

430 - 500,000 80%

~~80,000~~

43
~~2~~
86

370,000 full grandfather
320,000 budget

98

99

00

(50,000)

(6,000)

Chronology of welfare reform cuts affecting legal immigrants:

Welfare Law: The welfare reform law included \$21.3 billion in savings for legal immigrants. Legal immigrants were banned from getting SSI and food stamps. States were given the option of denying Medicaid to those who were here when the law signed, while future immigrants are banned from Medicaid for five years.

1:18?

- \$12.9 billion in SSI savings
- \$5.2 billion in Medicaid savings
- \$3.2 billion in food stamp savings

President's Budget: The President's budget proposed to restore SSI and Medicaid for legal immigrants who became disabled after they entered the U.S., regardless of the date they entered. It also restored Medicaid to legal immigrant children.

It did not restore SSI and Medicaid for the elderly who are not disabled. It did not propose food stamp restorations beyond an implementation delay.

- \$9.1 billion in SSI restorations
- \$5.8 billion in Medicaid restorations (would have been \$3.7 billion if budget had not also assumed Medicaid per capita cap policy)

Final Budget Agreement: The final agreement restores SSI and Medicaid for legal immigrants in the U.S. when the welfare law was signed who are or become disabled after coming to the U.S.

It does not help legal immigrants who arrived after August 23, 1996.

320,000 in '98

- \$8.0 billion in SSI restorations
- \$1.7 billion in Medicaid restorations

* Marchand MREx - why not on SSI now
* Future fix MRE?
~~* Paper to Marchand~~
~~* Did VP do OK with Marchand~~
* Gutierrez on zero tolerance.
Pugh

- Sen Fin better

- Still not doing all, though - $\frac{1}{2}$, those > 8/96

Levin 125,000
160,000?

- Gutierrez
- Levin

- Marchand - kids SSI
- Chromosome

- photo

Legal Immigrant Savings/ Restorations (\$ in billions)	SSI	Medicaid	Food Stamps	Total
Welfare Reform	\$12.9 savings	\$5.2 savings	\$3.2 savings	\$21.3 savings
President's Budget	\$ 9.1 restored \$ 3.8 unrestored (elderly who are not disabled)	\$3.7 restored (\$5.8 with per capita cap) \$1.5 unrestored (elderly who are not disabled)	-0- \$3.2 unrestored (all cuts)	\$12.8 restored (\$14.9 with per capita cap) \$8.5 unrestored
Budget Agreement	\$ 8.0 restored \$ 4.9 unrestored (future entrants, elderly who are not disabled)	\$1.7 restored \$3.5 unrestored (future entrants, elderly who are not disabled)	-0- \$3.2 unrestored (all cuts)	\$ 9.7 restored \$11.6 unrestored



THE VICE PRESIDENT'S LEGAL IMMIGRANT EVENT

DATE: June 19, 1997
LOCATION: Old Executive Office Building, Room 450
TIME: 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm
FROM: Maria Echaveste
Diana Fortuna
Barbara Woolley

I. PURPOSE

To reaffirm the Administration's commitment to the fair treatment of legal immigrants as agreed upon in the budget agreement, to highlight the real stories of legal immigrants who will be adversely affected by the Republican budget proposals, and to heighten awareness of the impact of Republican plans to cut aid for legal immigrants.

II. BACKGROUND

The bipartisan budget agreement restored SSI and Medicaid benefits to any immigrant in the country as of August 23, 1996 who is or becomes disabled. Notwithstanding the plain language of the budget agreement, the House Ways and Means Committee reconciliation proposal restores SSI and Medicaid benefits only to immigrants (both the disabled and non-disabled elderly) already receiving benefits prior to August 23, 1996, when the welfare law was signed --essentially grandfathering those already on the rolls. We did not achieve everything we had hoped in the budget agreement --the President's original proposal would have gone further to allow new entrants (legal immigrants who arrived after the welfare law was signed) to also qualify for benefits if they became disabled.

The budget agreement preserves SSI coverage for more people in the long run than the House proposal. By the year 2002, the Ways and Means proposal would protect 75,000 fewer immigrants than the budget agreement, 125,000 fewer immigrants by the year 2007. Note, however, the House proposal protects more people initially because it grandfatheres everyone on the rolls, including the non-disabled elderly, who are not protected by the budget agreement. In spite of this apparent "elderly vs. disabled" split, aging groups have joined with disability groups in forcefully endorsing our approach over the House's.

There is now a scramble in Congress to find money to cover both groups at issue --the elderly non-disabled on the rolls who are not covered under the budget agreement, and legal immigrants in the country when the law was signed who become disabled in the future. The Senate Finance Committee voted today for a proposal that is significantly better than the House, and that actually costs more than the budget agreement over the budget window because it grandfatheres everyone now on the rolls.

Like the House proposal, the Senate would cover all those on the rolls when the welfare law was signed. It would also allow disabled legal immigrants in the country when the welfare

law was signed to apply for SSI until September of this year. In contrast, the budget agreement would provide disability and health benefits to disabled immigrants in the country when the law was signed no matter when they become disabled.

In our letter to the Hill on the Senate Finance proposal yesterday, we signaled our willingness to cover the non-disabled elderly under the right circumstances by stating, "The Administration is sympathetic to the goal of covering the elderly non-disabled, and will work with you to address this issue. However, as is the case with all of the provisions in the agreement, any new policies that require additional resources must be mutually agreeable." The Senate Finance policy would cost \$10.4 billion, as compared to the \$9.7 billion price tag of the budget agreement and the \$9.0 billion cost of the House proposal. Covering both groups would cost \$11.4 billion.

This means that under the Senate's plan, the particular individuals whose plight we are describing at the event would be eligible for SSI --however, if these same individuals had become disabled this October they would not be able to get SSI. Given these shifting circumstances, we feel it is best for you to focus your remarks on the House proposal, and note in passing that the Senate proposal is not good enough because it does not cover the group protected by the budget agreement.

Dorota Kiedos, 27, is a legal immigrant from Poland, and she will share her story with the audience with the help of a translator. She came to the United States in 1993 with her husband and their son. In 1994 she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, a degenerative disease of the central nervous system, and was unable to perform her job at the shoe factory where she has worked since moving to the U.S. She was informed in February that although her case was previously approved by the Social Security Administration to receive SSI benefits, she was no longer eligible because she is not a U.S. citizen.

III. PARTICIPANTS

Speaking

Vice President

Paul Marchand

Luis Gutierrez (D-IL)

Sander Levin (D-MI)

Dorota Kiedos

Chairman, Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities

Congressman

Congressman

Legal immigrant from Poland

Also on Stage (but not speaking)

John Callahan

Acting Commissioner, Social Security Administration

The audience is made up of 180 representatives from a broad segment of organizations--Hispanic, Asian American, Immigration, Provider, Religious, Women's, Ethnic, Education, Gay/Lesbian, Children, Aging, and Disability.

IV. PRESS PLAN

Open to press.

