

I urge my colleagues to support this important amendment and commend our bipartisan colleagues who are leading the fight on this critical issue.

By supporting the arts and the humanities, the Federal Government has the ability to partner with state and local efforts to bolster the arts and educational opportunities in our communities.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE FAIRVIEW AUXILIARY BOARD TO FAIRVIEW GENERAL HOSPITAL

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the Fairview Auxiliary Board to Fairview General Hospital, whose selfless efforts exemplify a model of benevolence and altruism.

Over fifty years ago this organization was founded under the auspices of providing essential resources to the hospital for equipment, building funds, and scholarships. Today, this organization has blossomed to staff over 140 volunteers dedicated to this proposition. Their hours of volunteered time have resulted in astounding success. Volunteers have contributed over 30,000 hours and raised more than \$600,000 in the past ten years alone.

Mr. Speaker, please join me today in commending the members of the Fairview Auxiliary Board. We must encourage organizations such as theirs to continue to volunteer their time and effort in the interest of the betterment of the world.

THE SENIOR CITIZENS FREEDOM OF CHOICE ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Senior Citizens Freedom of Choice of Act. This act ensures that participation in the Medicare program is completely voluntary. I also ask unanimous consent to insert into the record a letter sent to my office from a citizen who is trying to receive Social Security benefits without being forced to enroll in Medicare Part A, along with a letter from the Social Security Administration admitting that seniors who do not enroll in Medicare Part A are denied Social Security benefits.

When Medicare was first established, seniors were promised that the program would be voluntary. In fact, the original Medicare legislation explicitly protected a senior's right to seek out other forms of medical insurance. However, today, the Social Security Administration refuses to give seniors Social Security benefits unless they enroll in Medicare Part A.

This not only distorts the intent of the creators of the Medicare system, it also violates the promise represented by Social Security. Americans pay taxes into the Social Security Trust Fund their whole working lives and are promised that Social Security will be there for them when they retire. Yet, today, seniors are

told that they cannot receive these benefits unless they agree to join another government program!

At a time when the fiscal solvency of Medicare is questionable, to say the least, it seems foolish to waste scarce Medicare funds on those who would prefer to do without Medicare. Allowing seniors who neither want nor need to participate in the program to refrain from doing so will also strengthen the Medicare program for those seniors who do wish to participate in it. Of course, my bill does not take away Medicare benefits from any senior. It simply allows each senior to choose voluntarily whether or not to accept Medicare benefits.

Seniors may wish to refuse Medicare for a variety of reasons. Some seniors may wish to continue making their own health care decisions, rather than have those decisions made for them by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Other seniors may have a favorite physician who is one of the growing number of doctors who have been driven out of the Medicare program by CMS's micromanagement of their practices and below-cost reimbursements.

Forcing seniors into any government program as a precondition of receiving their promised Social Security benefits both violates the promise of Social Security and infringes on the freedom of seniors who do not wish to participate in Medicare. As the author of the submitted letter says, ". . . I should be able to choose the medical arrangements I prefer without suffering the penalty that is being imposed." I urge my colleagues to protect the rights of seniors to make the medical arrangements that best suit their own needs by co-sponsoring the Senior Citizens Freedom of Choice Act.

Congressman RON PAUL

U.S. Congress, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN PAUL: I am writing to inform you about a structural problem in Medicare of which you may be unaware and that I believe must be remedied, all the more so now that there are rumors that Medicare, Part A, might be combined with Medicare, Part B.

In brief, the problem to which I refer involves the requirement that a Medicare eligible individual enroll in Medicare, Part A as a condition of receiving Social Security benefits to which he or she is entitled. In fact, the Social Security Administration has combined the enrollment forms for the two programs, so that an application for Social Security benefits to which one is entitled automatically entails enrollment in Medicare, Part A.

I discovered this in June 2001 when I went with my husband to apply for my Social Security benefits. I made it quite clear that I would *not* enroll in Medicare, Part A due to my objections to certain aspects of this program. (The objectionable aspects include invasion of privacy and limitation of medical choice.) In response I was told that I then could not receive the Social Security benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

Further communication with CMS by myself and by the office of Senator Kennedy on my behalf confirmed that CMS and the Social Security Administration take the position that "the Medicare program, Part A . . . [is] a benefit completely linked to the monthly social security benefit for those age 65 or older." Indeed I was sent a copy of federal regulation 404.640 (entitled "Withdrawal of an application"), which states that anyone who enrolls in Medicare, Part A and then decides later to withdraw will have to return

all benefits received. (Another document I received states that this includes both medical benefits and social security benefits.)

