

**CONGRATULATIONS TO HCFA FOR SAVING MEDICARE MONEY; CONGRESS SHOULD GIVE HCFA MORE COMPETITIVE PURCHASING TOOLS**

**HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 14, 2001*

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, a lot of Members of Congress have been criticizing HCFA lately, largely because they are trying to carry out impossible complex laws passed by Members of Congress.

We also complain that HCFA isn't competitive enough. In the BBA of 1997, we gave authority to HCFA to carry out competitive bidding demonstrations on the purchase of durable medical equipment. Those demonstrations are indeed showing substantial savings. I would like to enter in the RECORD a press release of March 1st describing the progress of these demonstrations.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should immediately allow those demonstrations to become permanent and to be extended nationwide. Congress should stop calling HCFA inefficient when we aren't willing to give it the power to be efficient.

[From the HCFA Press Office, Mar. 1, 2001]

**SECOND ROUND OF MEDICARE COMPETITIVE BIDDING PROJECT FOR MEDICAL SUPPLIES IN POLK COUNTY, FLA.**

Medicare has launched the second round of its successful pilot project in Polk County, Fla., that uses competition to provide quality medical equipment and supplies to beneficiaries at better prices. The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 authorizes the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) to demonstrate how competitive bidding can help Medicare beneficiaries and the program pay more reasonable prices for quality medical equipment and supplies. Several studies by the U.S. General Accounting (GAO) and the HHS Inspector General have shown that the Medicare program and its beneficiaries often pay more for medical equipment and supplies than the prices paid by other insurers and individual patients. Requiring suppliers interested in serving Medicare beneficiaries to submit bids including quality and price information assures access to high-quality medical equipment at a fairer price. The changes also can reduce Medicare waste and abuse.

During the first round of the Polk County demonstration, HCFA, the agency that administers Medicare, invited companies to compete to sell medical equipment and supplies to 92,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Polk County. Bids were evaluated on the basis of quality and price. The new rates set by this competitive process are saving individual beneficiaries and Medicare an average of 17 percent on the cost of certain medical supplies, while protecting quality and access for Polk County beneficiaries. The competitive bidding process took place in the spring of 1999. The new rates took effect on Oct. 1, 1999, and will remain in effect until Sept. 30, 2001.

HCFA implemented a similar demonstration in three Texas counties in the San Antonio area—Bexar, Comal and Guadalupe counties. Suppliers who wished to sell products in five categories to Medicare bene-

ficiaries in the region were required to compete on the basis of quality and price in the spring of 2000. As in the Polk County process, the new prices are saving individual beneficiaries and Medicare an average of 20 percent on the cost of certain medical supplies while protecting quality and access for San Antonio beneficiaries. The new rates took effect on Feb. 1, 2001, and will remain in effect until Dec. 31, 2002.

In the second round of the Polk County demonstration, suppliers will again compete this spring on the basis of quality and price for four of categories of medical equipment and supplies categories included in the first round of the pilot. The categories are: oxygen supplies; hospital beds; urological supplies and surgical dressings. The fifth product category, enteral nutrition, is not being included in the second round because the focus of the demonstration is on medical equipment and supplies delivered to the home, and enteral nutrition is primarily provided to nursing home residents. The rates determined for the second round are to take effect on Oct. 1, 2001, and will remain in effect until Sept. 30, 2002.

**GUEST CHAPLAIN, DR. CALVIN TURPIN**

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 14, 2001*

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to submit background material on Dr. Calvin Turpin. Dr. Turpin, from my district, offered the prayer to open the House today.

Dr. Calvin C. Turpin of Hallister, CA, is a native of Illinois. He is a retired professor of religion and an administrator from Hardin Simmons University, Abilene, TX.

Dr. Turpin earned a B.A., and M.A. from Baylor University, Waco, TX; An M.A. from Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN; Bachelor of Divinity; M.R.E. (Master of Religious Education) and a Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, and a Doctor of Science in Theology from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, Mill Valley, CA.

Dr. Turpin served as Deputy Chief of Chaplains for the Civil Air Patrol. He and his wife Eudell are the parents of a son and daughter.

Dr. Turpin served in the Army during World War II and has served as a minister in Southern Baptist Churches in Texas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and California.

Presently he serves as National Chaplain of the American Legion (2000–2001).

**REVIVING STEEL**

**HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, March 14, 2001*

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I submit into the RECORD the following editorial from the March 11th edition of the Cleveland Plain Dealer. I believe this piece speaks to the urgent need for action to aid the American steel industry, and I encourage my colleagues to read it.

[From the Plain Dealer, Mar. 11, 2001]

**REVIVING STEEL**

Why is America's steel industry in such a sorry state?