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- * Upon arrival to the holding room outside Room 450, you will be met by Paul Marchand, Chairman of Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities, Congressmen Sander Levin and Luis Gutierrez, and Dorota Kiedos.
- * **YOU** and the other participants are announced on stage together, beginning with Paul Marchand and ending with you. **YOU** and other participants will remain standing.
- * Paul Marchand makes remarks and introduces Congressman Gutierrez.
- * Congressman Luis Gutierrez makes remarks and introduces Congressman Levin.
- * Congressman Sander Levin makes remarks and introduces Dorota Kiedos.
- * Dorota Kiedos makes remarks (through her translator, Maria Kazimierczak) and introduces **YOU**.
- * **YOU** make remarks and depart.

VI. REMARKS

Provided by speech writing.

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- Tab A: Agenda
- Tab B: Paul Marchand remarks and bio.
- Tab C: Dorota Kiedos remarks.
- Tab D: List of Participants.
- Tab E: One Pager - Legal Immigrants

A SAFETY NET FOR VULNERABLE LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

The House Ways and Means Committee has failed to restore a minimal safety net for disabled legal immigrants. The bipartisan budget agreement provides funds to restore SSI and Medicaid benefits to any legal immigrant in the U.S. prior to August 23, 1996 who is or becomes disabled -- but the House Ways and Means Committee proposes only to grandfather benefits for those immigrants already receiving benefits when the welfare law was signed.

- **THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE PROPOSAL IGNORES VULNERABLE IMMIGRANTS WHO BECOME DISABLED AFTER AUGUST 23, 1996:** This proposal abandons many legal immigrants who were in the U.S. when the welfare law was signed but become severely disabled after that date. In contrast, the bipartisan budget agreement protects these immigrants -- targeting assistance to those vulnerable individuals who need it most.
- **BY THE YEAR 2002, THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE PROPOSAL WOULD PROTECT 75,000 FEWER IMMIGRANTS THAN THE BUDGET AGREEMENT.** This number grows to 125,000 by the year 2007.
- **DISABLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO RELY ON THEIR SPONSORS FOR HELP.** Since sponsorship agreements were not legally binding in the past, a disabled legal immigrant whose sponsor refuses to provide support has no legal recourse and no source of income. Or a sponsor may not be able to afford to support a severely disabled individual. A disabled legal immigrant who has been in the U.S. for many years may have lost touch with or be unable to locate his or her sponsor.
- **NATIONAL GROUPS REPRESENTING THE ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE UNITED IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO THIS PROPOSAL.** They recognize that the budget agreement would protect more disabled elderly and non-elderly people than the House Ways and Means proposal.
- **THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS PROPOSAL IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE BUDGET AGREEMENT.** Negotiators found a way to assist these individuals within the context of a balanced budget. Now the House Ways and Means Committee is trying to unravel that agreement and failing to restore a minimal safety net for disabled legal immigrants.
- **WHILE BETTER THAN THE HOUSE APPROACH, THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE ALSO FALLS SHORT OF THE MARK.** The Senate Finance Committee would allow disabled legal immigrants to apply for benefits for a short period of time but would then shut the door to legal immigrants who become disabled. Immigrants who become disabled after this arbitrary grace period would be ineligible, just as in the House Ways and Means proposal.

Example: A legal immigrant family entered the country 3 years ago. Both parents work

full-time, earning \$25,000 a year at jobs that don't provide health insurance. Next year, their 5 year-old son becomes severely disabled in a car accident. Under the budget agreement, he would be eligible for SSI and Medicaid; but under the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance proposals he would be denied SSI -- and potentially Medicaid.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

LEGAL IMMIGRATION EVENT

Thursday, June 19, 1997

Room 450, OEOB

1:00 p.m.

REMARKS

Paul Marchand

Chairman of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities

Honorable Luis V. Gutierrez, D-IL

U.S. House of Representatives

Honorable Sander M. Levin, D-MI

U.S. House of Representatives

Dorota Kiedos

Indian Orchard, Massachusetts

Honorable Albert Gore, Jr.

Vice President of the United States

**Statement of Paul Marchand,
Chairman of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities
and Director of Governmental Affairs for
The Arc of the United States**

June 16, 1997

Good morning. I am Paul Marchand, and I am here representing the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities. CCD is a coalition of approximately 100 national disability organizations working together to advocate for national public policy that ensures the self-determination, independence, empowerment, integration and inclusion of children and adults with disabilities in all aspects of society. I am also representing The Arc of the United States, the nation's largest volunteer organization dedicated solely to issues of mental retardation.

I simply cannot overstate our dismay at the fact that Representative Shaw and the House Ways and Means Committee have decided to violate the balanced budget agreement as part of their ongoing effort to strip away access to critical assistance for people with disabilities. What person would think that it is right to go after some of the most vulnerable people in our country - low income people with severe disabilities - all for the sake of budget cuts that are not even necessary to achieve a balanced budget? I wish I could believe that Mr. Shaw did not understand the implications of his efforts, but I cannot. The reality is that people who meet the eligibility requirements for SSI are virtually destitute and are either elderly or have a severe disability. They are already living on the edge and just getting by. Mr. Shaw's proposal could destroy the already fragile lives of these people.

Let me give you a real life example of an SSI recipient from Mr. Shaw's home state of Florida. "Alexis" is a 37 year old man with mental retardation. Even though both of his parents are naturalized U.S. citizens, he has not yet been able to become a citizen. He has tried several times, but has so far been unsuccessful. Under current welfare law, Alexis will lose his SSI because he is not a citizen, thus losing his housing and other supports at a community-based group home. He would then have to move back in with his parents, who simply do not have the resources to take care of him. His parents, who are both working, taxpaying members of their community, would have to choose between eventual bankruptcy or having Alexis become a ward of the state, neither of which would help this country, the taxpayers, or most of all, Alexis.

To put this in perspective, the maximum federal SSI payment is \$5,808 per year, while it would cost the federal government and the state of Florida over \$62,000 annually to institutionalize an individual with mental retardation.

Because of cases like this, Congressional leaders and the White House agreed to restore SSI eligibility for people who were in this country prior to the welfare bill becoming law. They did not want to strand people in such dire circumstances and leave them with no options. But Mr.

Shaw's proposal would affect many people who face situations equally as compelling as "Alexis" by making them ineligible when they need SSI in the future. Cutting off future eligibility for such individuals is both cold-hearted and short-sighted policy.

The cuts proposed by Mr. Shaw are especially disturbing because Congress had the finances to follow through on the budget agreement and preserve SSI life-line assistance for these people. In fact, they had everything they needed to do the right thing. They had the funds for the program and the people in need. All they lacked was the will to follow through on the budget agreement.

We had hoped that the balanced budget agreement, which already damages many key programs for people with mental retardation and other disabilities, would be the baseline, the bottom line for program cuts. Instead, we now see Rep. Shaw and the Ways and Means Committee deciding that those cuts weren't enough, and they have to proceed on their never-ending quest to cut funding whenever they can for low income people with disabilities.

And at the same time, they propose to put that money and more into the pockets of the wealthiest Americans, people who do not face the challenges of surviving day to day. This is almost unthinkable. Here we have Congress squeezing every possible penny from people with disabilities, cutting them off from a lifeline program that at best provides income that is about 75% of poverty, and then they turn around and give an unnecessary windfall to the richest of the rich.

