Let us know how access to this document benefits you.
Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/baucus_speeches

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umt.edu/baucus_speeches/164

This Speech is brought to you for free and open access by the Archives and Special Collections at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in Max S. Baucus Speeches by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Senator * or Department*: BAUCUS

Instructions:
Prepare one form for insertion at the beginning of each record series.
Prepare and insert additional forms at points that you want to index.
For example: at the beginning of a new folder, briefing book, topic, project, or date sequence.

Record Type*: Speeches & Remarks

MONTH/YEAR of Records*: March-1981
(Example: JANUARY-2003)

(1) Subject*: National Farmers Union
(select subject from controlled vocabulary, if your office has one)

(2) Subject* none

DOCUMENT DATE*: 03/02/1981
(Example: 01/12/1966)

* "required information"
AS I WAS FLYING DOWN TODAY FROM WASHINGTON, I COULDN'T HELP THINKING THAT I HAD LEFT ONE UNREAL PLACE -- ONLY TO ARRIVE IN ANOTHER. BETWEEN the two, I was reminded of an old song: "Home on the Range." As I left the city of Washington behind, I couldn't help but think about the rural areas of the United States.

As Senator Max Baucus from Montana, I often represent the interests of rural America in Congress. I strongly believe in the importance of supporting our farmers and rural communities. Therefore, when President Reagan announced his economic proposals, including plans to cut federal spending and reduce taxes, I was keenly interested in how this would impact rural America.

President Reagan's economic proposals were aimed at刺激经济 growth and reducing the federal deficit. However, as a member of the Senate, I know that these proposals would have significant implications for rural America. The cuts in spending would mean that programs that support farmers and rural communities would be reduced. This could have serious consequences for our farmers, who rely on government support to stay in business.

As a member of the Senate, I have a responsibility to ensure that the interests of rural America are represented. I believe that the federal government has a role to play in supporting rural communities and their economy. We need to find a way to balance the budget without sacrificing the programs that are essential to rural America.

In conclusion, while I understand the need to cut federal spending, I worry about the impact that these cuts will have on rural America. As a member of Congress, I will continue to fight for programs that support our farmers and rural communities.

Speech by Senator Max Baucus on Monday, March 2, 1981, before the National Farmers Union.
NATIONAL TRENDS

SEEM TO MOVE IN CYCLES. THE PENDULUM NOW HAS SWUNG AWAY FROM THE GREAT SOCIETY PROGRAMS TOWARD WHAT'S BEING CALLED REAGANOMICS. THE ADMINISTRATION SEEMS INTENT ON ADMINISTERING ITS OWN VERSION OF SHOCK TREATMENT -- AND SO FAR IT HAS BEEN FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL.

HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO ALL THIS?

CERTAINLY THE PRESIDENT HAS HIS FINGER ON THE POLITICAL PULSE OF THIS NATION AND IS READING IT WITH PINPOINT ACCURACY.

FEW ECONOMISTS WOULD SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT CUTTING FEDERAL SPENDING SO DRASTICALLY WHILE AT THE SAME TIME CUTTING PERSONAL INCOME TAXES BY THE SAME AMOUNT IS ACTUALLY GOING TO REDUCE INFLATION AND INTEREST RATES.

BUT MOST AMERICANS BELIEVE THIS IS THE MEDICINE NEEDED AT THIS TIME -- AND THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION SEEMS ALL TOO EAGER TO PROVIDE IT.

FURTHERMORE, IT'S EASY TO TAKE A "WAIT AND SEE" APPROACH. MANY DEMOCRATS ARGUE THAT WE SHOULD JUST WAIT FOR THE PRESIDENT TO STUB HIS TOE, AND AVOID THE RISK OF SAYING SOMETHING THAT MIGHT GET US INTO TROUBLE.
BUT IS THIS THE RESPONSIBLE WAY TO MAKE PUBLIC POLICY?
IS THIS THE "RIGHT" THING TO DO?

THAT'S A DIFFERENT QUESTION.

RIGHT NOW MOST OF THE COMMENT ABOUT THE ADMINISTRATION'S
SPENDING CUTS IS FOCUSED ON WHOSE "OX IS GETTING GORED." AND

IT'S EASY TO GET BOGGED DOWN ARGUING WHETHER MONTANA'S
AMTRAK LINE SHOULD BE CUT RATHER THAN ARIZONA'S WATER PROJECT.

THE REAL FOCUS, HOWEVER, SHOULD BE ON MORE FUNDAMENTAL
ISSUES. WHAT ROLE SHOULD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PLAY IN
TRANSPORTATION, IN HEALTH CARE, IN EDUCATION?

