which then typically goes almost directly to a TV or radio station or direct mail house. The people who are running for office, the people I have met in this great body, are decent people. They are here because they care about the system. They do the fund-raising side not because they like that, not because they line their own pockets but because they are willing to endure the humiliation and the drudgery and the frustration in order to get here and have a voice for the people of their State. We need to be very careful when we talk about this to not tear down this House and not tear down our colleagues because they are good, decent

people. The system of funding may be corroded but the people involved are not corrupt people. I want to make sure what we do is we free them from that drudgery and we free them from that stigma and that stain that other people might attach to it.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I would certainly echo that. I would also say that the gentleman raises a good point about the cost of media and the idea that radio time, that TV time which eats up so many of the dollars that are raised in campaigns, if we could get more contributions from the public airwaves toward campaigns, if we could have some free air time on radio and television, that it would certainly help ease the need for campaign donations.

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. The issue of the individuals, the Members of Congress, that are here and how they relate to this system, I do not think there is any doubt that we have people that are here that are well-intentioned, they care about their constituencies, they care very much about their congressional districts, and they are caught in a bad system. They are caught in a bad system. That is why I am so proud of our freshman class for stepping up to the plate. The freshman class that preceded us did the same thing.

Members from both sides of the aisle last August, in 1998, 252 Members, voted for this bill that all of us want to see passed today. I think that sends a very strong message that we want change, we want people to be heard, we want truly to open up the system and get back to ideas rather than money.

If there are no additional comments from either the gentleman from Washington or the gentlewoman from Illinois, let me at this point just close by saying that I am very, very proud of our freshman class for stepping up to the plate on this issue. I am very proud of the gentleman from Washington for his leadership on this issue as the president of our freshman class, and the gentlewoman from Illinois. I know that she has also become a leader on this issue and I compliment her on that and say that I think with all of us working together and reaching across the aisle, I really and truly think we are going to get this done, we are going to get it done early and get it over to the other body. I think we are going to see progress on this issue this year. I thank both my colleagues for their participation.

PROMOTING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Madam Speaker, one of the benefits of a livable community is that it provides a setting that

high technology industries can flourish. Indeed, it works both ways. While a livable community attracts high technology, high technology can in fact provide the support for a more livable community, support via a more educated workforce, support in terms of having the financial resources that that community can pay for growth and development, support by having a workforce that is intensely sensitive to the requirements of livable communities.

This has had a tremendous impact on our national economy. It is common knowledge to most Members of this body that high technology has been the fastest growing area of our national economic growth, over 4 million jobs, and it approaches almost \$1 trillion in terms of our gross national product. In my State of Oregon, the effects have been even more profound. We are known, for example, for agriculture and wood products. Yet technology-based industries in the State of Oregon now provide twice the economic impact as agriculture and forest products combined. It provides an average wage that is almost twice the State average. There is every indication as far as the future is concerned that the impact nationally and in the State of Oregon in the years ahead is going to be even more profound. Yet the question is, how do we take maximum advantage of this growing economic and sociological phenomenon.

It would seem to me that it is important for the Federal Government to have in place a series of policies that promote the full implementation of this opportunity. There has been significant indirect Federal support through the research and development tax credit that has helped invest in the future as far as these industries are concerned. Again, just taking the impact on a small State like Oregon where 8 percent of the total revenue is tied up in research and development, well over \$1.3 billion.

But it is time for us in the Federal Government to get real about what our policy is towards stability in the high-tech industry. We have had in place for years a temporary investment tax credit that we approve a year at a time. We are going to extend the investment tax credit, once again due to expire. I hope that this year is the last time we go through this charade of the 1-year extension. We know that it is critical for the future of the high-tech industry. We know that it is a benefit that is well-placed, that pays dividends far in excess of the amount of benefit that is granted. Indeed, there is every indication that, according to one estimate, over \$41 billion of new investment would be unleashed by making the investment tax credit permanent. Nobody in the private sector, however, is going to make the long-term investments based on our good intentions.