We are here today to call upon the House and Senate to restore the integrity of the budget agreement and the promise of this nation to people who have come here seeking a better life and a fairer deal. It is incumbent upon America's elected officials to stand by their word and their values by rejecting this extremist anti-immigrant, anti-disability effort by the Ways and Means Committee.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Paul A. Marchand

Paul A. Marchand is Director of the national Governmental Affairs Office of The Arc (formerly the Association for Retarded Citizens of the United States), a position he has held for 26 years. The Arc's Governmental Affairs Office assists Federal agencies and the U.S. Congress in formulating programs and benefits for individuals with mental retardation and their families. He is a nationally recognized expert on public policy and disability, having been extensively involved in the passage of many vital Federal laws, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. He played a major role in the enactment of legislation to provide Supported Employment for persons with severe disabilities, to mandate preschool services for children with disabilities, and to establish state programs to serve infants and toddlers.

Mr. Marchand also serves as Chairman of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD), an important coalition of over 100 national, Washington-based organizations which works with the U.S. Congress and Federal agencies on rights, education, rehabilitation, employment, housing, developmental disabilities, health, long-term services, and Social Security Act programs.

He is a member of the Executive Board of the President's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Coalition on Human Needs and NISH, a national organization which creates employment opportunities for people with severe disabilities. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Distinguished Service Award from President George Bush. Two years ago, he was appointed by the Clinton Administration to serve on the National Commission on Childhood Disability which explored ways to improve the SSI program for children.

Prior to his service with The Arc, Mr. Marchand coordinated the Developmental Disabilities Council in the State of Rhode Island, served as Executive Director of the Northern Rhode Island Association for Retarded Citizens for five years, and was a Special Education teacher in Massachusetts for three years. He is a graduate of Fitchburg (Massachusetts) State College, where he majored in Special Education.

Jan., 1997

MY NAME IS DOROTA KIEDOS. I AM HONORED TO BE HERE TODAY TO TELL MY STORY AND THE STORY OF COUNTLESS OTHER LEGAL IMMIGRANTS WHO, LIKE ME, CAME TO THIS COUNTRY TO WORK HARD AND BUILD A BETTER LIFE FOR OUR FAMILY, ONLY TO FIND OURSELVES SUFFERING AN UNEXPECTED TRAGEDY.

I AM A TWENTY-SEVEN YEAR OLD LEGAL PERMANENT RESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. I CAME TO THIS COUNTRY IN 1993 FROM POLAND WITH MY HUSBAND, AND MY THEN TWO YEAR OLD SON, LUCAS. WE CAME TO THIS COUNTRY, LIKE COUNTLESS OTHER IMMIGRANTS, WILLING TO WORK HARD, CONTRIBUTE TO THIS GREAT NATION AND WHEN POSSIBLE, BECOME AMERICAN CITIZENS.

SOON AFTER WE ARRIVED IN MASSACHUSETTS, MY HUSBAND AND I BOTH FOUND WORK. I BEGAN WORKING IN A FACTORY PRODUCING SHOE INSERTS. IT WAS HARD WORK, BUT I WAS GRATEFUL TO HAVE A JOB.

I WOULD HAVE NEVER EXPECTED THAT I, AS A YOUNG WIFE AND MOTHER, WOULD SUFFER THE TRAGEDY OF BEING DIAGNOSED WITH MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS. M.S. IS A DEGENERATIVE DISEASE THAT ATTACKS MY CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM. I WAS DIAGNOSED WITH M.S. IN 1994 AFTER SUFFERING A HORRIBLE ATTACK AT WORK.

P. 170

SINCE THAT TIME MY CONDITION HAS DETERIORATED AND MY DOCTOR HAS TOLD ME THAT I UNABLE TO WORK DUE TO THE EFFECTS OF MY DISEASE. MY DISABILITY AFFECTS MY BALANCE AND COORDINATION. I HAVE DIFFICULTY PERFORMING SIMPLE HOUSEHOLD CHORES SUCH AS CLEANING AND LAUNDERING. AT TIMES, WITHOUT WARNING I CANNOT STAND OR WALK WITHOUT ASSISTANCE. WHAT BREAKS MY HEART THE MOST IS THAT, AT TIMES, I CAN NOT LIFT MY SON, OR HOLD HIM FOR FEAR OF LOSING MY BALANCE. I ALSO FEAR THAT I CAN NOT HAVE MORE CHILDREN.

I APPLIED FOR SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME IN MAY, 1996. I WISH THAT MY FAMILY HAD THE RESOURCES TO NOT NEED THIS BENEFIT, BUT MY HUSBAND HAS ONLY RECENTLY STARTED A NEW JOB AND HIS INSURANCE WILL NOT COVER ME BECAUSE MY CONDITION IS A PREEXISTING ONE. WE LIVE ON HIS SALARY ALONE WHICH IS ONLY \$1, 200 A MONTH. WE BARELY MEET OUR BASIC NEEDS. I RECEIVE NO FOOD STAMPS OR OTHER PUBLIC BENEFITS EXCEPT MEDICAID FOR MYSELF.

ON FEBRUARY 7, 1997 I RECEIVED A LETTER FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION INFORMING ME THAT I MET THE MEDICAL QUALIFICATION FOR RECEIVING SSI. ON FEBRUARY 12, 1997 I RECEIVED ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION TELLING ME THAT BECAUSE I AM NOT A U.S. CITIZEN I CAN NOT RECEIVE SSI.

MY FAMILY AND I WERE VERY UPSET TO LEARN THIS. BECAUSE OF MY
ILLNESS, WE NEED THIS ASSISTANCE NOW AND IN THE FUTURE I WILL NEED
~~NURSING HOME CARE.~~ *even more care*

I DID NOT COME TO THIS COUNTRY TO RECEIVE CHARITY AND I AM ASHAMED
THAT I MUST ASK FOR HELP. I DID NOT KNOW THAT I WOULD BECOME ILL
AND WISH THAT I WAS HEALTHY AND ABLE TO WORK. I ASK OF THIS GREAT
COUNTRY UNDERSTANDING AND COMPASSION FOR MYSELF, MY FAMILY AND
THE MANY OTHER IMMIGRANTS LIKE ME.

THANK YOU FOR LETTING ME SHARE MY STORY.

IT IS WITH GREAT HONOR THAT I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE THE VICE-
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, ALBERT GORE.

