

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

FAIR TREATMENT FOR NURSE
ANESTHETISTS

HON. MIKE KREIDLER

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 1994

Mr. KREIDLER. Mr. Speaker, high quality health care for older Americans is the goal of the Medicare Program. Medicare is designed to pay for needed and appropriate care, by professionals qualified to provide that care. Among those qualified professionals are the certified registered nurse anesthetists who administer anesthesia during surgery and other procedures.

All States license these highly trained professionals, and in many areas they are the only professionals who perform anesthesia services. Whether practicing independently or employed in hospitals and other facilities, nurse anesthetists administer two-thirds of the 26 million anesthetics given to patients each year in this country. They are the sole anesthesia providers in 85 percent of rural hospitals.

Licensed as nurses, CRNA's perform the same functions as physicians who administer anesthesia, while working in collaboration with a wide range of other health professionals. Their education includes college, at least a year's experience in acute care nursing, a 2-year postgraduate nurse anesthesia program, including extensive didactic and clinical training, passing a national certification examination, and a continuing education program with mandatory recertification every 2 years.

Despite these qualifications and State laws enabling them to practice, nurse anesthetists face barriers to practice because of Medicare regulations that were intended to serve other purposes. I have introduced H.R. 4291, to revise those Medicare rules so that CRNA's can practice their profession to the full extent of their skills and training.

The bill would resolve three major problems facing nurse anesthetists who serve Medicare patients:

First, conditions of payment.

Before 1982, some anesthesiologists billed Medicare for services that were performed mainly by nurse anesthetists, with little or no actual involvement by the anesthesiologist. In 1982, Congress required the Health Care Financing Administration to define more precisely how physicians are to be involved in directing the work of nurse anesthetists, in order to receive payment from Medicare.

HCFA's regulations require that the physician participate in certain components of the anesthetic process, many of which could be appropriately handled by the nurse anesthetist without the physician's presence. Unfortunately, many hospitals have treated these regulations as quality of care standards, instead of conditions for paying physicians. The re-

sults have been to restrict unnecessarily the scope of many nurse anesthetists' practice to less than State laws allow, and to cause duplication of effort and periodic delays in treatment.

H.R. 4291 would require HCFA to revise its regulations so as not to restrict nurses from performing all State-authorized services, while maintaining the original objective of preventing fraud and abuse. Additionally, the bill would eliminate these medical direction conditions of payment in 1998, when Medicare will pay the same for medically directed and nonmedically directed anesthesia services.

Second, physician supervision of nurse anesthetists.

Medicare regulations now require physician supervision of nurse anesthetists, as a condition for hospitals or ambulatory surgical centers to receive Medicare payment, despite State laws allowing nurse anesthetists to practice without such supervision. H.R. 4291 would prohibit HCFA from requiring physician supervision of anesthetists unless such supervision is required by State law.

The bill would also eliminate current limits on the ratio of anesthesiologists to nurse anesthetists in a medically directed setting, when Medicare payments for medically directed and solo anesthesia services reach the same level in 1998. Removing these limits will allow health professionals in different localities to determine appropriate anesthesia delivery patterns, rather than having them determined indirectly by Medicare.

Third, parity of payment when two professionals provide a service.

Often an anesthesiologist and a nurse anesthetist work together on a procedure. Unless the Medicare carrier determines that the services of both professionals were medically necessary, Medicare typically pays the physician the whole fee and the anesthetist nothing. When the anesthetist is a hospital employee, the hospital takes the loss.

H.R. 4291 would provide, in cases where two professionals performed a service jointly, that the fee otherwise payable to the physician be divided equally between the physician and the nurse anesthetist—or his or her employer. While Medicare should not have to pay for more service than was needed, there is no good reason to penalize the nurse anesthetist alone.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation would add no cost to the Medicare Program, and could reduce costs by encouraging more use of cost-effective nurse anesthetist services. I urge my colleagues to support it.

The Text of H.R. 4291 follows:

H.R. 4291

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. REVISION OF CONDITIONS OF PAYMENT RELATING TO ANESTHESIA SERVICES FURNISHED BY CERTIFIED REGISTERED NURSE ANESTHETISTS.

(a) PROMULGATION OF REVISED REGULATIONS.—The Secretary of Health and Human Services shall revise any regulations describing the conditions under which payment may be made for anesthesia services under the medicare program so that—

(1) payment may be made for anesthesia services furnished in a hospital or an ambulatory surgical center by a certified registered nurse anesthetist who is permitted to administer anesthesia under the law of the State in which the service is furnished; and

(2) the conditions under which payment may be made for a physician service consisting of the medical direction or medical supervision of a certified registered nurse anesthetist meet the requirements of subsection (b)(1).