Poor management, inefficient work rules, runaway imports, outrageous energy costs, low prices, expensive obligations to retirees, skeptical landers and rapidly changing technology have all played a role. But the collective impact is undeniable: In little more than three years, 16 firms, including Cleveland LTV Corp., have sought bankruptcy protection. Since last spring, profits at even the best-run firms have largely melted into pools of red ink; LTV lost \$351 million in the last quarter alone. The mini-mills that once seemed to be steel's new wave now look almost as vulnerable as the dinosaurs in this historically cyclical industry.

Since steel is an economic and military necessity, America needs a healthy industry. And in our system, that's largely the responsibility of individual steelmakers. They have to be intelligently managed, flexible, able to see technological change before it overwhelms them. Companies that can't or won't change will fail. And yet, it's not unreasonable for government to help such a vital enterprise negotiate a market shaped by forces that bear little resemblance to economic theory.

The Bush administration is said to be studying how best to assist steel. And a bipartisan group in the House of Representatives has offered a set of proposals, many of them rooted in ideas put forward by industry leaders and the United Steel Workers of America. While specifics of the legislation, whose co-sponsors include Cleveland-area Democrats Dennis J. Kucinich, Stephanie Tubbs Jones and Sherrod Brown, may be a bit dubious, they do pinpoint areas that need attention: foreign competition, "legacy costs," consolidation and capital.

Ask most steelmakers and their allies to identify the industry's No. 1 problem and chances are they'll finger the glut of low-priced foreign steel that flooded this country last year. But the import crush is not some foreign plot. A strong U.S. dollar, while good for the overall economy, makes imports relatively cheaper and more desirable to cost-conscious steel users. Even in the best of times, American steel makers cannot meet domestic demand. Industry officials concede that about a quarter of the steel used in this country will always come from abroad, much of it slab that's then finished by American steel firms.

Still, American steel firms need some respite from bargain-basement competition. The question is how to give it to them, especially since the world Trade Organization has rejected America's anti-dumping laws. Perhaps the administration at least could give American producers the "anti-surge" warnings that NAFTA partners Mexico and Canada provide their steelmakers by constantly monitoring imports.

U.S. steelmakers proudly point to billions invested in modernization since the late 1970s. America today makes as much steel with a third as many workers. But shrinking the work force meant early retirement for thousands of employees; LTV's integrated steel operations, for example, support 12,000 active workers and 72,000 retirees. Many established steel firms thus face enormous "legacy costs," mostly for retiree health care, that add an estimated \$15 to \$20 to the price of each ton. It's a burden not shared by domestic upstarts or by foreign competitors whose governments pay for health care.

The House bill proposes a surcharge on every ton of steel sold in the United States

to help cover retiree health costs. A similar program operates in the coal industry. Spreading the burden of legacy costs might speed the consolidation that many think the steel industry desperately needs. Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill, who led a troubled aluminum industry back to profitability while at Alcoa, has signaled that any long-range fix for steel probably will require some global reduction in capacity that pushes up prices. Retrenchment may cost some American firms, but their workers and retirees should not be punished in the process.

Finally, steel may be on the verge of technological quantum leaps. But they won't be cheap, and already many banks are understandably leery of investing in such a dicey industry. Even a federal program that currently guarantees 85 percent of a loan has attracted so few takers that the Bush budget suggests cancelling it. Some suggest that governments or pension funds could step in as financiers. But before heading down that risky road, let's see whether help on import competition and legacy costs encourages private lenders to take another look at steel.

DR. THOMAS STARZL

HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call my colleagues' attention to an important anniversary—the 20th anniversary of Dr. Thomas Starzl's first liver transplant in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Dr. Starzl has been a pioneer in the field of organ transplants for the last 40 years. Dr. Starzl performed the world's first liver transplant in 1963 and the world's first successful liver transplant in 1967. His successful use of azathioprine and corticosteroids in kidney transplants in 1962 and 1963 produced a surge of transplant research around the world. Dr. Starzl's successful experiments with anti-lymphocyte globulin and cyclosporine in 1980 enabled transplantation to move from the experimental stage to an accepted medical procedure. And in 1989, Dr. Starzl's experimentation with another anti-rejection agent, FK506, led to additional advances in transplantation.

These are only a few of the highlights of Dr. Starzl's long and productive career. One measure of his contribution to modern medicine is the sheer volume of research that he has produced. He has authored or co-authored more than 2,000 articles, as well as four books and 292 chapters. I would point out that Dr. Starzl has been identified by the Institute for Scientific Information as the most cited scientist in the field of clinical medicine. Truly, he is a remarkable man.