EVENT ON LEGAL IMMIGRATION

June 19, 1997

List of participants

Carla Joyce Luggiero
Elana Isabel Lario
Peters Willson
Christine Burch
Barbara Gay
Carolyn Briel
Jackie Nichols
Bruce Yarwood
Rose Gonzalez
Carol Bargo
Cynthia Woodside
Heidi Ann Ecker

Marilyn Yager

Thomas Brooks
Elana Beth Harris

Michael Lin
Bob Sakaniwa
Jayne Parks
Viet Le

Marty Ford
Paul Marchand
Justin Dart

Helen Gonzales
Martin Ornelas-Quintero
Elizabeth McGrail

Hala Maksoud
May Berry
Aram Hamparian

Organization

Provider Organizations

American Hospital Association
Catholic Health Association
NACH
Nat Assn Public Hospitals
American Assn. for Homes & Services for Aging
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Medical Womens' Assn
American Health Care Association
American Nurses Assn
American College of OBGYNs
Nat Assn of Social Workers
AIDS Policy Center for Children Youths and Families
Vanderbilt Medical Center

Children's Organizations

Child Welfare League of America
The Children's Partnership

Asian American Organizations

Organization for Chinese Americans
Japanese American Citizen's League
Asian Pacific American Legal Consortium
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance

Disability Organizations

Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities/The Arc
Consortium of Citizens with Disabilities/The Arc
Justice For All

Gay/Lesbian Organizations

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
Latino/a Lesbian and Gay Organization
Lesbian & Gay Immigration Rights Task Force

Ethnic Organizations

American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee
Arab American Institute
Armenian National Committee of America

Martins Zvaners
Abdurahman Alamoudi
Khaled Safuri
Rita Mullan
Nancy Huber
Ludmila Foster
Laszlo Pasztor
Frank Koszorus
Milan Kravanja
Nuala F. Moore
Father Sean McManus
Ronald Cruz
Robert Blancato
Sophia Miskiewicz
Karl Altai
Robert Miller
Ross Vartian
Elizabeth O'Connell
Catherine Stella O'Leary
Myron Jarosewich
Andrew Manatos
Jennifer Murphy
Emanuel Manotos
Ludmila Foster
Asta Banionis

Sharon Daly
Father Robert Brooks
Jaydee Hanson
British Robinson
Michael Hill
Abigail Price
Dana Marie Bickseler
Dorothy Ivey
Jenny Brav
Margaret Matoric
Reverend Richard Cizik
Lonni Jackson

Abba Cohen
David Harris
David Louis Bernstein
Teresa G. Litwak

American Latvian Association
American Muslim Council
American Muslim Council
Americans for a New Irish Agenda
Central Coordinating Committee
Congress of Russian-Americans
National Federation of American Hungarians
Hungarian American Federation of Metropolitan DC
National Federation of Polish Americans
Irish American Unity Conference
Irish National Caucus
Portugese American Leadership Council
Italian American Democratic Leadership Council
Polish American Congress
Joint Baltic American National Committee
American Czechoslovak Assoc.
Armenian Assembly of America
National Italian American Foundation
Irish Americans for a Democratic Victory
Ukranian Congress Committee of America
National Coordinated Effort of Hellinists
Irish Immigration Center
Manotosku-Manatos
Congress of Russian-Americans
Lithuanian American Corporation

Religious Organizations

Catholic Charities, U.S.A.
The Episcopal Church
The United Methodist Church
Jesuit Social Ministries
United States Catholic Conference
United States Catholic Conference: Policy Division
Mennonite Central Committee
NCC/CWS--Immigration and Refugee Program
United Methodist Board of Church and Society
Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service
National Association of Evangelicals
World Release Corporation

Jewish Organizations

Agudath Isreal of America
American Jewish Congress
American Jewish Committee
National Council of Jewish Women

Jennifer P. Greyson
Mark Levin
Stephen Silberfarb
Abba Cohen
Murray Tenenbaum
Tami Schultz
Reva Price
Jess Hordes
Rebecca Anne Skelton
Jason Epstein

Joel Francisco Najar
Cecilia Nunoz
Marisa Demeo
Liliana Lopez
Jaime Zapata
Tomas Gonzalez
Elena Lorio
Dionicio Morales

Thomas Rugg Brooks
Gabriela J. Uro
Ashley Giglio
Sally Ann Shake
Brian Koman
Ed Kealy/Catherine Ghram
Katrina A. Kelley
Hillary Goldmann

Jennifer Vasilof
Stuart Page Campbell
Chai Feldblum
Eula Tate
Joshua Bernstein
Sarah Kanwick
David Scott Lorello
Berta Romero
Christina Foley
Angela Kelley
Alida Barletta
Judy Mark
George Dewey Roberts

Council of Jewish Federations
National Conference on Soviet Jewry
National Jewish Democratic Council
Agudath Israel of America
Jewish Comm. Council of Greater Washington
Jewish Community Council
Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Anti-Defamation League
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
B'nai B'rith

Hispanic Organizations

La Raza
La Raza
MALDEF
MANA
National Assn. For Bilingual Education
National Hispanic Council on Aging
Natl. Assn. of Latino Elected & Appointed Officials
Mexico-American Opportunity Foundation

Education Organizations

Child Welfare League of America
Council of City Schools
American Association of Community Colleges
Education Legislative Services
Leadership Conference Education Fund
Committee for Educational Funding
National School Boards Association
American Association of State Colleges and Universities

Immigration Organizations

Coalition on Human Needs
Coalition on Human Needs
Georgetown Univ. Law Center
United Auto Workers
NILC
Washington Lawyers Committee
American Civil Liberties Union
Interaction
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Forum
National Immigration Forum
Service Employees International Union

Jeffrey Passel
Patricia Colette Branch
Ellen Gail Witman

Urban Institute
Jordan, Burtz, Barrison, & Johnson
Witman and Associates

Ricky Ryan
James Firman
Lew Harris
Victoria Wagman
Jenifer Zeitzer
Julia Clark
Curtis Decker
Steve Protulis
Jean Daniel

Seniors

National Council in Aging
National Council on Aging
National Council on Aging
National Council on Aging
Alzheimers Association
National Council on Independent Living
National Assoc. of Protection and Advocacy Systems
National Council of Senior Citizens
National Assoc. of Area Agencies on Aging

HHS

Kevin Thurm
Rich Tarplin
Dennis Hayashi
Irene Bueno
Guadalupe Parcheco
Bob Williams
Lavinia Limon
Mark Magana
David Nielson
Linda Sanches

Social Security

John Callahan
Brian Coyne
Judy Chessser
Carolyn Colbin
Beatrice Disman
Myrtle Haversham
Joan Wainwright
Phil Gambino
Lisa Peoples
Cassandra Wilkins
William Daly
Mary Mahler
John Dyer
Dianne Garro
Thomas M. Parrott
Webster Phillips
Robert A. Nickerson

James O'Donnell
David Whalen
Frank Jasmine
Jim Golden
Maryann Bennett
Karlin McNeill
Susan Burnett
Kenneth Mannella

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Vice President

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: (202) 456-7035

Thursday, June 19, 1997

**VICE PRESIDENT GORE WARNS AGAINST
HOUSE GOP PROPOSAL ON LEGAL IMMIGRANTS**

Notes that 75,000 Fewer People Would Get Benefits in 2002 than in Budget Agreement

WASHINGTON -- Vice President Gore today (6/19) warned against the House Republican proposal affecting disabled legal immigrants, warning that 75,000 fewer people would get Supplemental Security Income as compared to the bipartisan budget agreement.

The bipartisan budget agreement restored SSI and Medicaid benefits to any immigrant in the country as of August 23, 1996 who is or becomes disabled. The House Ways and Means Committee proposal ignores vulnerable immigrants who become disabled after August 23, 1996. About 75,000 fewer immigrants would receive benefits by 2002, and 125,000 fewer by 2007.