(b) REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDICAL DIRECTION DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The requirements of this subsection are that the conditions under which payment may be made for the medical direction or medical supervision of a certified registered nurse anesthetist—

(A) shall not restrict such nurse anesthetists working with anesthesiologists from performing all the components of the anesthesia service that such nurse anesthetists are legally authorized to perform in the State in which the service is furnished; and

(B) shall prevent fraud and abuse in payment for anesthesia services by requiring that the physician providing medical direction or medical supervision must be physically present in the facility where the certified registered nurse anesthetist's services are performed and be available in a timely manner for consultation or assistance if indicated.

(2) CONSULTATION REQUIRED.—The Secretary shall revise the regulations referred to in subsection (a)(2) after consultation with representatives from professional associations of certified registered nurse anesthetists and anesthesiologists.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The revisions to the regulations referred to in subsection (a) shall apply to anesthesia services furnished on or after January 1, 1995.

(d) TERMINATION OF REGULATIONS ON MEDICAL DIRECTION OR SUPERVISION.—The regulations referred to in subsection (a)(2) shall be repealed effective January 1, 1998.

SEC. 2. ENSURING PAYMENT FOR PHYSICIAN AND NURSE FOR JOINTLY FURNISHED ANESTHESIA SERVICES.

(a) PAYMENT FOR JOINTLY FURNISHED SINGLE CASE.—

(1) PAYMENT TO PHYSICIAN.—Section 1848(a)(4) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(4)), as added by section 13516(a) of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1993 (hereafter referred to as "OBRA-1993"), is amended by adding at the end the following new subparagraph:

"(C) PAYMENT FOR SINGLE CASE.—Notwithstanding section 1862(a)(1)(A), with respect to physicians' services consisting of the furnishing of anesthesia services for a single case that are furnished jointly with a cer-

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

tified registered nurse anesthetist, if the carrier determines that the use of both the physician and the nurse anesthetist to furnish the anesthesia service was not medically necessary, the fee schedule amount to be applied shall be equal to 50 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable under this section if the anesthesia service were personally performed by the physician alone."

(2) PAYMENT TO CRNA.—Section 1833(1)(4)(B) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 13951(1)(4)(B)), as added by section 13516(b) of OBRA-1993, is amended by adding at the end the following new clause:

"(iv) Notwithstanding section 1862(a)(1)(A), in the case of services of a certified registered nurse anesthetist consisting of the furnishing of anesthesia services for a single case that are furnished jointly with a physician, if the carrier determines that the use of both the physician and the nurse anesthetist to furnish the anesthesia service was not medically necessary, the fee schedule amount shall be equal to 50 percent of the fee schedule amount otherwise applicable under this section if the anesthesia service were personally performed by the physician alone."

(b) UNIFORM TREATMENT OF ALL MULTIPLE CONCURRENT CASES.—Section 1848(a)(4) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395w-4(a)(4)) and section 1842(b)(13) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1395u(b)(13)), as amended by section 13516(a) of OBRA-1993, are each amended—

(1) by striking "two, three, or four" each place it appears and inserting "two or more"; and

(2) by inserting "or medical supervision" after "medical direction" each place it appears.

(c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) and (b) shall apply to services furnished on or after January 1, 1995.

TRIBUTE TO HUNTINGTON FAMILY CENTERS IN SYRACUSE

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 1994

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, for 75 years, Huntington Family Centers in Syracuse, NY, has devoted time and energy to making our community whole. The talented, dedicated staff and civic-leader volunteer directors help individuals and families in need.

While many of us work to strengthen the economy and impact family life in a positive way through legislation and bricks-and-mortar community development, Huntington counselors deal every day with the specific problems of people who can't take another step on their own. Huntington helps people—in a caring, dignified way.

As we in central New York celebrate the 75th anniversary of Huntington Family Centers, I ask my colleagues to pay tribute as well. Founded in 1919, Huntington is a multi-purpose, not-for-profit human service agency dedicated to innovative programming which brings about personal growth.

Child care, sexual abuse counseling, field trips for neighborhood kids, drug and alcohol abuse classes—for adults and kids into their teens—are only part of the approach. Crisis intervention, during which food, clothing, and

shelter are often provided on a moment's notice; and elderly services including outreach for poor, frail, or developmentally disabled seniors, are two additional areas of concentration.

The list of programs and facilities goes on and on. It is impossible for me to describe in a short time how rich and diverse the services of Huntington are. Suffice to say, the people at Huntington not only react, they anticipate. They provide positive experiences for family members of all ages, from field trips to the farmers' market to exercise and craft time for seniors. They not only work well in emergencies, they employ far-sighted planning to meet their goals.

They deserve our great thanks and respect. They have made life meaningful for many others. We who believe that public service is a noble endeavor admire this substantial and resilient organization. Thank you.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS PRESENTS LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

HON. G.V. (SONNY) MONTGOMERY

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 1994

Mr. MONTGOMERY. Mr. Speaker, on March 2, Mr. Richard E. Marbes of Green Bay, WI, national commander of the Disabled American Veterans, appeared before the joint House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committees to present DAV's legislative priorities for the 2d session of the 103d Congress. I would like to share with my colleagues excerpts from his very eloquent statement.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD E. MARBES, NATIONAL COMMANDER OF THE DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

Messrs. Chairmen and members of the Veterans Affairs Committees: On behalf of American Veterans and its Women's Auxiliary, it is indeed an honor and privilege to appear before you today to discuss the major concerns of our nation's service-connected disabled veterans and their families.