SHOULD WE REMOVE ALL REGULATIONS? IS THE MARKETPLACE -- THE
FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM -- GOING TO INSURE THAT RURAL AMERICANS
HAVE HEALTH CARE THEY CAN AFFORD AND THAT IS ACCESSIBLE?

OR IS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT REQUIRED TO STEP IN TO INSURE
THAT WE ACHIEVE THESE GOALS?

THESE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT AND FUNDAMENTAL QUESTIONS WE FACE.

NOW TO HEALTH CARE.

The points of this speech are good. But it's a little boring
A lot of facts and figures. Frankly, I sometimes had a hard
time concentrating myself. What about the audience, I
saw a few people nodding through. (Brock's speech, before mine
was a few years midway through. [Brock's speech, before mine
was a few years midway through. It was weak.) We need anecdotes,
unpredictable, dramatic. Remember, too. This is an offering

I WOULD LIKE TO STAND HERE TODAY AND TELL YOU THAT CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT ARE COMMITTED TO EXPANDING HEALTH CARE COVERAGE TO ALL AMERICANS.

I WOULD LIKE TO PREDICT THAT THE QUALITY OF MEDICAL CARE AND ITS AVAILABILITY ARE GOING TO IMPROVE IN THE NEXT DECADE.

BUT IN REALITY, THE FUTURE OF THE FEW FEDERAL HEALTH PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO HELP RURAL AMERICANS IS UNCERTAIN. WE DON'T KNOW YET JUST WHAT THE REAGAN-STOCKMAN VISION HOLDS FOR RURAL HEALTH.

THOMAS JEFFERSON ONCE SAID "THE PATCH MUST FIT THE HOLE." JEFFERSON'S ADMONITION THAT THE SOLUTION FIT THE PROBLEM IS NOWHERE MORE APPARENT THAN IN RURAL AMERICA.

IT'S THIS KIND OF COMMON SENSE THINKING THAT ALL TOO OFTEN IS LACKING.

DURING MY SEVEN YEARS IN CONGRESS I HAVE FOUND THAT MY COLLEAGUES SUFFER FROM AN INGRAINED URBAN BIAS IN THEIR APPROACH TO PROBLEM-SOLVING. THE SOLUTIONS CONGRESS COMES UP WITH ARE URBAN SOLUTIONS TO URBAN PROBLEMS WITH LITTLE OR NO CONSIDERATION OR UNDERSTANDING OF RURAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

Whatever happened to my idea of "Do not keep the "That's the good news."
THE LESSON FOR ALL OF US IS, THAT WE MUST EDUCATE SENATORS AND REPRESENTATIVES SO THAT THEY UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE HEALTH NEEDS OF MANHATTAN, NEW YORK AND MANHATTAN, MONTANA.

I SPEND PROBABLY ONE-THIRD OF MY TIME TALKING ABOUT THESE DIFFERENCES WITH MY OTHER SENATORS.

I TELL THEM THE HEALTH OF RURAL AMERICA IS NOT ON AN EQUAL FOOTING WITH THAT OF URBAN AMERICA.

I TELL THEM THE INFANT MORTALITY RATE IN RURAL MEDICALLY-DEPRIVED AREAS IS THREE TIMES THE NATIONAL AVERAGE.

I TELL THEM THAT ONLY 20 PERCENT OF WOMEN OF CHILD-BEARING AGE ARE RURAL, BUT THAT THEY ACCOUNT FOR HALF THE MATERNAL DEATHS.

I TELL THEM THAT 138 RURAL COUNTIES, WITH A POPULATION OF 500,000 HAVE NO DOCTOR.

AND, I TELL THEM THAT FARMING IS THE THIRD MOST DANGEROUS PROFESSION.

IN SHORT, RURAL AMERICA FACES TWO MAJOR HEALTH PROBLEMS: A SHORTAGE OF DOCTORS AND OTHER MEDICAL PERSONNEL AND A LACK OF RESOURCES TO PURCHASE HEALTH CARE.
RECRUITING AND KEEPING DOCTORS AND OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS IS A REAL AND PERSISTENT PROBLEM. AT THE SAME TIME, MORE AND MORE SMALL TOWN HOSPITALS ARE CLOSING THEIR DOORS AS COSTS DRIVE THEM OUT OF BUSINESS.

THERE'S ONLY ONE DOCTOR FOR EVERY 2,400 RURAL AMERICANS, COMPARED TO ONE DOCTOR FOR EVERY 500 PEOPLE IN METROPOLITAN AREAS.