"The Republican plan singles out immigrants who are in this country legally for harsh and unfair treatment and it breaks faith with the bipartisan balanced budget agreement," the Vice President said at a White House ceremony.

"It fails to restore a safety net for disabled legal immigrants by abandoning the people who were in the United States when the welfare bill was signed, but who unexpectedly fell ill or became disabled after that date."

When Congress enacted last year's welfare law, they included provisions affecting legal immigrants that were not only harsh and unnecessary, but had nothing to do with the real goal of welfare reform -- moving people from welfare to work. Since then, the President and Vice President have worked hard to restore benefits to legal immigrants.

National groups representing the elderly and people with disabilities are united in their opposition to this proposal. They recognize that the budget agreement would protect more disabled elderly and non-elderly people than the House Ways and Means proposal.

##

I think we can get
copies of the photos
taken in his office

Legal Immigrant Savings/ Restorations (\$ in billions)	SSI	Medicaid	Food Stamps	Total
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President's Budget	\$ 9.1 restored \$ 3.8 unrestored (elderly who are not disabled)	\$3.7 restored (\$5.8 with per capita cap) \$1.5 unrestored (elderly who are not disabled)	-0- \$3.2 unrestored (all cuts)	\$12.8 restored (\$14.9 with per capita cap) \$8.5 unrestored
Budget Agreement	\$ 8.0 restored \$ 4.9 unrestored (future entrants, elderly who are not disabled)	\$1.7 restored \$3.5 unrestored (future entrants, elderly who are not disabled)	-0- \$3.2 unrestored (all cuts)	\$ 9.7 restored \$11.6 unrestored

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Chronology of welfare reform cuts affecting legal immigrants:

Welfare Law: The welfare reform law included \$21.3 billion in savings for legal immigrants. Legal immigrants were banned from getting SSI and food stamps. States were given the option of denying Medicaid to those who were here when the law signed, while future immigrants are banned from Medicaid for five years.

- \$12.9 billion in SSI savings
- \$5.2 billion in Medicaid savings
- \$3.2 billion in food stamp savings

President's Budget: The President's budget proposed to restore SSI and Medicaid for legal immigrants who became disabled after they entered the U.S., regardless of the date they entered. It also restored Medicaid to legal immigrant children.

It did not restore SSI and Medicaid for the elderly who are not disabled. It did not propose food stamp restorations beyond an implementation delay.

- \$9.1 billion in SSI restorations
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Final Budget Agreement: The final agreement restores SSI and Medicaid for legal immigrants in the U.S. when the welfare law was signed who are or become disabled after coming to the U.S.

It does not help legal immigrants who arrived after August 23, 1996.

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A SAFETY NET FOR VULNERABLE LEGAL IMMIGRANTS

The House Ways and Means Committee has failed to restore a minimal safety net for disabled legal immigrants. The bipartisan budget agreement provides funds to restore SSI and Medicaid benefits to any legal immigrant in the U.S. prior to August 23, 1996 who is or becomes disabled -- but the House Ways and Means Committee proposes only to grandfather benefits for those immigrants already receiving benefits when the welfare law was signed.

- **THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE PROPOSAL IGNORES VULNERABLE IMMIGRANTS WHO BECOME DISABLED AFTER AUGUST 23, 1996:** This proposal abandons many legal immigrants who were in the U.S. when the welfare law was signed but become severely disabled after that date. In contrast, the bipartisan budget agreement protects these immigrants -- targeting assistance to those vulnerable individuals who need it most.
- **BY THE YEAR 2002, THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE PROPOSAL WOULD PROTECT 75,000 FEWER IMMIGRANTS THAN THE BUDGET AGREEMENT.** This number grows to 125,000 by the year 2007.
- **DISABLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS MAY NOT BE ABLE TO RELY ON THEIR SPONSORS FOR HELP.** Since sponsorship agreements were not legally binding in the past, a disabled legal immigrant whose sponsor refuses to provide support has no legal recourse and no source of income. Or a sponsor may not be able to afford to support a severely disabled individual. A disabled legal immigrant who has been in the U.S. for many years may have lost touch with or be unable to locate his or her sponsor.
- **NATIONAL GROUPS REPRESENTING THE ELDERLY AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ARE UNITED IN THEIR OPPOSITION TO THIS PROPOSAL.** They recognize that the budget agreement would protect more disabled elderly and non-elderly people than the House Ways and Means proposal.
- **THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS PROPOSAL IS NOT CONSISTENT WITH THE BUDGET AGREEMENT.** Negotiators found a way to assist these individuals within the context of a balanced budget. Now the House Ways and Means Committee is trying to unravel that agreement and failing to restore a minimal safety net for disabled legal immigrants.
- **WHILE BETTER THAN THE HOUSE APPROACH, THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE ALSO FALLS SHORT OF THE MARK.** The Senate Finance Committee would allow disabled legal immigrants to apply for benefits for a short period of time but would then shut the door to legal immigrants who become disabled. Immigrants who become disabled after this arbitrary grace period would be ineligible, just as in the House Ways and Means proposal.

Example: A legal immigrant family entered the country 3 years ago. Both parents work full-time, earning \$25,000 a year at jobs that don't provide health insurance. Next year, their 5 year-old son becomes severely disabled in a car accident. Under the budget agreement, he would be eligible for SSI and Medicaid; but under the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance proposals he would be denied SSI -- and potentially Medicaid.

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SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION FACTSHEET

THE BUDGET AGREEMENT HELPS MORE IMMIGRANTS THAN THE GRANDFATHER PROPOSAL

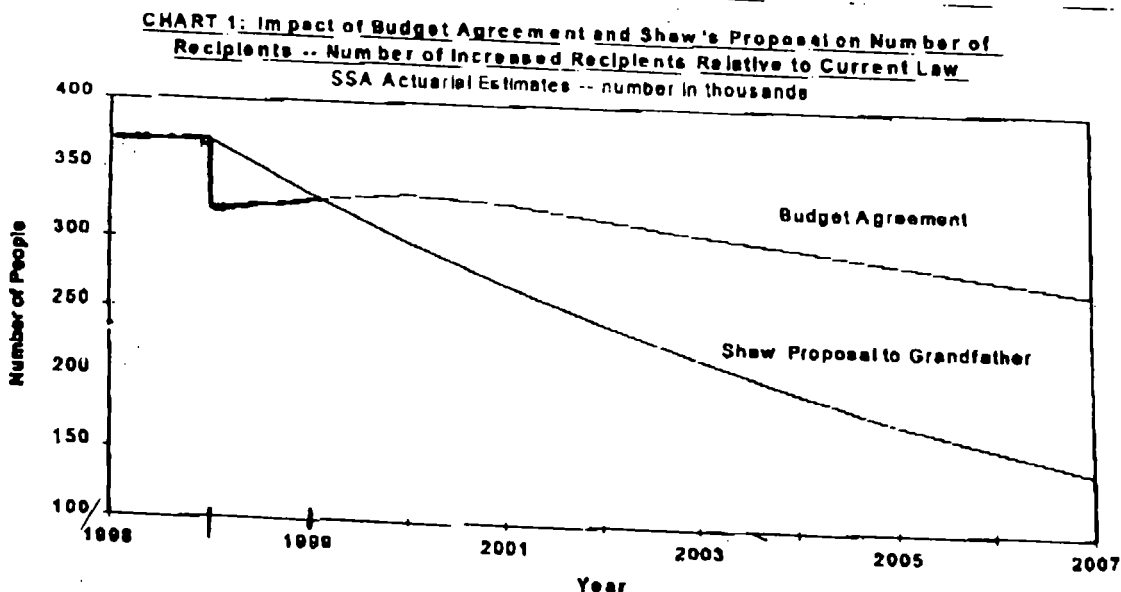
The Bipartisan Budget Agreement restores SSI and Medicaid for all legal immigrants who are or become disabled and who entered the U.S. prior to August 23, 1996. Although the Subcommittee action would maintain SSI for some elderly legal immigrants now on SSI who are not covered by the budget agreement because they are not disabled, it would protect many fewer low-income immigrants over time than the budget agreement would.