At the outset, Messrs. Chairmen, I wish to thank you and your Committees for the support you have given to veterans, their families, and to the veterans' programs that have enhanced their lives during the first session of the 103rd Congress.

Messrs. Chairmen, DAV was founded in 1920 and chartered by Congress in 1932 as the primary advocate for America's service-connected disabled veterans, their dependents and survivors. Major policy positions of the DAV and the framework of our national legislative program are derived from a number of resolutions adopted by the delegates to our annual national conventions. Our 1994 mandates, which cover a broad spectrum of VA programs, have been made available to your Committees and to individual members of your staffs.

With your permission Messrs. Chairmen, I would like to digress for just a few moments to talk about a couple of subjects of great importance to the members of the DAV.

As the Committees are well aware, last year one of our very own, Jesse Brown, was tapped by President Clinton to serve as his Secretary for Veterans Affairs. A combat-disabled Marine and true advocate for veter-

ans, Secretary Brown has dedicated his entire adult life to serving America's veterans and their families.

Quite naturally, we in the DAV are extremely proud of Jesse Brown. We wish him "God speed" as he fulfills VA's mission, which, as so eloquently stated by President Abraham Lincoln, is "to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan."

Although we miss Jesse, our management staff at our National Headquarters, and our Service and Legislative Headquarters are lean and efficient; they are experienced and dedicated, and they direct an organization whose financial viability makes it possible for us to continue our commitment to providing direct services to disabled veterans and their families through our corps of 236 National Service Officers located at 69 offices throughout the country.

We pledge to you a redoubling of that commitment to service.

Messrs. Chairmen, in a few short months our nation will celebrate the 50th anniversary of D-Day. It gives me great pride to note that a number of men who helped carry out one of America's most brilliant military operations are seated in this very room today. We as a nation owe them—and all veterans—a great debt of gratitude.

These D-Day warriors—like the millions who served in our military before them and the millions who served in our military after them—gave their all, no questions asked, when our country needed them in its darkest hours.

In return for sacrificing their limbs and sometimes their lives, all that these veterans ever asked in return was that our nation honor its commitment to help them and their families in their darkest hours. This sacred covenant between our nation and its uniformed defenders has been both implied and implicit since our nation was founded.

Regrettably, Messrs. Chairmen, there are those in positions of immense political power who wish to break or severely weaken this sacred covenant between our nation and its defenders of democracy. These power brokers—these barons of the budget—have little regard for the time-honored commitments of the past.

And in their zeal to win a few extra votes and grab a few extra headlines, these barons of the budget have mistakenly chosen to place dollars over decency when it comes to funding veterans' programs.

DAV members are justifiably concerned about the tax exempt status of their compensation benefits and we applaud the fact that bills have once been introduced in the Congress by Veterans Affairs Committee Chairmen Rockefeller and Montgomery to clarify the tax exempt statute of VA benefits.

The issue of the concurrent receipt of VA disability compensation payments and military longevity retirement pay without a deduction from either payment continues to be of great concern and we urge you to seek a resolution to this injustice.

Messrs. Chairmen, despite our most impassioned pleas to the President, the trade embargo against Vietnam was recently lifted. This issue is vitally important to our members because members of our Armed Forces have always taken into combat with them an unwritten, unspoken, but unbreakable contract of the battlefield. A contract from our government that simply states: We will leave no one, dead or alive, in the hands of the enemy.

In our view, the U.S. government—dating back to the end of World War II—has failed

miserably in meeting the terms of this contract. It is a great national travesty that we still have not accounted for nearly 90,000 American patriots since the end of World War II.

I assure you that every DAV member has a standing obligation to press our national leaders to develop policies consistent with this unwritten, unspoken, but unbreakable contract of the battlefield in order to ensure that American fighting forces are never again used as political pawns.

Messrs. Chairmen, recent revelations that our government conducted secret radiation testing on some of its unsuspecting citizens and soldiers is appalling to most Americans. The DAV is outraged that a former VA Chief Medical Director classified the existence of VA's atomic medicine division as confidential. His actions were taken, we're told, supposedly out of concern for the problem the VA might have with potential service-connected disability compensation claims resulting from radiation tests performed on patients in VA hospitals.

We applaud the Administration's efforts to shed light on this dark era of American history and call upon your Committees to continue to investigate this situation and to compensate these individuals fairly.

The DAV is also deeply concerned about the problems facing our Persian Gulf War veterans, especially those veterans who still suffer from the mysterious ailments commonly referred to as Persian Gulf Syndrome.

We also remain deeply committed to providing assistance to our nation's homeless veterans. DAV chapters and departments all across the country have developed local programs to deal with this pressing problem, while the DAV Charitable Trust has allocated nearly \$340,000 to assist homeless veterans since 1988.