Upon receipt of a copy of the letter, dated October 12, 2001, sent to Senator Kennedy regarding my complaint. I followed that letter's suggestion that I make an attempt to file "a restricted application for Social Security benefits." This I did in a letter, dated May 15, 2002, to the regional commissioner for Social Security, Manual Vaz.

The response to my letter to Mr. Vaz came from the local (Waltham) Social Security office. In that letter, dated May 29, 2002. I was told that it was impossible to make a restricted application, i.e., an "application for cash social security retirement benefits only."

Thus I was left with no recourse. I could not appeal a denial of my "restricted" application, because I was not even permitted to make the application. Short of an expensive lawsuit or an Act of Congress, there appears to be no remedy.

This is no trivial matter for me. I have now lost two years of Social Security benefits. It is not clear when or if I will ever receive these benefits. All those with whom I have discussed this problem, irrespective of their political persuasion, have been shocked to hear about these regulations.

I believe that I should be able to choose the medical arrangements I prefer without suffering the penalty that is being imposed. I ask that you take steps to remedy this situation. I shall be happy to supply documentation regarding the facts outlined above, if you request it. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely, _____

SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

DEAR MS. :

Enclosed please find the regulations which state that there is no application for cash social security retirement benefits only. If you file for cash benefits you MUST file for the Medicare Part A (HI). Therefore this can only be translated, in one way at this time. If you do not wish to file for Medicare Part A (HI) you must forfeit your right to cash benefits.

If I can be of any further assistance please feel free to contact me at the above telephone number extension, 3016.

Sincerely yours,

Technical Expert.

HONORING MAYNARD HOLBROOK JACKSON, JUNIOR, AND EXTENDING CONDOLENCES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ON HIS DEATH

SPEECH OF

HON. KENDRICK B. MEEK

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 16, 2003

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague, JOHN LEWIS, for introducing this resolution. I was honored to cosponsor it, because I think it is very important that people in this legislative body and in this nation know the huge impact Maynard Jackson had on the country and on the African American community in particular.

You could just sense the importance of Maynard Jackson by watching the thousands of mourners who waited in lines stretching several blocks to honor him. Former Presidents joined everyday citizens in honoring the life and service of this great man, who was the

first black mayor of Atlanta, a major Southern city and a symbol of both the Old South, and the New South.

Mayor Jackson paved the way for African Americans who are interested in government and civic affairs and were willing to devote their time and effort to public service. He showed what could be achieved with intelligence and fairness and hard work. And in doing so he provided both hope and opportunity to all Atlantans, white and black, while inspiring a whole generation of African American elected officials, including me.

Maynard Jackson served as Mayor of Atlanta from 1974 to 1982 and again from 1990 to 1994. His three terms were distinguished by diversification and growth in Atlanta's economy. He saw opportunity international trade before the "world economy" became a household name. He encouraged foreign governments to open new consulates and foreign companies to open trade offices, and Atlanta's imports and exports increased accordingly.

The result of Maynard Jackson's policies was record-setting new jobs creation, strong bond ratings, and the most successful non-preference, non-quota affirmative action and equal opportunity programs in the nation.

Maynard Jackson was also an innovator. He developed a successful neighborhood planning system and a city-wide comprehensive development plan. He also brokered major construction projects in housing and mass transit and instituted reform in city management and organization and improved employee incentives—all of which led to increased worker productivity.

Especially noteworthy was Mayor Jackson's leadership in the construction of Hartsfield Atlanta International Airport, which was completed ahead of schedule and under budget.

As a result, Maynard Jackson's years of Mayoral service are widely respected and documented as times of unparalleled economic development, internationalism, public-private partnerships, racial harmony, and fiscal stability for Atlanta. Because of his leadership, Atlanta created more jobs in the 1990s than any other U.S. city—half a million since 1993.

A report in Higher Education in America's Metropolitan Areas identified the Atlanta region as a national leader in higher education, consistently ranking in the top 10 metro areas in key measures of higher education activity. The majority of students in the Atlanta region not only are pursuing higher education, they are completing it: Atlanta has the sixth highest number of degrees conferred at the Bachelor's level and higher, due in large part to the encouragement and urging of Mayor Jackson.

It is certainly fitting that he died on the same day that the U.S. Supreme Court upheld affirmative action. He demanded that African-American firms get their fair share of government contracts, including those awarded in the \$1 billion expansion of Hartsfield International Airport. By the end of his first term, the percentage of city contracts going to minority-owned firms had increased from 0.13 percent to 38.6 percent.

