

the past twenty years. Responsible for the implementation of drug and gang prevention programs such as D.A.R.E. and G.R.E.A.T., Reverend Giles has had a profound impact on Norwalk's young people. Because of his good work, our children are learning the dangers of drugs, gangs, and youth violence. Reverend Giles' efforts have gone a long way in opening the doors of communication between students and local law enforcement officials, a crucial link in the fight to end youth violence.

Even with the incredible responsibilities Reverend Giles takes on in his professional career, he has still found time to serve on several community organizations, including the Interdenominational Ministers Alliance of Greater Bridgeport and Vicinity, Milford's Board of Police Commissioners, and New Haven's Annual Yom Hashoah Community Observance in remembrance of the Holocaust. I have had the privilege of having him serve on my Military Advisory Committee where he has taken the time to interview students from around the Third Congressional District who are interested in attending our nation's military academies.

I am proud to stand today and join Reverend Giles' wife, Stephany, family, friends, and the First Baptist Church of Milford in extending my sincere thanks and appreciation for his outstanding leadership and invaluable contributions to our community. My sincere congratulations, Reverend Giles, on your tenth anniversary and best wishes for continued success.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER
AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT
ON H.R. 2614, CERTIFIED DEVELOPMENT
COMPANY PROGRAM
IMPROVEMENTS ACT OF 2000

SPEECH OF

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition of H.R. 2614. I am deeply disturbed that this legislation was assembled by the Republican leadership without consultation with either the President or the Democrats in Congress. It is a partisan package of tax breaks for a variety of special interests. It ignores the needs of middle-class families and does not appropriately deal with the struggles of rural and teaching hospitals under the Medicare program.

This legislation does not contain the bipartisan school construction tax credit bond provision that would provide \$25 billion in interest-free school construction bonds to help our crumbling schools. Instead it provides far less help to school districts, while giving the greatest tax cuts to wealthy bondholders, not average taxpayers.

This bill also fails to address the marriage penalty and reform of the estate tax to protect small businesses and family farms. Both are tax cut priorities around which there is broad bipartisan agreement.

H.R. 2614 does not provide an adequate tax solution for people who lack health insurance. Instead, it offers a sham deduction that could lead to many families paying more for the health insurance that they already have. Ac-

ording to the Joint Tax Committee, the deduction for buying health insurance will only succeed in helping about 5 percent of the 43 million uninsured purchase health insurance. Furthermore, this provision could lead employers to either cut back their contribution to health insurance premiums or drop coverage completely for many employees. In short, this tax deduction is very costly at \$10 billion per year, yet has very little positive impact.

While this bill would increase the minimum wage 50 cents in 2001 and another 50 cents in 2002, all other provisions to help workers by altering overtime and other protections of the Fair Labor Standards Act have been dropped. Instead, the bill contains numerous small business and special interest tax breaks—such as \$25 billion for an increase in the business meals deduction, repeal of 4.3 cents of the diesel fuel excise tax for railroads at a cost of \$1.58 billion and a \$250 million tax break for timber companies.

Instead of providing relief for those health care providers who really suffered harm from the 1997 Balanced Budget cuts this legislation would pass along 41 percent of the increase in Medicare spending to HMOs. This money could otherwise be directed toward beneficiary and health care providers needs. There is not even a guarantee that HMOs will stay in the communities they now serve. Each dollar that goes to the HMO industry in this bill is a dollar that won't go to improve coverage for a Medicare beneficiary or go to help a rural hospital remain open.

I cannot support this inappropriate use of increased Medicare dollars. I support meaningful assistance to health care providers and targeted managed care payment increases to low-reimbursement counties, like many in Wisconsin, in exchange for their commitment to remain in the communities they serve for at least three years and not abandon seniors like so many have.

This Congress has failed to pass any meaningful health reform, such as the Patients' Bill of Rights or a Medicare prescription drug benefit, and instead has chosen to provide tax breaks for special interests and millions of dollars in Medicare spending to HMOs. I urge my colleagues to oppose this bill.

WAIVING POINTS OF ORDER
AGAINST CONFERENCE REPORT
ON H.R. 2614, CERTIFIED DEVELOPMENT
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SPEECH OF

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 26, 2000

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 2614. While I believe that there are many good provisions in this bill, I must object to it because it does not restore Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) benefits to legal immigrant women and children. In 1995, Congress imposed a 5-year ban on providing Medicaid and CHIP coverage to recently qualified immigrants. In 1996, Congress passed an immigration bill that split families; threw out due process; and took away discretion. But, worst of all, Congress took away compassion.

So, I'm not here just as a Member of Congress or as the Chairman of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Health Task Force. I'm here as an American upset with the laws that discriminate against my fellow human beings. Today we stand before you to defend the women and children who fled tyranny and poverty only to be denied the health care afforded other Americans. We are talking about people that came here legally, play by the rules, and pay taxes. I firmly believe that we should include a provision that give states the option to provide SCHIP and Medicaid benefits to lawfully present immigrant low-income pregnant women and children. Children and pregnant women who are denied coverage through the SCHIP and Medicaid 5-year ban usually can't get other vital health care coverage. As a matter of decency, as a matter of economics, as a matter of public health, legal immigrant children and pregnant women deserve the same access to essential health care coverage offered to citizens. For pregnant women and their children, regular prenatal care and early intervention saves lives and dollars.