As a continuation of our deep concern about the unique problems facing women veterans, the DAV will soon be hosting a women veterans health care forum here in Washington. The forum, which is being designed by a special DAV Women Veterans Advisory Committee, will bring top executive and legislative branch officials face-to-face with women veterans to address problems in VA's delivery of health care to this growing segment of the veteran population.

Speaking of health care, Messrs. Chairmen, our nation is now engaged in a great debate about how to reform and reconfigure our entire health care delivery and financing systems. Clearly the VA—as the nation's single largest health care system—has a vested interest in such a debate.

And just as clearly, America's veterans—especially America's disabled veterans who are the single largest consumer group using the VA health care system—also have a vested interest in the outcome of this great debate. Consequently, the DAV has embraced the role identified for VA in President Clinton's National Health Care Reform Plan.

In our analysis, the President's vision for VA actually mirrors, in large part, DAV's plan for VA health care laid out in the "American Veterans Health Care Reform Act of 1992." This legislation was introduced during the 102nd Congress as S. 2248 and H.R. 4278.

The VA health care system is at a critical juncture and there is an absolute, vital need for VA to move swiftly down the road of reform regardless of what happens to national health care reform. We urge your Committees to carefully consider and expeditiously act upon the necessary legislation that will give the authority and flexibility needed to successfully navigate the road of reform.

Messrs. Chairmen, perhaps the most challenging issue facing our nation today is finding a way to put our nation's fiscal house in order. Certainly none of us wish to unfairly saddle our children and grandchildren with our debts.

Regrettably, in order to reduce federal expenditures, the barons of the budget—often over the strong objections of your Committees—have in recent years taken hard-earned dollars directly out of the wallets of America's veterans.

During the decade of the 80's, for instance, VA was required to identify more than \$2 billion in savings.

Still unable to reduce the spiraling federal deficit, in 1990, the barons of the budget once again placed veterans and veterans' programs squarely in the cross-hairs of their deficit-reduction rifle. The shot that was fired became known as the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (OBRA) of 1990. When OBRA was signed into law, VA benefits and services were required to be cut by some \$3.6 billion through Fiscal Year 1995.

Last year, veterans were wounded yet again by the deficit-reduction rifle when OBRA of 1993 was passed. This measure requires an additional \$2.6 billion in cuts through 1998 and extends many of the OBRA 1990 cuts. Among other things, this law eliminated the Montgomery GI Bill COLA for Fiscal Year 1994 and reduces it by one-half for Fiscal Year 1995. It also freezes discretionary spending over the next five years at the FY 1993 level.

We are now faced with the reality that the discretionary spending freeze, coupled with deep cuts mandated by the Fiscal Year 1995 budget, will further erode VA's ability to provide quality health care and benefit determinations to America's veterans in a timely fashion.

Quite frankly, Messrs. Chairmen, enough is enough. It is time that the barons of the budget recognize that freedom is not free. It is time that the barons of the budget understand that caring for America's veterans is a legitimate, continuing cost of war.

They must stop taking benefits away from veterans and their families. They must stop the ever increasing delays veterans must endure to receive their earned compensation benefits. In some cases, we no longer measure claims decision delays in terms of months but in terms of years. This is an outrage!

These barons of the budget must stop cutting employees from our VA health care facilities—especially at a time when we are asking VA to compete in a new era of national health care reform.

The barons of the budget must recognize that veterans are not the cause of our nation's fiscal crisis. VA entitlements are not out of control and, in fact, are decreasing as a percentage of total federal outlays for social welfare programs.

Even in view of the fact that VA benefits and services are not the cause of our federal deficit, some continue to call for cuts in veterans' entitlement spending. I recently read a report prepared by the Concord Coalition which called for eliminating disability compensation payments to veterans rated less than 30 percent service-connected disabled.

I found it ironic that such a proposal would come from a group who takes its name from the famous Revolutionary War battle in which many men died and were wounded so that our nation could be free of tyranny.

The Concord Coalition report goes on to say, and I quote, "entitlement program costs are rising rapidly. When the nation promised

these benefits and services, it underestimated how much they would cost. Now, we must face the unpleasant truth that we can no longer afford to keep those promises fully."

I submit that we cannot afford to forget the sacrifices of those men and women who gave of their body, mind and spirit in defense of this country. As a nation, we must honor our commitment and adamantly reject calls from the barons of the budget to take earned compensation payments away from our service-connected disabled veterans.

Please do not misconstrue our opposition to cutting and eliminating veteran's benefits and services as an unwillingness on the part of disabled veterans to help with our nation's fiscal crisis.

Actually, just the opposite is true when you realize that thousands of veterans across the country give so freely of their time and money so that the VA may continue to provide some semblance of service to America's veterans.

For example, from March 1991 to April 1992 more than 12,000 DAV and Auxiliary volunteers across the country donated more than 2.3 million hours of voluntary service to the VA. This is the equivalent of VA having an additional 1,200 full-time employees with an estimated value of \$28 million dollars. Monetary donations during the same period totaled nearly \$3 million dollars and other hospital and service related donations came to \$16.5 million dollars.