o The Administration's proposed language for the Bipartisan Budget Agreement would retain current benefits for the first 6 months of FY 1998 in order to give SSA sufficient time to determine whether current elderly noncitizens receiving SSI are disabled. As the chart shows, the budget agreement would cover the same number of recipients as the Subcommittee's proposal to grandfather in the first 6 months of FY 98.

o In addition, under the Bipartisan Budget Agreement, immigrants who become disabled and who entered the country prior to August 23, 1996 would still be eligible.

o As the chart below shows, over time, the budget agreement helps more immigrants than the proposal to grandfather everyone on the rolls on August 22, 1996.

o In FY 98, the grandfather proposal would cover 370,000 recipients. This number would steadily decline in the outyears. By FY 2002, the Bipartisan Budget Agreement would cover 75,000 more recipients than the grandfather proposal and by FY 2007, the



SHAW PROPOSAL

Why is the Balanced Budget Agreement proposal better than the Chairman's?

- The bipartisan agreement between the Administration and Republican leadership would provide SSI benefits to disabled individuals who entered the country before enactment of the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996* (PRWORA). The agreement would cover more individuals than the Chairman's proposal.
- While the continued eligibility of all individuals on the SSI rolls as of August 22, 1996—including the nondisabled aged—is a desirable feature, the Chairman's proposal does not go far enough with regard to individuals who were in the country but who had not received SSI before that date.
- This group includes individuals who may have been trying to work in spite of their impairments, individuals who are within the existing 3-year deeming period, individuals who were not disabled before August 22, 1996, and individuals who had filed but not yet received benefits.
- Without access to SSI eligibility, noncitizens who were residing in the United States before enactment of PRWORA or who become blind or disabled at some time in the future, could find themselves without assistance in meeting basic needs. Some of these individuals entered without sponsors and their inability to work would leave them with no means of income. Even those who were sponsored may have lost touch with their sponsors, their sponsors may have died, or their sponsors may not be able to afford to support individuals with disabilities. These individuals, in turning to State or local government programs or private charities for help, would place significant strains on the resources of these entities.
- The Balanced Budget Agreement proposal would not make SSI benefits available to newly arrived immigrants. It would be limited to persons in the United States prior to August 23, 1996. Individuals who entered the country after then date would not come under the proposed disability exemption.
- *Some many of* Those with disabilities or who develop disabilities in the future must overcome great barriers to naturalization. The INS waiver from certain naturalization requirements for those with disabilities was narrowly drawn to comport with congressional intent. People who cannot take the oath still cannot naturalize in spite of the disability waiver. It is imperative that those with disabilities and those who become disabled in the future have access to SSI benefits to assure that assistance continues to be available to them to help meet their basic need for food, clothing and shelter.

The National Immigration Forum's

BENEFITS BULLETIN

A Look At How the Welfare Law Will Affect Legal Immigrants

June 16, 1997

OVER 75,000 ELDERLY AND DISABLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS ARE LEFT UNPROTECTED BY THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS "GRANDFATHERING" PROPOSAL

3 pages total

House Bill Breaks Promise Made in Budget Agreement

The bipartisan budget agreement reached between the president and Congressional leaders restores benefits for certain legal immigrants now and in the future. The budget bill passed by the House Ways and Means Committee breaks the budget agreement. The Ways and Means bill significantly scales back restoration of benefits to elderly and disabled immigrants. The SSA estimates that by FY 2002, at least 75,000 FEWER LEGAL IMMIGRANTS would be covered by the Ways and Means proposal than under the budget agreement.

Sponsors of the proposal claim that their proposal covers more people by "grandfathering" all immigrants on the SSI rolls as of the date of enactment of the welfare law. But in exchange, no immigrants who become elderly or disabled in the future—even if they were here prior to August 22, 1996—will be eligible for SSI.

Fewer people will be covered by the proposal despite the fact that the Committee had at its disposal enough money to cover elderly and disabled immigrants currently on the rolls and those who were here prior to enactment of the welfare law and who become disabled in the future. The money was there, but the Committee walked away from responsibility for these poor, elderly, and disabled immigrants.

In contrast, the bipartisan budget agreement will ultimately cover all current elderly SSI recipients as they become too old and disabled to support themselves. It goes farther by covering legal immigrants who were in the country as of August 23, 1996, and need SSI in the future. For example, a now healthy 65-year old who was in the U.S. last August and later develops Alzheimers would receive

benefits under the bi-partisan budget agreement but would not under the "grandfathering" proposal. The "grandfathering" proposal is a ruse designed to obfuscate the fact that the most vulnerable will have no assistance in the future.

The Senate Finance Committee, which will begin consideration of its budget bill the week of June 16th, takes the House Ways and Means Committee proposal and adds coverage for a **limited number** of immigrants who have been in the country since prior to the welfare bill's enactment and who become disabled in the future. While this is an improvement over the House bill, it is still a step back from the bipartisan agreement reached on the budget.

WHAT IS THE POSITION OF THE NATIONAL ELDERLY GROUPS TO THE PROPOSAL?

They oppose the "grandfathering" proposal. The major organizations representing the elderly on this issue, 20 such organizations, including the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) and all of the other major national organizations representing the elderly, have signed a letter to the Ways and Means Committee leadership declaring that they "will not . . . support any reductions in benefits to immigrants with disabilities in order to provide them to other groups of immigrants."

WHY HAVE THEY TAKEN THIS STAND?

→ Because more elderly legal immigrants are denied under the "grandfathering" proposal. The members of the Ways and Means Committee such as Rep. Clay Shaw claim that the Committee's proposal is protecting more elderly because he "grandfathers" in all elderly immigrants who were receiving SSI as of August 23, 1996. In fact it covers fewer people. The universe of people protected in the "grandfathering" proposal is fixed; it is only those already on the rolls as of last August.

HOW CAN SUPPORTERS OF THE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE PROPOSAL CLAIM TO COVER 100,000 MORE ELDERLY THAN THE BUDGET DEAL?

It's smoke and mirrors. Here are the facts: The Congressional Budget Office assumes that about 80 percent (400,000) of legal immigrants currently receiving SSI will continue to do so under the budget agreement. Of the remaining 20 percent (100,000) the Social Security Administration expects that only 50,000 current recipients will initially lose benefits, but that over time, as that population ages, virtually all will be covered by the budget agreement.