Children who have routine office visits and immunizations grow to be healthy adults with less medical complications. Children monitored by pediatricians are less likely to be victimized by chronic and communicable diseases. Preventive care minimizes emergency room visits, a costly and inefficient way of providing health care. Remember, diseases do not ask to see a passport. The 5-year ban on providing Medicaid and CHIP coverage has been the greatest barrier to health care for legal immigrants. It's time to make the system fair for everyone.

IMPORTANCE OF THE ONGOING
U.S. CONGRESSIONAL FORUM ON
LAOS WITH THE APPROACHING
25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
COMMUNIST REGIME

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned about the deteriorating political, economic and security situation in Laos which remains under the brutal control of one of the world's last remaining Stalinist regimes. More is needed to promote democracy, basic human liberties and human rights—and to stop the serious, ongoing intervention by Vietnam's military and security forces in the internal affairs of Laos. This is needed to serve the interests of the American people and the freedom-loving people of Laos, Vietnam and Thailand.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the Center for Public Policy Analysis and its Executive Director, Mr. Philip Smith, as well as Colonel Wangyee Vang of the Lao Veterans of America for their leadership in helping to convene the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos. Many of my colleagues from both sides of the aisle have participated in this important forum series on Capitol Hill over the course of the 106th Congress. It has helped to develop enhanced awareness and understanding of the serious developments in Laos by policymakers. I am proud to have participated in a

number of these events, along with my staff assistant, Paul Berkowitz. In December of 1999, at one of the Congressional Forum sessions, I was pleased to participate along with Major General Vang Pao and other distinguished guests, and presented a joint report about our Congressional Staff Delegation research mission to Southeast Asia in the summer of 1999. In our report, issued jointly by the International Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, we discussed the serious ongoing plight of the Hmong and Lao people still suffering in Laos. Other speakers and participants at the forum series on Laos included distinguished Members and staff from many offices including: Representatives DANA ROHRBACHER, GEORGE RADANOVICH and WILLIAM DELAHUNT, of the House International Relations Committee, on which I serve as Chairman, as well as Chairman JESSE HELMS, Senators BOB SMITH, RUSSELL FEINGOLD, PAUL WELLSTONE, Representatives MARK GREEN, PATRICK KENNEDY, CALVIN DOOLEY and the late Bruce Vento, who passed away earlier this month. Congressman Vento's leadership on human rights and with the forum series on Laos will, indeed, be sadly missed by so many in this Chamber and in the Laotian community.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. Congressional Forum series on Laos is making a significant impact in helping to provide vital information and to formulating policy toward Laos. It has helped generate numerous breaking stories in news services around the world, including the Washington Post, Washington Times, Agence France, Associated Press, the South China Morning Post and others. Radio Free Asia, Lao Service, as well as the Voice of America have also provided coverage. Historic legislation on Laos has also been enacted with the important information that has come from these Forums in Congress including H. Con. Res. 169, condemning, for the first time, the Communist regime in Laos for its human rights violations and other matters. I was proud to have worked with Representatives GEORGE RADANOVICH, MARK GREEN and former Congressman Bruce Vento to help pass this important legislation in the International Relations Committee.

Mr. Speaker, thus far, distinguished panelists and participants in the Congressional Forum on Laos have also included important Laotian and Hmong leaders as well as Lao experts from around the world, including: T. Kumar, Asia Director for Amnesty International; Markram Ouais, The National Democratic Institute's (NDI) Senior Program Officer for Asia; Dr. Jane Hamilton-Merritt, Noble Prize nominee and distinguished Lao and Hmong scholar; Dr. Chou Norinh, of the United League for Democracy in Laos, and distinguished professor at Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand; Dr. Bounchaloune Phouthakany, of the University of Quebec, and Secretary General, United Lao Association of Canada; Dr. Khamphay Abbai of Australia; Dr. Bounthone Chanthavixay, with the World Wide Coordinating Committee on Laos, Hagen, Germany, and former Lao student protest leader in Eastern Europe; His Royal Highness Prince Sayavong, of the Lao Royal Family, in France; Major General Vang Pao, Hmong leader; Colonel Wangyee Vang, President of the Lao Veterans of America; Thongsavanh Phongsavanh, of the Lao Representatives Abroad Council; General Thonglit