The DAV also employs 170 Hospital Service Coordinators at 171 VA facilities. With more than 4,000 volunteer drivers, DAV's National Transportation Network will log nearly 18 million miles and transport more than 400 thousand veterans to VA health care facilities this year alone. DAV departments and chapters, together with the national organization, have also donated 317 transportation vans to VA Medical Centers across the country at a cost of nearly 5 million dollars.

Through the combined efforts of DAV National Service Officers and Hospital Service Coordinators, over 500 thousand veterans received information and assistance in filing VA benefit claims.

During our past 12 month reporting period, efforts of DAV National Service Officers resulted in more than 244,000 total awards to veterans and their families. Thanks to our dedicated cadre of National Service Officers, the DAV has made a tremendous impact on the lives of thousands of veterans and their families.

It's obvious that the members of the DAV are pitching in and giving more than their fair share because we know first-hand of the sacrifices made by veterans and the problems they face upon becoming disabled.

Messrs. Chairmen, this morning I have attempted to outline to the Committee DAV's observations regarding the state of veterans' affairs in America. I have noted some criticisms of the way veterans have been treated over the past dozen years.

I have expressed the willingness on the part of DAV and Auxiliary members to give of their time and resources so that other sick and disabled veterans may receive a degree of increased service at VA health care facilities. And I have quantified the service provided to veterans and their families by DAV National Service Officers, Hospital Service Coordinators and our volunteers.

But I must tell you in all candor that America's veterans will no longer be pushed around by the barons of the budget. And no longer will our nation's veterans tolerate elected officials who would rather blindly

out every federal program—regardless of the program's value or impact on the national debt—than make the difficult political choices necessary to right our nation's financial ship of state.

Let me assure you that the DAV deeply appreciates the efforts members of your Committees have made to persuade those holding the power of the purse of the value of veterans' programs and our nation's statutory and moral obligation to provide adequate funding for those programs.

May God bless each and every one of you as you deliberate the fate of America's veterans and their families. And may God bless America.

NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

HON. THOMAS J. MANTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 25, 1994

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, this week we celebrate "National Library Week 1994." Our libraries serve as the caretakers of our history, preserving the memories of our cities and communities. By taking advantage of the countless services and resources that libraries have to offer, we can continue to challenge our minds and imagination.

Our public libraries, however, are struggling to survive, as financial assistance decreases. I would like to share an article from the April 1994, edition of the Reader's Digest, entitled "How Stupid Can We Get?" by William Ecenbarger. This article discusses the financial constraints that libraries are faced with even though there has been a 30-percent increase in the number of users since 1980, as the article states.

The article talks about the Queens Borough Public Library in my district, the second busiest library in the country, and how vitally important it is to the 2,000–4,000 visitors it has each day. These visitors range from children who will attend storybook hour, to immigrants who will attend English class, to young adults who will attend amateur drama group. For generations, Queens Public Library has served as a link to a future for so many people—especially immigrants and students. We must keep our libraries fully funded so as not to lose the valuable resources that our libraries offer.

The article follows:

HOW STUPID CAN WE GET?
(By William Ecenbarger)

At the Sunflower County Public Library in rural northwestern Mississippi, a grade-school boy opens a book entitled *Tomorrow—the Moon*. The introduction reads: "Eventually man may be able to land on the moon and really explore it." The book was published in 1959.

For the past few years, the Owsley County Library in the Appalachian Mountains of Kentucky has run out of money before the end of the fiscal year. Each time, librarian Joyce Marcum has had to wait several months until the start of the new fiscal year before her salary can be paid.

Many of the nation's more than 15,000 libraries are suffering from financial distress; hours shortened, staff reduced, book-buying curtailed, magazine subscriptions canceled,

long lines at checkouts and computer terminals. And sometimes, even shuttered libraries.

Last year 25 public libraries closed in California, and in Massachusetts 27 library branches have closed in the past four years. The trend is nationwide and affects all sorts of neighborhoods—rich and poor; rural, urban, suburban.

What in the name of Benjamin Franklin is going on here?

Hardly anyone is against libraries. The problem is often lack of information on the part of patrons, and misunderstanding on the part of public officials responsible for providing library funds. About three of every four library dollars come from local taxes. (The rest is from state, federal and private sources.) This local control enables each community to determine what kind of library it wants, but it also puts libraries in competition for tax dollars with such municipal services as police and fire protection.

As a result, the public library—an American tradition almost as old as the flag, one of the greatest democratic institutions ever created and the envy of other nations—is struggling to survive. This, just when job-seekers, students and immigrants have pushed library use to an all time high. About 1.4 billion items—books, audio cassettes, films, computer software—were borrowed at U.S. public libraries last year, a 30-percent increase over 1980.

NO ENGLISH, NO WORK.