According to the standards currently used by the Social Security Administration, a much higher percentage will actually continue to receive assistance. Requalification for immigrants who are over 75 years old should be close to automatic. And nearly all of those between 65 and 75 years old should be able to requalify if they have any serious impairments, such as arthritis, high blood pressure, etc., that limit their ability to work. Those who fail to requalify will be eligible to reapply at a later time if and when their health deteriorates.

HOW ARE VULNERABLE ELDERLY LEGAL IMMIGRANTS LEFT UNPROTECTED UNDER THE "GRANDFATHERING" PROPOSAL?

SSA estimates that by FY 2002, at least 75,000 fewer legal immigrants will be covered by the "grandfathering" plan than under the budget agreement. Most elderly legal immigrants are not on SSI, but need a safety net because illness and vulnerability are a constant threat as they age. The "grandfathering" proposal would completely shut these elderly immigrants out, regardless of need, because they are not currently on the rolls. Many of those denied have been living in the U.S. for many decades.

Those denied assistance will include persons with Alzheimer's disease, those with Parkinson's disease, and persons in "board and care" facilities or nursing homes who were not receiving SSI as of August 22, 1996. The budget agreement, unlike the "grandfathering" proposal, will protect the most elderly and disabled as their circumstances change and deteriorate.

WON'T THE BUDGET AGREEMENT REQUIRE THAT ALL ELDERLY BE KICKED OFF THE ROLLS BEFORE REAPPLYING?

No. In fact the SSA has indicated that Supreme Court case law requires that elderly immigrants receiving SSI remain on the rolls during the redetermination process. In addition, the Senate version of the budget resolution already contains language that would permit the elderly to continue receiving benefits during the redetermination process. This language could simply be added to the budget bill thereby ensuring that all elderly are entitled to continue receiving benefits through the redetermination process.

Bi-Partisan Budget Deal	The Shaw Proposal
<u>Covered:</u> • All disabled recipients receiving SSI as of 8/23/96; • Elderly recipients receiving SSI as of 8/23/96 who requalify as disabled; and, • Legal immigrants who were in the U.S. as of 8/23/96, and become disabled in the future.	<u>Covered:</u> • Disabled and elderly recipients receiving SSI as of 8/23/96.



Diana Fortuna

06/19/97 11:09:03 AM

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Record Type: Record

To: Lawrence J. Haas/OMB/EOP, Eric L. Schnure/OVP @ OVP
cc: Jack A. Smalligan/OMB/EOP, Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP, Emil E. Parker/OPD/EOP
bcc: Records Management
Subject: Re: VP DRAFT 

Comments in caps in text below.

Eric L. Schnure @ OVP

Eric L. Schnure @ OVP

.....
06/19/97 11:08:09 AM
.....

Record Type: Record

To: Diana Fortuna/OPD/EOP, Jack A. Smalligan/OMB/EOP, Cynthia A. Rice/OPD/EOP, Emil E. Parker/OPD/EOP
cc:
Subject: VP DRAFT

Please get final edits to Larry Haas ASAP. Thanks for your help.

**Remarks
Vice President Al Gore**

**Legal Immigrant Event
Washington, DC
June 19, 1997**

(Acknowledgments from advance)

Last year, when Congress passed legislation to reform America's welfare system, they included provisions that did not respect the diversity that defined this nation of immigrants, and THEY it had absolutely nothing to do with moving Americans from welfare to work.

Those provisions singled out legal immigrants -- legal immigrants -- for harsh and unfair treatment.

From day one, President Clinton and I -- and many Members of both the House and the Senate said plainly: It is wrong to tell millions of people who work here and pay taxes here, that if somebody mugs you in a dark alley or if your child suddenly falls seriously ill, or you or your spouse are injured at work, that you're not going to receive the helping hand that everyone else who is legally living here is entitled to. [JUST WANT TO NOTE THAT THOSE ARRIVING AFTER 8/96 GET NOTHING UNDER BUDGET AGREEMENT]

That's why we fought so hard for a bipartisan balanced budget agreement that honored [IS IT TOO WOOSY TO SAY "DOES MUCH TO HONOR", SINCE BUDGET AGREEMENT DOESN'T HELP THOSE WHO ARRIVE AFTER 8/96?] our moral obligation to protect the most vulnerable in our society. And we were pleased when that bipartisan balanced budget -- as agreed to by both the President and the bipartisan Congressional leadership -- restored a significant amount of the unwise and unfair cuts in aid to legal immigrants made in last year's welfare bill.

We had an agreement. Both sides signed on. But now, after signing their name, the Republican leaders in the House [I DON'T THINK YOU NEED "IN THE HOUSE" -- NEITHER HOUSE HONORING COMMITMENT] are writing off **their commitment**.

The(ir) HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS proposal fails to restore a safety net for disabled legal immigrants by abandoning the people who were in the United States when the welfare bill was signed, but had the unexpected misfortune [MISFORTUNE NOT A GOOD WORD FOR DISABLED ADVOCATES; HOW ABOUT JUST "UNEXPECTEDLY FALL ILL?] of falling ill and becoming disabled after that date.

Their proposal leaves behind people like Dorota Kiedos, whom you just heard from. It leaves behind Jos [ISN'T IT JOSE?] Trujillo, a 23 year-old immigrant from Mexico who suffers from Hodgkin's Disease and who would

not receive SSI benefits under the House Republican proposal. And it leaves behind 75,000 other legal immigrants by the year 2002, and 125,000 by the year 2007.

These people work hard. They love their family . . . and this country. They have come to the land of opportunity, like so many before them, simply to build a better life. And in doing so, throughout our history, they have helped build a better America.

The Republican plan, as it currently stands in the House of Representatives, [AGAIN I THINK YOU CAN DROPS "AS IT CURRENTLY STANDS IN HOUSE" BECAUSE BOTH BREAK FAITH] breaks faith with the bipartisan balanced budget agreement. But even more: because it treats immigrants who are in this country legally in the most harsh and unfair of ways . . . it fails to realize that America is a strong nation because we are a diverse nation.

America's racial and ethnic diversity give us an advantage unmatched in the world. Our diversity is crucial for the health of our economy . . . but also for the vitality of our democracy.

That is why the Republican plan, as it currently stands, is wrong. If I can use a sometimes explosive term, in my opinion it is un-American . . . unworthy of a nation of immigrants. And it must be changed.

As the legislative process continues -- I hope the Republican majority will honor the bipartisan balanced budget plan they agreed to earlier. We stand ready to work with them in good faith on this issue. Let's reach out to those who want to reach up and do right by the legal immigrants in America.

###

**THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED LEGAL IMMIGRANTS
THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE
BUDGET PROPOSAL LEAVES BEHIND**

José Trujillo *new* |

California

Mr. Trujillo is 23 years old and came to the U.S. in 1989 from Mexico. In 1996, he was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease, a cancer of the lymph system. He has Level III-A, which means the cancer has spread throughout his body but not yet to his bones. He is currently receiving chemotherapy. He applied for SSI immediately following his diagnosis in 1996 and faced delays. His case has now been dismissed due to the Welfare Law.