TO MAKE MATTERS WORSE, WE'RE LOSING THOSE DOCTORS WE HAVE, AT A FASTER RATE. THE DOCTORS SERVING SMALL COMMUNITIES ARE ON THE AVERAGE OLDER, AND AS THEY RETIRE NO ONE IS REPLACING THEM.

ONLY ABOUT FOUR PERCENT OF THE MEDICAL SCHOOL GRADUATES ARE SETTING UP PRACTICES IN RURAL COMMUNITIES -- FAR LESS THAN THE DEMAND FOR SUCH CARE.

AS A RESULT, RURAL AMERICANS ARE MAKING MORE VISITS TO DOCTORS AND HOSPITALS THAN THOSE IN CITIES.

EQUALLY FRUSTRATING IS THE FACT THAT THE FEDERAL PROGRAMS ESTABLISHED TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS ACTUALLY DISCRIMINATE AGAINST US.

FOR EXAMPLE, LESS THAN ONE-THIRD OF MEDICAID FUNDS GO TO NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS DESPITE THE FACT THAT ONE-HALF OF THE POOR LIVE IN SUCH AREAS.

Remember, it's hard enough to remember a series of written down facts and figures. It's much more difficult to remember spoken facts and figures.
LIKEWISE, MEDICARE SPENDS UNEQUALLY FOR RURAL AND URBAN HEALTH CARE. PAYMENTS FOR MEDICARE BENEFITS ARE ONE-THIRD LESS FOR ELDERLY PERSONS IN RURAL AREAS, COMPARED WITH METROPOLITAN AREAS. THAT'S DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE PERCENTAGE OF ELDERLY IN NON-METROPOLITAN AREAS IS NEARLY TWICE AS GREAT.

SUCH DISCREPANCIES EFFECTIVELY DISCOURAGE THE PRACTICE OF MEDICINE IN SPARSELY POPULATED AREAS. IN THE PAST FEW YEARS, CONGRESS HAS ENACTED SEVERAL PROGRAMS THAT ARE MORE SENSITIVE TO OUR PROBLEMS. THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS PROGRAM, THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS, THE RURAL HEALTH CLINIC SERVICES ACT -- THESE PROGRAMS ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS.

IN 1974, 157 COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS SERVED ABOUT 1.2 MILLION PEOPLE. BY 1980, THERE WERE 872 CENTERS SERVING 4.2 MILLION PERSONS. MORE IMPORTANT, COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS ARE AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGY FOR MEETING THE DEMAND FOR HEALTH SERVICES IN RURAL AREAS. THESE CLINICS ARE SERVING RURAL AMERICANS WHO WOULD OTHERWISE BE DEPRIVED OF THE MOST RUDIMENTARY AND BASIC HEALTH CARE SERVICES.

THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS PROGRAM IS THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS, THE RURAL HEALTH CLINIC SERVICES ACT -- THESE PROGRAMS ARE THE CORNERSTONE OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S COMMITMENT TO IMPROVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED AREAS.
FOR NEARLY 1,000 AREAS IN AMERICA, THE NATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE CORPS IS BRINGING HEALTH CARE TO PEOPLE AND FAMILIES WHO OTHERWISE WOULD REMAIN UNDERSERVED.

FINALLY, THE RURAL HEALTH CLINIC SERVICES ACT INSURES THAT MEDICARE AND MEDICAID WILL PAY FOR NURSE PRACTITIONERS AND PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS' SERVICES IN RURAL HEALTH CLINICS.

THESE ADVANCES ARE THREATENED BY THE SHOCK THERAPY PROPOSED BY PRESIDENT REAGAN.


THE ADMINISTRATION ALSO IS PROPOSING TO ELIMINATE THE FEDERAL GRANT AND LOAN SUBSIDY PROGRAM FOR HEALTH MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATIONS, A KEY CONCEPT IN PREVENTIVE MEDICINE.

PRESIDENT REAGAN WANTS TO LIMIT HOW MUCH THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PAYS FOR MEDICAID.

AND, THE PRESIDENT WANTS TO REDUCE AND CONSOLIDATE DOZENS OF HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROGRAMS INTO BLOCK GRANTS -- INCLUDING THE COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTERS PROGRAM.
I FEAR THAT THESE PROPOSALS ARE JUST THE BEGINNING, THEY EXEMPLIFY THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION'S BELIEF THAT WE SHOULD Deregulate major parts of the economy.