To enable its children to compete in a complex world, America desperately needs improvements in its education system. Yet, here we are removing some of the most basic tools. "Ours has been a country where no child, regardless of economic circumstance, need grow up without books, but today we are in danger of losing that tradition," contends Hardy R. Franklin, president of the American Library Association.

The Queens Borough Public Library in New York City, with 62 branches, is the second-busiest system in the United States after the Los Angeles County Public Library. Between 2000 and 4000 people—men in business suits, Indian women in bright saris, jean-clad adolescents—come to its main branch every day. In addition to the usual activities, there's a story-book hour for three- to five-year-olds, classes in sign language, an amateur drama group, literacy and English for immigrants.

Historically, few groups have benefited more from the American free public library than immigrants. It has been their bootstrap for generations. For many of them today, the Queens Library provides an introduction to the language and culture of America.

When Elise Gbado came to Queens from the African nation of Benin five years ago, English was incomprehensible to her. So when a new English class was announced by the library, she got in line at noon and waited until 6 p.m. to enroll. "This is very important for me," she says, "because in America, 'No English, no work.'"

Last year the library taught English to nearly 3000 students, representing 82 nations and 51 languages. There are hundreds of others who desperately want to enroll but can't. There's not enough money to hire teachers and train staff.

Other signs of financial trouble in Queens abound. There are gaping spaces on magazine racks from unrenowned subscriptions. Most branches are closed on Sundays, and there are long waits on Saturdays to check out books. With so many school libraries in Queens closed, when a teacher assigns reading, 30 children may show up asking for the

same book. But there are only a few copies, and the book budget has run dry.

GRATEFUL "UNCLE ANDY"

Public libraries are an American invention. Benjamin Franklin organized a subscription library that pooled the books of Philadelphia residents in 1731; this was the forerunner of today's public library. During the American Revolution, the idea of allowing ordinary citizens to take books home blossomed.

The first free public library supported by taxation was established at Peterborough, N.H., in 1833, and by the time of the national centennial there were nearly 4000 public libraries in the country. In 1887 Minerva Sanders, a librarian in Pawtucket, R.I., welcomed boys and girls under age 14, who were not allowed in libraries at the time, to the first children's reading room.

James Anderson of Allegheny, Pa., made his 400-volume library available to boys who worked in the town, one of whom was a telegraph messenger named Andrew Carnegie. After he became a steel baron, a grateful Carnegie donated some \$50 million for public-library construction. Bequests from "Uncle Andy" helped to sprinkle more than 2500 libraries around the world.

Today libraries are everywhere. There's one in a Cleveland-area shopping mall, a commuter train station in Atlanta and a supermarket in Wichita, Kan. And wherever they are, their mission is the same—to make information accessible and affordable. Too many libraries, however, spend more time balancing the books than lending them.

"Our big problem is that there aren't enough books, and many are outdated," says Mississippi's Sunflower County library director Anice Powell. She estimates that of the 100,000 books in the Sunflower collection, one-third should be discarded either because they are ragged with missing pages or are obsolete. Current holdings include *Getting to Know the Two Chinas* (1960) and *Life Saving and Water Safety* (1937). "And we have so few science books that we can't lend them out at all," she says.

Between 1977 and 1992, the average price of an adult hardcover book more than doubled, from about \$19 to \$45, as did the average yearly subscription price of magazines. Powell's annual book-buying budget is \$8000; she has \$4000 for magazine subscriptions. "I'm always juggling money from one account to the other," she says. Last year she had to cancel subscriptions to five major publications, and she can't get any children's magazines.

"I'm distressed about this," she adds. "Reading during the early years determines whether a child will grow up to be a literate adult." Nearly half of all adults in her county are illiterate, and fewer than half the children finish high school.

The financial crunch has caused larger libraries to buy fewer copies of books, too. At the Pasadena, Calif., Public Library, for example, recently there were 255 patrons on the waiting list for John Grisham's *Pelican Brief*.

NO DOUBLE SYSTEM

In addition to books and magazines, computers are a powerful ally for the information seeker. New technologies in data storage and retrieval have enabled public libraries to perform research services unimagined a generation ago. Infotrac and other on-line article research databases are faster and more up-to-date than the standard book references.

Some critics suggest that expensive on-line databases have no place in a public li-

brary. Yet for libraries to ignore the research capability of the computer is to create in America a double system of information access—one of awesome power for the privileged, the other an obsolete research tool for the not-so-privileged.

Daniel Cleary, manager of the business, science and technology section of the Queens Borough Public Library, says he has been forced to cancel indexes in the fields of biology, chemistry and math. "We're hurting our students," he warns. "The public library is the only place where everyone has access to this kind of information."

All the more so because many U.S. public schools no longer have libraries—and if they do, their collections often are substandard. How important are school libraries? Students from schools with strong libraries score higher on tests, according to a 1993 study by the Colorado Department of Education. Yet in California, the number of school libraries has decreased by half since 1986.

EVERY VOICE COUNTS

How can we reverse our libraries' decline? "The most important thing is for patrons to go to their elected officials and demand something be done," says Anice Powell. The American Library Association agrees. "Politicians do respond when citizens speak out—it's just that sometimes you have to speak very loudly," says Hardy Franklin.

