

Rangel

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(Republican takeover) gave us an opportunity as Democrats to realize it's not business as usual," he said.

If the Democrats retake Congress and Rangel assumes the chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee, he does not plan to refund the slashed programs but to build on the working ones, he said.

He supports improved educational opportunities for all Americans and expansion of free trade and a growing economy.

"If I could get support for education and job training, I could justify my position," he said.

Private companies would also play a larger role in Rangel's America. He said Sony, Viacom, IBM and IGT are just a few of the 90 percent of corporations who are willing to fund expanded job training programs.

Like Rangel, Coffin would like to see a more efficient government. He isn't proposing any new spending programs and said there were already enough laws on the books. They just need "minor adjustments," he said.

"I want good government instead of tearing down good institutions in the name of economy, which is sometimes a cover for racism," said Coffin, who is Hispanic.

And Coffin, Rangel said, represents the kind of independent leadership needed in today's Congress.

"No one can say he's not honest. No one can say he's not skilled," Rangel said.

"In the era in which we are living in this country, he is a breath of fresh air," he said.

Although Rangel has consistently been reelected by more than 96 percent of District 15 voters, he has been touring the country to raise money for candidates like Coffin, who has been slow in raising funds.

Only a week ago did the Coffin campaign pass the \$100,000 mark in fundraising, and "most of my money has been spent on research," he said.

Raising funds seems to be the daunting challenge that kept other interested individuals from

running for Ensign's seat too, Coffin said.

"The only thing that kept people away from this race was the money," he said.

During this year's campaign season Rangel estimated Republicans would raise three times as much as Democrats through fundraisers, but at some point the money stops bringing in votes, he said.

The goal is to help the Bob Coffins of 1996 raise to compete until it stops helping them, Rangel said.

National party leaders "are not here for a vote," Rangel said. "We're here for leadership... We need (Coffin) in Congress."

Pap Smear

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Because cost is such an important factor, Associated Pathologists will begin to do double-blind screenings of slides starting July 1. That means for no additional fee, two cytotechnologists will view every slide coming into the laboratory, McCaleb said.

Double screening is "the most accurate and cost-effective way of screening Pap smears," he said. But in an ideal world, patients should still order both a Pap smear and PAPNET screening.

While he praised the AutoPap system, McCaleb knows of no one using it in the state of Nevada. "The closest (lab using AutoPap) is in San Diego, and they have been using it three to

four weeks," he said.

Calls for comment to AutoPap officials were not immediately returned.

Improved diagnostic screening should be a real aid to blacks who, doctors said, are diagnosed with gynecological cancers at two times the rate of whites, but that is only part of the solution.

University of Nevada gynecological oncologist Dr. John Stapleton said many misdiagnoses are caused by overworked cytotechnologists in out-of-state labs.

To make more money, "certain labs exceeded the number of smears a lab can do (safely) in a day," Stapleton said.

With the passage of the 1988 Clinical Laboratories



Marzette Lewis, left, claps while Congressman Charles Rangel embraces Bob Coffin during Wednesday's meeting with black Democrats. Photo by Savoy/LVS-Voice

Improvement Act, the federal government established limited jurisdiction over labs across the country, limiting the number of slides technicians can view in a day to 100.

June Fricano, the cytotechnologist who examined Smith's slides, looked at about 200 slides a day. Fricano's salary at the Oak Creek, Wis.-based Chem-Bio Corp. was based on her productivity; \$2 per slide, Laurence said.

Associated Pathologist cytotechnologists average about 80 slides a day, McCaleb said, but qualified technicians can see as many as 90 slides a day.

Local labs, like APL, whose credentials can be checked with a simple call to the Nevada State Board of Medical

Examiners of the Nevada State Medical Society, were not the cause of the problem, Stapleton said.

"Most of the problems with pathology were these mail-order clearing houses where almost all of (the tests) are done out of state," he said.

The American College of Pathology, the oldest and one of the three largest laboratory licensing agencies has also created guidelines.

But "American College of Pathology guidelines were being ignored (by renegade labs)," he said. "Usually they were doing 10 to 20 percent more screenings than the recommendations."

Patients are cautioned to ask their doctors where their tests are analyzed if they have any questions, experts said, because without the patient's knowledge many Pap smears are sent to out of state laboratories where standards may be different.

"If they are being sent out of state, that's a pretty good indication that doctor is shopping for a cheaper Pap smear," said McCaleb, who cautioned lower prices to doctors may not mean lower prices to patients.

Per CLIA guidelines, labs are also required to keep Pap smear results on file for five years, said Dr. Mary Nielsen, chair of the national CAP Cytopathology Committee.

Not only does this mean patients can look at their tests later down the line, but it also gives a table of reference to technicians who may have a question about an abnormal or atypical cell, Nielsen said.

Atypical results mean a laboratory spots a cell that is not quite cancerous but isn't normal either. It is the most common abnormal Pap smear diagnosis, Nielsen said.

"To me it indicates women really should be followed up," she said.

Following up could mean getting a new Pap smear "at least two to three weeks to totally regenerate," Stapleton said.

"Far and away most times the second test comes back normal," Nielsen said.

While additional oversight may cut down on the number of false negatives, "you're always going to have a few labs in the country that don't maintain standards," McCaleb said.

He urges people to call their local medical society to check whether theirs is CAP and CLIA certified and routinely inspected by state and national officials.

Accrediting agencies, generally, review credentials once every two years to ensure laboratories maintain a high standard of service. But accreditation does not ensure the laboratory is doing quality work, it just means they have the ability to analyze tests, experts said. Independent routine quality inspections should be performed to see how well a lab does their work, McCaleb said. Associated Pathologists, for example do quality checks at least once every other month.

To be sure your laboratory is CAP and CLIA accredited call (800)-LAB-5678 or the Clark County Medical Society at 739-9989.

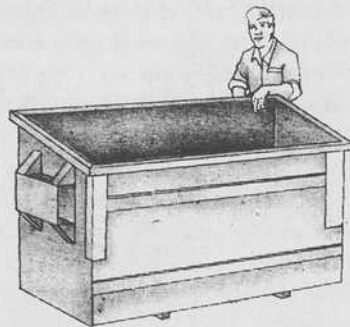
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