IN THE HEALTH FIELD THIS IS CALLED THE COMPETITION MODEL. NEARLY A YEAR AGO I SPOKE ON THIS SUBJECT AT A CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON. THE PRO-COMPETITION SPOKESMAN WAS NONE OTHER THAN DAVID STOCKMAN, NOW PRESIDENT REAGAN'S BUDGET DIRECTOR.

MR. STOCKMAN ARGUES THAT THE FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM WILL INSURE THAT SMALL TOWNS GET ADEQUATE HEALTH CARE. WE ALL KNOW THAT THERE ARE TOO MANY DOCTORS IN THE UNITED STATES RIGHT NOW. ACCORDING TO THE STOCKMAN ARGUMENT, THE NATURAL FORCES OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND WOULD FORCE THESE DOCTORS TO MOVE TO THE SPARSELY POPULATED PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

WE'VE HEARD THESE ARGUMENTS BEFORE -- IN SUPPORT OF Deregulation in the airline, railroad and trucking industries.

MONTANANS, HOWEVER, KNOW JUST HOW WELL THIS WORKS. SMALL AIRLINES STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE. WE ARE DOWN TO ONE RAILROAD IN MY STATE, AND OUR FREIGHT RATES ARE SOME OF THE HIGHEST IN THE NATION.

John: Did you read this speech out loud for reflection and for transition? It doesn't flow or move to next pt as well as for expenditures floor at start last week.
AND, I AM AFRAID THE SAME THING WOULD HAPPEN IF THESE HEALTH
COMPETITION PROPOSALS ARE ENACTED.

I BELIEVE THERE IS A FAIR, EQUITABLE WAY TO CUT FEDERAL
SPENDING WHILE PRESERVING THE HEALTH CARE SERVICES RURAL AMERICANS
SO DESPERATELY NEED. I KNOW THAT THE SO-CALLED COMPETITION MODEL
IS NOT THE ANSWER.

MOST OF THE PUBLICITY ABOUT THE REAGAN SPENDING CUT PROPOSALS
LEADS US TO BELIEVE THAT THEY AFFECT EVERY GOVERNMENT PROGRAM
EQUALLY.

BUT THAT IS NOT REALLY THE CASE. IN FACT, THE PRESIDENT IS
EXEMPTING NEARLY TWO-THIRDS OF THE FEDERAL BUDGET FROM ANY CUT
WHATSOEVER.

AS A RESULT, THE PERCENTAGE THAT IS CUT FROM THE REMAINING
ONE-THIRD IS MASSIVE.

THE ONLY FAIR WAY TO CUT FEDERAL SPENDING IS TO CUT EVERY
PROGRAM, EVERY AGENCY, EVERY EXPENDITURE BY THE SAME PERCENTAGE.

CUTTING FEDERAL PROGRAMS BY JUST THREE PERCENT, FOR EXAMPLE,
WOULD SAVE ABOUT $13 BILLION. AND, IF YOU CUT THE TAX BREAKS BY
THE SAME PERCENTAGE, ANOTHER $6 BILLION COULD BE SAVED.

By the time I and other panelists
had finished (about 1 hr) over 60% of
audience had drifted out.
A FIVE PERCENT CUT WOULD SAVE ABOUT $30 BILLION.

THIS APPROACH WOULD SAVE THE ESSENTIAL PROGRAMS SO VITAL TO RURAL AMERICA. AND, IT WOULD RESULT IN GREATER EFFICIENCIES IN THE WAY THEY OPERATE. EVERY PROGRAM CAN STAND A SMALL CUT.

AN ACROSS-THE-BOARD SPENDING CUT WILL INSURE THAT NO GROUP SACRIFICES MORE THAN THEY SHOULD.


IT’S EASY IN THESE DAYS OF BUDGET SLASHING TO FORGET THAT GOVERNMENT MUST HAVE A HEART. GOVERNMENT MUST BE COMPASSIONATE.

GOVERNMENT MUST BE HUMANE. Government must truly be of the people, by the people and for the people.

THE MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION HAVE BEEN ON THE FOREFRONT OF FINDING NEW WAYS TO SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS.

I URGE YOU TO CONTINUE THAT PURSUIT.
AND, I HOPE THE NATIONAL FARMERS UNION WILL REMAIN THE STRONG
FORCE IT HAS BEEN IN THE PAST.

YOUR VOICE WILL BE HEARD IN WASHINGTON -- IF YOU TAKE THE TIME
AND MAKE THE EFFORT TO BE INVOLVED.

TOGETHER WE CAN PRESERVE THIS COMPASSIONATE, HUMANE GOVERNMENT.
I ASK YOU TO WORK WITH ME IN PRESERVING THIS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE
FOR ALL AMERICANS.

THANK YOU.