One such effort to deter library cuts occurred this year in Philadelphia when Mayor Edward G. Rendell proposed to save \$2 million by halving hours at ten branches of the Free Library of Philadelphia. A massive letter-writing, petition and phonecall campaign descended on the mayor and city council. Library supporters rallied in front of the central library. In the end, half the funds were restored, and some of the service cuts never materialized.

Similarly, an outraged citizenry in Chicago was able to get nearly \$3 million in cuts in library funding restored. In Brooklyn, N.Y., incensed library patrons lobbied city government for funding to open 46 of 58 branches five days a week that had been cut to 14 to 16 hours a week.

A secure source of funding independent of politicians, such as tax revenues and bond issues linked specifically to libraries, is also important. Ohio has a portion of its state income tax set aside for libraries, and libraries there are doing well.

Indeed, the evidence is strong that the public will support spending for libraries. Last year in Pasadena, Calif., voters approved by a 4-to-1 margin a five-year library-tax levy of \$20 per year on each single-family residence, \$13 on each apartment unit and \$147 for each business parcel.

Today libraries are more important than ever because reading is still the most basic survival skill in our information-driven society. For children from homes where the only book is the telephone book, the library is their one great hope.

Author James Michener says, "Libraries represent an individual's right to acquire knowledge. Without libraries, I would be a pauper, intellectually and spiritually."

Do we want to make future generations such paupers? How stupid can we get?

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate on February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all

meetings and hearings of Senate committees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place, and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled, and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Tuesday, April 26, 1994, may be found in the Daily Digest of today's RECORD.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

APRIL 28

9:30 a.m.

Governmental Affairs

To resume hearings to examine the impact of unfunded Federal mandates on how State and local governments provide programs, services, and activities, and on related measures including S. 563, S. 648, S. 993, and S. 1604.

SD-342

Labor and Human Resources

To hold joint hearings with the Committee on Labor and Human Resources' Subcommittee on Children, Family, Drugs and Alcoholism on methods for preventing youth violence.

SD-430

Rules and Administration

To resume hearings on S. 1824, to improve the operations of the legislative branch of the Federal Branch, focusing on Subtitle A, Parts I and II of Title III, relating to Congressional biennial budgeting and additional budget process changes.

SR-301

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, focusing on strategic programs.

SD-192

Appropriations

VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Council on Environmental Quality.

SD-106

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the United States Information Agency, the Board for International Broadcasting, and the Federal Communications Commission.

S-146, Capitol

Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings on proposed legislation relating to housing and community investment.

SD-538

Finance

To hold hearings to examine the tax treatment of organizations providing health care services, and excise taxes on tobacco products, guns, and ammunition.

SD-215

Judiciary

Business meeting, to consider pending calendar business.

SD-226

Labor and Human Resources

Education, Arts and Humanities Subcommittee

To resume hearings on S. 1513, authorizing funds for programs of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

SD-628

2:00 p.m.

Appropriations

Transportation Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Federal Transit Administration, Department of Transportation, and the Washington Metro Transit Authority.

SD-138

Armed Services

Military Readiness and Infrastructure Subcommittee

To resume hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, and the future years defense program, focusing on the Defense Business Operations Fund and the military construction program.

SR-232A

Energy and Natural Resources

Public Lands, National Parks and Forests Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 1549, to revise the act establishing Golden Gate National Recreation Area to provide for the management of the Presidio by the Secretary of the Interior, and S. 1639, to provide for the management of the portions of the Presidio under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior.

SD-366

Judiciary

To hold hearings on pending nominations.

SD-226

Indian Affairs

To hold oversight hearings on water and sanitation issues in rural Alaska.

SR-485

2:30 p.m.

Appropriations

Interior Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Office of Construction Management, both of the Department of the Interior, and the National Indian Gaming Commission.

SD-116

Select on Intelligence

To hold closed hearings on intelligence matters.

SH-219

APRIL 29

10:00 a.m.

Finance

Health for Families and the Uninsured Subcommittee

To hold hearings to examine health care reform issues, focusing on consumer protection and quality assurance.

SD-215

2:00 p.m.

Foreign Relations

To hold hearings on the nominations of Peter R. Chaveas, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Malawi, Edmund T. DeJarnette, Jr., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Angola, Irvin Hicks, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to Ethiopia, Robert Krueger, of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Burundi, and Johnny Young, of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Togo.

SD-419

MAY 3

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

Force Requirements and Personnel Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, and the future years defense program, focusing on Reserve component manpower, personnel, and compensation issues.

SD-106

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings on Boron-Neutron Cancer Therapy.

SD-366

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for Food and Consumer Services, Food and Nutrition Service, and Human Nutrition Information Service, all of the Department of Agriculture.

SD-138

Appropriations

Defense Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, focusing on defense conversion programs.

SD-192

Armed Services

Regional Defense and Contingency Forces Subcommittee

To resume hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, and the future years defense program, focusing on the Navy investment strategy.