Even though we know we are going to extend it, even though they are certain we probably will extend it, it simply is not prudent for people to put millions of dollars, tens of millions of dollars or more on the line based on our good intention. We have seen train wrecks on the floor of this Chamber before.

I hope that Members on both sides of the aisle will come together quickly to make clear that we are going to make this a permanent extension. Livable communities, I have suggested time and again on the floor of this Chamber, require not so much rules and regulations as they require the Federal Government to be a constructive partner with State and local governments, with private citizens and business to help promote livable communities. The stability that would come from a permanent extension of the investment tax credit would be a very tangible expression of that stable Federal partnership, and I hope we are about that business soon in this congressional session.

MANAGED CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. GANSKE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GANSKE. Madam Speaker, tomorrow on the other side of the Capitol, in the Senate, debate begins on managed care reform legislation.

I would like to take my colleagues back to May 30, 1996, when a small, nervous woman testified before the House Committee on Commerce. Her testimony, Madam Speaker, was buried in the fourth panel at the end of a long day about the abuses of managed care. The reporters were gone, the television cameras had packed up, most of the original crowd had dispersed.

□ 1615

Madam Speaker, she should have been the first witness that day, not one of the last. She told about the choices that managed care companies and self-insured plans are making every day when they determine medical necessity.

This woman, Linda Peeno, had been a claims reviewer for several HMOs. Here is her story:

"I wish to begin by making a public confession. In the spring of 1987, as a physician, I caused the death of a man. Although this was known to many people, I have not been taken before any court of law or called to account for this in any professional or public forum. In fact, just the opposite occurred. I was rewarded for this. It brought me an improved reputation in my job and contributed to my advancement afterwards. Not only did I demonstrate I could do what was expected of me, I exemplified the good company doctor. I saved half a million dollars."

Madam Speaker, as she spoke, a hush came over the room. The representatives of the trade associations who were still there averted their eyes. The audience shifted uncomfortably in their seats, both gripped and alarmed by her story.

Her voice became husky, and I could see tears in her eyes. Her anguish over harming patients as a managed care reviewer had caused this woman to come forth and bear her soul.

She continued:

"Since that day I have lived with this act and many others eating into my heart and soul. For me a physician is a professional charged with the care or healing of his or her fellow human beings. The primary ethical norm is: Do no harm. I did worse; I caused death."

She went on:

"Instead of using a clumsy, bloody weapon, I used the simplest, cleanest of tools: my words. This man died because I denied him a necessary operation to save his heart. I felt little pain or remorse at the time. The man's faceless distance soothed my conscience. Like a skilled soldier, I was trained for this moment. When any moral qualms arose I was to remember I am not denying care, I am only denying payment."

Madam Speaker, by this time the trade association representatives were staring at the floor, the Congressmen who had spoken on behalf of the HMOs were distinctly uncomfortable and the staff, several of whom subsequently became representatives of HMO trade organizations, were thanking God that this witness came at the end of the day.

Dr. Peeno's testimony continued:

"At the time this helped me avoid any sense of responsibility for my decision. Now I am no longer willing to accept the escapist reasoning that allowed me to rationalize this action. I accept my responsibility now for this man's death as well as for the immeasurable pain and suffering many other decisions of mine caused."

She then listed the many ways managed care health plans deny care to patients, but she emphasized one particular issue: the right to decide what care is medically necessary.

She said:

"There is one last activity that I think deserves a special place on this list, and this is what I call the smart bomb of cost containment, and that is medical necessities denials. Even when medical criteria is used, it is rarely developed in any kind of standard traditional clinical process."

She continued:

"It is rarely standardized across the field. The criteria is rarely available for prior review by the physicians or the members of the plan. We have enough experience from history to demonstrate the consequences of secretive, unregulated systems that go awry."