OK

can't tell?

For more information, please contact:
Melinda Bird
Protection and Advocacy
(213) 427-8747

"Mrs. Sang"

"Mrs. Sang" is a 50 year old Cambodian woman who fled war-torn Cambodia in 1979 after losing four of her five children in the war. "Mrs. Sang" came to the U.S. in 1984 as a political refugee with the hope of starting a new life. After entering the U.S., her husband who had been kidnapped and imprisoned by the Khmer Rouge while in Cambodia, became physically and emotionally abusive, and abandoned her. She has been medically diagnosed as suffering from major depressions. As a result of her mental disability, doctors have found that she is unable to work and support herself. "Mrs. Sang" applied for SSI on April 26, 1995. In August of 1996, she received a letter from the Social Security Administration advising her that she qualified for SSI based on her disability. When she went to the SSA office on August 30, 1996, eight days after the welfare reform law passed, she was told she was no longer eligible because she was a legal immigrant.

For more information, please contact:
Victor Hwang
Asian Law Caucus
(415) 391-1655 ext. 31

Piedad Altagracia Gonzalez

New York

Piedad Altagracia Gonzalez, born in Colombia, entered the U.S. as a lawful permanent resident in 1986, then a healthy woman with no history of any physical or mental illness. She is single and has no children. She soon found employment, and had worked for four years when she began experiencing severe debilitating arthritis in her back as well as was diagnosed with major depression and an anxiety disorder. She became too disabled to continue working.

In 1994, Ms. Gonzalez applied for SSI benefits. She received a favorable decision from the Social Security Administration in November, 1996. However, SSA issued a subsequent decision in December, 1996 denying her SSI benefits due to the restrictions imposed by the Welfare Bill.

For more information, please contact:
Fraska Alfonso, Counsel
New York Legal Assistance Group
(212) 750-0800 ext. 129

Deng Yang *- new 2*

Madison, WI

In 1990, Mr. Yang, a 48 year old Hmong from Laos, came to the U.S. as a refugee with his wife and their nine children ranging in age from 3 to 19 years old. He served from 1961 to 1975 in the Hmong military in Laos under its alliance with the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency in the "secret war" in southeast Asia. In 1968, both of Mr. Yang's legs were injured by a mine explosion and continued to serve the Hmong military and the U.S. as a military truck driver. For his 14 years of military service to the U.S., Mr. Yang received a Congressional Commendation.

In 1994, Mr. Yang who was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and chronic abdominal pain from his war-wounds applied for SSI benefits. He was notified in December, 1996 that he had been found disabled with an onset date of November, 1995. However, in another notice, also dated December, 1996, he was told that he was ineligible for any past due or future SSI benefits because he did not meet any of the exceptions under the Welfare Law.

For more information, please contact:
Sue Augustus
The SSI Coalition
(312)460-8403

Mr. Vargas *- new 3*

Chicago, IL

Mr. Vargas came to the U.S. from Mexico ten years ago. After being abandoned as a child, he was placed in the foster care system of California. He suffers from kidney failure and receive kidney dialysis twice a week. As a result of his kidney problems, he received a blood transfusion from which he contracted HIV. Now at 21 years old, Mr. Vargas has aged out of the foster care system. Due to his immigration status, he is now not eligible to receive SSI benefits because of the Welfare Law.

For more information, please contact:
Melinda Bird
Protection and Advocacy
(213) 427-8747

Shane Nemrod

New York, NY

Mr. Nemrod was born in Lebanon and entered the U.S. legally on a tourist visa in 1989. He married a U.S. citizen and as a result of that marriage acquired his legal residency. He is now divorced.

He worked from 1990 to 1994 at the Waldorf Astoria in New York City. In September, 1994, he sustained severe injuries to his head, back and neck on the job due to an elevator accident. In January, 1995, he applied for SSI. He had a long drawn out battle with the SSA and was finally found disabled in April, 1997. On May 2, 1997 his application for benefits was denied because of his alienage and the changes to the law due to the welfare bill.

For more information, please contact:
Fraska Alfonso, Counsel
New York Legal Assistance Group
(212) 750-0800 ext. 129

Ivo Sutich

San Francisco, CA

Mr. Sutich fled communist Yugoslavia in 1954, at the age of 24, and two years later came to the United States legally through the Department of State's Escapee Program. He worked in the U.S. for eight years before being diagnosed with chronic paranoid schizophrenia and being involuntarily committed to a mental hospital. He is now 67 years old and nearly blind. He was recently discharged from a nursing facility and for the first time in several years, he is living in the community with the help of caseworkers. Upon leaving the nursing facility, Mr. Sutich applied for SSI but was denied because of his immigration status. Unless Mr. Sutich's reapplication for SSI is approved, he will be evicted from the board-and-care facility where he is permitted to reside pending his application's approval.

For more information, please contact:
Melinda Bird
Protection and Advocacy
(213) 427-8747

"Lisa"

Maine

After a two year courtship, "Lisa," a native of the Philippines, married an American serviceman in 1965. Shortly thereafter, they moved to the U.S. "Lisa" began working as soon as she became eligible. She gave birth to her first and only child in 1968. She continued working until she was laidoff. She and her husband decided it best that she devote herself to being a mom and a homemaker. Her son is now a sergeant with the U.S. Army Airborne Rangers. The 21-year marriage ended in divorce and "Lisa" returned to factory work. She moved to Maine and later remarried. Shortly thereafter, her second husband was diagnosed with AIDS. "Lisa" was tested and was found to have the virus as well. Lisa began showing symptoms of her HIV, especially chronic fatigue. In 1996, she and her second husband were divorced.

She was granted a fully favorable decision for SSI benefits on March 13, 1997. On March 17, 1997, "Lisa" received notice that, despite her disability, she would not receive any benefits because she only has 31 working quarters. The reason she lacks the required 40 is that she spent time raising her American-born son, and the Social Security Administration does not credit quarters of a spouse if the marriage ends in divorce. Without SSI benefits that she would be entitled to under the terms of the budget deal, "Lisa" will be without critical care.

For more information, please contact:
Samuel Mathis, Esq.
(207)799-9291

Karen Delay *new 4*

Carlisle, PA

Ms. Delay came to the U.S. from the United Kingdom in 1982 after she married an American GI. After undergoing several back operations in the 1990's, she applied for SSI in the summer of 1994. Her application was processed by SSA, and she was awarded SSI benefits in April 1997 only to then be denied due to the Welfare Law. She is now divorced and raising on her own her three children -- Rebecca, age 13; Adam, age 11; and, Christian, age 5 -- who are U.S. citizens. The only income she currently receives is child support for her children.

For more information, please contact:
Robert Raines
Disability Law Clinic of The Dickinson School of Law
(717)243-3696
or Karen Delay at (717) 567-7367

Teresa

Philadelphia, PA

Teresa is a Nigerian woman who is elderly and nearly blind. She applied for SSI before the welfare law passed and was not approved until after the law was in effect, therefore disqualifying her. She is a legal resident who resides in Philadelphia with at least one adult son.

For more information, please contact:
Mr. Jess Leventhal
(215)757-2010