SR-222

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings on the nominations of Rear Adm. Robert E. Kramek, USCG, to be Commandant, and Rear Adm. Arthur E. Henn, USCG, to be Vice Commandant, both of the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

Finance

To resume hearings to examine health care reform issues, focusing on the classification of workers as employees or independent contractors, and the self-employment tax treatment of partners and S Corporation shareholders.

SD-215

10:30 a.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for the United States Coast Guard.

SR-253

2:30 p.m.

Armed Services

Nuclear Deterrence, Arms Control, and Defense Intelligence Subcommittee

To resume hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, and the future years defense plan, focusing on the Department of Energy's weapons and materials support and other defense programs.

SR-222

MAY 4

9:30 a.m.

Armed Services

Military Readiness and Infrastructure Subcommittee

To resume hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, and the future years defense program, focusing on environmental programs and the implementation of the Base Closure Acts.

SR-232A

Indian Affairs

To hold hearings on provisions of H.R. 6 and S. 1513, bills authorizing funds for programs of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

SR-485

10:00 a.m.

Foreign Relations

Business meeting, to consider pending nominations.

SD-419

Veterans' Affairs

To hold oversight hearings on dangerous exposures in the Persian Gulf War.

SD-106

2:00 p.m.

Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Merchant Marine Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 1945, to authorize funds for fiscal year 1995 for certain maritime programs of the Department of Transportation.

SR-253

MAY 5

9:30 a.m.

Rules and Administration

To resume hearings on S. 1824, to improve the operations of the legislative branch of the Federal Branch, focusing on Title III, Subtitle B (Staffing, Administration, and Support Agencies), and Subtitle C (Abolishing the Joint Committees).

SR-301

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Commerce, Justice, State, and Judiciary Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Legal Services Corporation.

S-146, Capitol

Appropriations

Transportation Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the National Transportation Safety Board, and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Department of Transportation.

SD-138

2:00 p.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

Public Lands, National Parks and Forests Subcommittee

To hold hearings on S. 471, to establish a new area study process for proposed ad-

ditions to the National Parks System, and S. 528, to provide for the transfer of certain United States Forest Service lands located in Lincoln County, Montana, to Lincoln County in the State of Montana.

SD-366

Veterans' Affairs

To hold hearings on proposed legislation to finance veterans health care programs.

SR-418

MAY 10

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, the Farm Credit Administration, and the Food and Drug Administration, Department of Health and Human Services.

SD-138

2:30 p.m.

Energy and Natural Resources
Water and Power Subcommittee

To hold hearings on the potential role of Federal reclamation projects in meeting the water supply needs of the Colonias in Texas.

SD-366

MAY 11

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

Interior Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

S-128, Capitol

MAY 12

9:30 a.m.

Energy and Natural Resources

To hold hearings on the Environmental Protection Agency's proposed renewable oxygenate standard.

SD-366

Rules and Administration

To hold hearings on proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Federal Election Commission.

SR-301

10:00 a.m.

Appropriations

VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Corporation for National and Community Service.

SD-106

MAY 13

9:30 a.m.

Appropriations

Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee

To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education.

SD-192

MAY 15

Housing and Urban Development, and independent agencies.

CANCELLATIONS

9:00 a.m.
Office of Technology Assessment
Board meeting, to consider pending business.

SD-138

MAY 3

EF-100, Capitol

MAY 25

2:30 p.m.
Energy and Natural Resources
Water and Power Subcommittee
To hold hearings to review the implementation of the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (Title 34 of P.L. 102-575) and the coordination of the program with other Federal protection and restoration efforts in the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.

SD-366

MAY 17

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense, focusing on the Pacific Rim, NATO, and peacekeeping programs.

SD-192

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of the Interior.

S-128, Capitol

MAY 26

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

SD-106

POSTPONEMENTS

APRIL 27

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense.

SD-192

9:30 a.m.
Judiciary
Technology and the Law Subcommittee
To hold hearings to examine privacy and competitiveness issues in the telecommunications industry, focusing on the Administration's "clipper chip" key escrow encryption program.

SH-216

JUNE 8

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Interior Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Energy.

S-128, Capitol

1:30 p.m.
Labor and Human Resources
Children, Family, Drugs and Alcoholism Subcommittee
To hold hearings on emerging issues regarding child abuse.

SD-430

JULY 19

10:00 a.m.
Appropriations
Defense Subcommittee
Business meeting, to mark up proposed legislation authorizing funds for fiscal year 1995 for the Department of Defense.

SD-192

2:00 p.m.
Commerce, Science, and Transportation
To resume hearings on S. 1350, to provide for an expanded Federal program of hazards mitigation and insurance against the risk of catastrophic natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions.

SR-253

MAY 20

9:00 a.m.
Appropriations
VA, HUD, and Independent Agencies Subcommittee
To hold hearings on proposed budget estimates for fiscal year 1995 for the Departments of Veteran's Affairs and

SD-106