Today, Atlanta is recognized as one of the nation's most dynamic cities, a place where hope is alive and well and not dependent on skin pigmentation.

Maynard Jackson has left his imprint so solidly on American society—economically, educationally, creatively, and socially—that his service and tutelage will long be remembered

and celebrated. He was an exemplary leader, a dedicated community servant, and a tireless advocate for economic and social justice. He literally helped change the world. He will be missed, but his spirit will live on in his extraordinary legacy.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. XAVIER BECERRA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, on Monday, July 14, 2003, I was unable to cast my floor vote on rollcall Nos. 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, and 359. The votes I missed include rollcall vote 354 on the Rehberg amendment; rollcall vote 355 on the Blumenauer amendment; rollcall vote 356 on the Hefley amendment; rollcall vote 357 on the Ackerman amendment; rollcall vote 358 on passage of the Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2004; and rollcall vote 359 on the Motion to Instruct Conferees on the Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act.

Had I been present for the votes, I would have voted "aye" on rollcall votes 354, 355, 357, and 359, and "nay" on rollcall votes 356 and 358.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask that the following be placed in the RECORD: During rollcall vote 367, the Hostettler amendment to H.R. 1950, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, my "aye" vote, in favor of the amendment, was not recorded. I would ask that the permanent record reflect my support for this amendment.

THE HONEST MONEY ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 17, 2003

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce the Honest Money Act. The Honest Money Act repeals legal tender laws, a.k.a. forced tender laws, that compel American citizens to accept fiat—arbitrary—irredeemable paper-ticket or electronic money as their unit of account.

Absent legal tender laws, individuals acting through the markets, rather than government dictates, determine what is to be used as money. Historically, the free-market choice for money has been some combination of gold and silver. As Dr. Edwin Vieira, the nation's top expert on constitutional monetary policy says: "... a free market functions most efficiently and most fairly when the market determines the quality and the quantity of money that's being used."

While fiat money is widely accepted thanks to legal tender laws, it does not maintain its purchasing power. This works to the disadvan-

tage of ordinary people who lose the purchasing power of their savings, pensions, annuities, and other promises of future payment. Most importantly, because of the subsidies our present monetary system provides to banks, which, as Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has stated, "induces" the financial system to increase leverage, the Federal Government can create additional money, in Mr. Greenspan's words, "without limit." For this reason, absent legal tender laws, many citizens would refuse to accept fiat irredeemable paper-ticket or electronic money.

Legal tender laws disadvantage ordinary citizens by forcing them to use money that is vulnerable to vast depreciation. As Stephen T. Byington wrote in the September 1895 issue of the American Federationist: "No legal tender law is ever needed to make men take good money; its only use is to make them take bad money. Kick it out!" Similarly, the American Federation of Labor asked: If money is good and would be preferred by the people, then why are legal tender laws necessary? And, if money is not good and would not be preferred by the people, then why in a democracy should they be forced to use it?

The American Federation of Labor understood how the erosion of the value of money cheated working people. Further, honest money, i.e., specie, was one of the three issues that encouraged ordinary people to organize into unions when the union movement began in the U.S. circa 1830.

While harming ordinary citizens, legal tender laws help expand the scope of government beyond that to which it is authorized under the Constitution. However, the primary beneficiaries of legal tender laws are financial institutions, especially banks, which have been improperly granted the special privilege of creating fiat irredeemable electronic money out of thin air through a process commonly called "fractional reserve lending." According to the Federal Reserve, since 1950, these private companies—banks—have created almost \$8 trillion out of nothing. This has been enormously advantageous to them.

The advantages given banks and other financial institutions by our fiat monetary system, which is built on a foundation of legal tender laws, allow them to realize profits that would not be available to these institutions in a free market. This represents legalized plunder of ordinary people. Legal tender laws thus enable the redistribution of wealth from those who produce it, mostly ordinary working people, to those who create and move around our irredeemable paper-ticket electronic money which is, in essence, just scrip.

The drafters of the Constitution were well aware of how a government armed with legal tender powers could ravage the people's liberty and prosperity. That is why the Constitution does not grant legal tender power to the Federal Government, and the States are empowered to make legal tender only out of gold and silver (see Article 1, Section 10). Instead, Congress was given the power to regulate money against a standard, i.e., the dollar. When Alexander Hamilton wrote the Coinage Act of 1792, he simply made into law the market-definition of a dollar as equaling the silver content of the Spanish milled dollar (371.25 grains of silver), which is the dollar referred to in the Constitution. This historical definition of the dollar has never been changed, and cannot be changed any more than the term