Dr. Starzl was born in 1926 in Iowa. He graduated with a bachelor's degree in biology from Westminster College in Missouri. He studied medicine at the Northwestern University Medical School in Chicago, and he did graduate work at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. He subsequently worked and studied at Johns Hopkins, the University of Miami, and the Veterans Administration Research Hospital in Chicago. Dr. Starzl served on the faculty of Northwestern University from 1958 until 1961 and held several positions, including

chairman of the department of surgery, at the University of Colorado School of Medicine from 1962 until 1980.

Since 1981, Dr. Starzl has been associated with the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Under his leadership, Pittsburgh became one of the largest and most successful centers for transplant surgery in the world. More than 5,700 liver transplants, 3,500 kidney transplants, 1,000 heart transplants, and 500 lung transplants have been performed at the University of Pittsburgh Medical center. In 1991, Dr. Starzl became director of the University of Pittsburgh Transplantation Institute, and in 1996, the Institute was renamed in his honor. Dr. Starzl now holds the title of director emeritus, and continues to conduct cutting-edge research on transplantation. Dr. Starzl has also been active as a leader—and often as a founding member—of a number of professional and scientific organizations, and he received nearly 200 awards and honors for his work.

I salute Dr. Starzl for his many contributions to the field of medicine on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of his first liver transplant in Pittsburgh.

INTRODUCTION OF YOUNG AMERICAN WORKERS' BILL OF RIGHTS ACT—H.R. 961

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 14, 2001

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, last week, with the support of 48 of our colleagues, I introduced comprehensive domestic child labor law reform—H.R. 961, The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act. This much-needed legislation will provide greater protection for American children in the workplace. The unfortunate exploitation of child labor in America is not a thing of the past. It is a problem that continues to threaten the welfare and education of millions of American young people. Unless we swiftly enact this important legislation, children will continue to be employed in jobs that place their lives in danger, and students will continue to struggle with the competing interests of holding a job and gaining an education at a time when education should be "priority number one". I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important legislation.

The exploitation of child labor is a national problem that continues to jeopardize the health, education and lives of many of our nation's children and teenagers. In farm fields and in fast-food restaurants all over this country, employers are breaking the law by hiring under-age children. Many of these youth put in long, hard hours and often work under dangerous conditions. Our legislation seeks to eliminate the all-too-common exploitation of children—working long hours late into the night while school is in session, and working under hazardous conditions.

Mr. Speaker, I am saddened to report that in this country, a young person is killed on the job every five days. Every 40 seconds a child is injured on the job. It is appalling to learn

that the occupational injury rate for children and teens is more than twice as high than it is for adults. These statistics are a national disgrace. It is totally unacceptable for a civilized, advanced society such as ours to have our children injured and killed on the job.

Mr. Speaker, The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act would establish new, tougher penalties for willful violations of child labor laws that result in the death or serious bodily injury to a child. Not only does the bill increase fines and prison sentences for willful violation of our laws, but it will also assure that the names of child labor law violators are publicized. Nothing will deter corporate giants more than negative publicity. Negative publicity is one of the most effective tools we have to change corporate behavior.

While people often associate the evils of child labor with Third World countries, American children and teenagers are also exploited on the job. Our economy has changed significantly since the days when teenagers held after school jobs at the "Mom and Pop" grocery store or soda shop on the corner. In today's low unemployment economy, teenagers are hired to fill-in or replace jobs previously held by adults in full-time positions. They work in franchise fast food restaurants and national supermarket chains.

Many high-school students are working 30 to 40 hours a week, and they often work well past midnight. Research shows that long hours on the job take away time needed for schoolwork or family and extracurricular activities. The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act sets limits on the amount of time students can work during the school year. This is important Mr. Speaker, because studies show that the more hours children work during the school year, the more likely they are to do poorly academically. Studies have also shown that children who work long hours also tend to use more alcohol and drugs.

Mr. Speaker, The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act will reduce the problem of children working long hours when school is in session, and it strengthens existing limitations on the number of hours children under 18 years of age can work on school days. The bill would eliminate all youth labor before school. After-school work would be limited to 15 or 20 hours per week, depending on the age of the child. Additionally our legislation will require better record keeping and reporting of child labor violations. It also prohibits minors from operating or cleaning certain types of dangerous equipment, and prohibits children from working under certain particularly hazardous conditions.

Children working early in the morning before school or working late into the evening on days when school is in session is a serious problem facing our country. Recently, I met with students from Aragon High School of San Mateo, California, in my Congressional district. After talking about The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act to these students, who were visiting our nation's capitol, the students spoke up and voiced their concerns about being required to work past 11 or later on school nights. Every one of these students spoke in favor of enacting The Young American Workers' Bill of Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, our legislation also increases protection for children under the age of 14