Chokhbenbun of France; Thongkhoun Phathana, President, The Laos Institute For Democracy; Ms. Sothida Bounthapanya Lao Progressive Party; The Lan Xang Foundation, of Atlanta, Georgia; Col. Ngeunsamith Sasorith, France, President, of the Paris-based, Association of Deportees and Escapees of Communist Concentration Camps in Laos; Mr. Vanida Sananikone Thephsouvanh, President, of the Paris-based, Lao Movement for Human Rights, France; Stephen Vang, of the United Lao Congress for Democracy; Chao Opat NaChampassak, of the Royal Lao Family; Princess Moune Souvanna-Phouma, of the Royal Lao Family; Mrs. Houa Ly and Ms. Yer Ly, wife and daughter of a Hmong-American from Wisconsin who disappeared in Laos in 1999; Mrs. Suzie Vang, wife of Mr. Michael Vang of Fresno, California who disappeared in Laos in 1999; Reverend Shongchai Hang, of Philadelphia who testified on behalf of Hmong and Lao Christians persecuted in Laos.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to thank all of the Members of Congress, staff and participants from around the United States and the world who have made the U.S. Congressional Forum on Laos such an important success in the 106th Congress. The winds of intense turmoil and change are now blowing in Laos. The United States, with the help of the U.S. Congress, needs to do more to support democracy and free and fair elections in Laos during the upcoming vote in 2002.

Mr. Speaker, toward this end, on December 1st, while the Communist Regime in Laos celebrates its dark anniversary of totalitarian dictatorship, it is important to note that a major installment of the Congressional Forum on Laos will be held in the U.S. House of Representatives with witnesses and participants from around the world, including the slated testimony of a group of student demonstrators who escaped from Vientiane, Laos recently and were just granted political asylum several days ago in America. A special ceremony will follow in Congress, during the evening, to mark the grim oppression of the Laotian people after 25 years of Communism. Laotian victims of communist oppression will share their testimony. I encourage my colleagues to continue to aggressively support these important activities and the efforts of Laotian people in their struggle to bring freedom, democracy and human rights to Laos.

HUMAN RIGHTS IN BURMA

HON. JOSEPH R. PITTS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 27, 2000

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, ethnic and religious minorities around the world suffer because many governments fail to protect fundamental human freedoms such as freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, and freedom of assembly. Or, a government fails to concede to the will of the people and imposes its will upon the people. When a government fails to uphold international human rights standards, to respect the wishes of the people expressed through voting or other legitimate mechanisms, or to protect people's basic freedoms from violations, individuals and groups often are harassed, imprisoned, tortured, and

even killed. Serious violence and human rights abuses have occurred in Burma through the actions of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). On September 26, 2000, I chaired the Congressional Human Rights Caucus Briefing on Human Rights Concerns in Burma. I would like to submit for the RECORD the testimony of Mr. David Eubank, Saw Htoo Htoo Lay, Pastor Edmund Htokut, Saw Ka Law Lah, Mr. Stephen Dun, and Major Larry J. Redmon.

TESTIMONY OF DAVID EUBANK BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS, SEPTEMBER 26, 2000

Thank you for this opportunity to share with you about the situation in Burma, and for the opportunity to ask for action to restore democracy in Burma, protect minority rights, and provide immediate humanitarian assistance for the Internally Displaced People (IDP).

CURRENT SITUATION IN BURMA

The dictators of Burma, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), continue to oppress the people of Burma, reject the 1990 democratic elections, hold over 1,300 political prisoners (55 of whom are members-elect of parliament), and brutally violate the human rights of ethnic minority peoples as well as ethnic Burmans. This has resulted in over 1 million refugees that have fled Burma since 1990, and 2 million Internally Displaced People (1 million ethnic Burmans are displaced for government projects, 1 million are ethnic minority peoples displaced by the attacks of the Burma Army and SPDC forced relocation programs.) The ethnic minority IDPs in particular are in immediate need of help. They face starvation, disease and the constant threat of attack by the Burma Army. Those who have been able to escape the SPDC forced relocation sites, are scattered in jungle hiding places, living in fear. If discovered they are brutally attacked by the Burma Army. Their home villages have been plundered and burned and the Burma Army has scattered land mines in and around their villages to strike terror and discourage their return. (In last year alone there were over 1,500 new landmine victims.) The IDPs live in fear with very little hope. HIV infection is on the rise with over 440,000 infected and little State response.

Narcotics production and export has increased with profits from the heroin and amphetamine traffic being shared with the SPDC. In 1999, over 500 million amphetamine tablets were smuggled into Thailand. Most of these were produced in the 55 amphetamine laboratories across the border in eastern Burma. 1.750 tons of opium was also produced making Burma the worlds number two producer of opium and heroin. The SPDC has been closely involved with groups that produce and traffic narcotics, helping in 2000 alone, to move over 100,000 form one group to a area adjacent to the Thai border, thus creating a major increase of narcotic traffic into Thailand.

The U.S. Department of State 1999 Country Report on Human Rights, the 2000 Annual Report on Religious Freedom, as well as current Amnesty International and International Labor Organization reports all condemn the human rights record of Burma and appeal for change.

RATIONALE FOR ACTION

(1) The people of Burma are oppressed, tortured, and murdered by the dictator's army, and this is wrong.

(2) There was a free and fair election in 1990 and the results should be recognized and democracy restored.

(3) The dictatorship allows narcotics production and prospers from its sale.