

a few potholes, surely, but won't reconstruct roads or build bridges. It will create some jobs but won't put a dent in the unemployment rate.

We need to do nation building right here at home in America. Congress just spent \$65 billion rebuilding the roads and bridges of Iraq, a nation of 26 million people. You just spent \$78 billion rebuilding the roads and bridges of Afghanistan, a nation of 30 million people. And all you can come up with is \$53 billion for nation building in America, our Nation, a Nation of over 300 million people.

The American Society of Civil Engineers gave us a D grade, and they and the United States Chamber of Commerce agree that the poor quality of America's infrastructure costs our economy hundreds of billions of dollars in lost growth.

To grow this economy and create jobs, we need to invest in rebuilding the roads, bridges, water, and sewer systems of this country. According to the New America Foundation, a 5-year, \$1.2 trillion American rebuilding plan would create 27 million jobs. In the first year alone, the economy would add 5.2 million jobs, or 433,000 jobs each month, and the economy would grow by over \$400 billion. Unemployment would be reduced to 6.2 percent in the first year alone and 5.6 percent in the second year.

This is a real and compelling jobs plan. The best tax policy is to bring back into the economy lost taxpayers and to buy labor, materials, equipment, and services from American small businesses.

Austerity didn't work in the United States in 1937, it didn't work in Japan in the 1990s, and it's not working in Europe and the United States today. To grow the economy, we need to invest and save. House Republicans need to stop whining about China and stand up for America.

HEALTH CARE LAW REPEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. STIVERS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. STIVERS. Mr. Speaker, the House and Congress this week should pass the health care repeal bill because the President's health care bill is making the economy worse.

I saw a recent poll that said 50 percent of small businesses are less likely to hire new employees because of the health care bill. As an example, in my district, I spoke to a small business owner who is scared to hire his 50th employee because it would subject his company to the mandates under the health care law.

Greg Fortney, who is a small business owner, told me he has great concerns about the health care law. He said it would prevent him from expanding his operations and giving his employees a chance to grow their own businesses. To comply with the health care law, it would take all of the prof-

its from his business, his annual profits, just to comply.

We need small business owners focused on creating jobs, not worrying about complying with a new mandate.

And it will tax our families who are struggling. Just last night, on a telephone town hall, I heard from a real estate agent who was concerned about the 3.8 percent tax on sales of homes that will go into effect in January of 2013. On a \$100,000 home, that's \$3,800, and it could make the difference between somebody being able to sell their home for a profit and a loss. So this isn't on the gain; this is on the net price. It has nothing to do with the health care bill. It was just a way to pay for the extra costs in the bill.

The bottom line is that the health care bill is making the economy worse. It's hurting job creators and it's hurting our struggling families and hurting real estate values. We need to repeal it and start over by focusing on cutting costs in our health care system and improving the efficiency. If we have a real crisis in health care, it's a crisis of cost.

PRESIDENT OBAMA CARES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, "ObamaCare" was coined by the Republicans to mock the wonderful Affordable Care Act passed by Congress in 2010 and signed into law by President Obama.

The recent Supreme Court decision proves that ObamaCare was the perfect nickname because President Obama cares. He cares about you. He cares about me. He cares about my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle and he cares about my friends on the Republican side of the aisle.

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He cares about all Americans. President Obama cares about us, and he thinks that we should not have to worry about going broke just because someone in our family gets sick.

Because Obama cares, every American has the right to affordable health care. And yet the Republicans hate it with every fiber of their being. Why?

Don't Republicans get sick, too? Don't Republicans worry about having to file for bankruptcy just because someone in their family gets sick? Don't Republicans go to the emergency room with no insurance?

Later this week, the Republicans will vote to repeal a law that proves that Obama cares. Not "repeal and replace," as they said they would do when they made their Pledge to America—just repeal. In other words, get rid of it, period.

How can the Republicans explain to their constituents the repeal of a law that affords health care for everyone? Are they trying to send a message that Republicans don't need health care?

Republicans are not robots. They get sick, they need surgery, they feel pain, they hurt, they cry, they mourn, they weep. Access to affordable health care is a basic right. It's not a Republican right, a Democratic right or an Independent right. It's a basic right for all Americans.

Hello. If you're out there somewhere in America today and you feel you don't need health care because you are invincible, well, you are not. Do you feel that the rest of us should pay your medical bills? Enough of that already.

Do you feel that those less fortunate should suffer needlessly? Then you need to pray to your God for forgiveness.

You must care. You must care about the less fortunate, the working poor, the foster child, the disabled, the elderly, the mentally ill, the homeless, those wracked with pain. And all of Congress must care.

The Affordable Care Act shows that Obama cares. He cares enough to include a provision that ensures our children can no longer be denied health care because of a preexisting condition. Obama cares enough to include a provision that allows students and young people under 26 to stay on their parents' health insurance plan no matter where they live.

Obama cares enough to add language that closes the Medicare doughnut hole so that seniors pay less for their prescription drugs. They no longer have to decide whether to fill their prescriptions or buy some food.

Obama cares enough to put in provisions that insist that insurance companies cannot drop your coverage when you get sick or that prohibit insurance companies from placing annual and lifetime limits on your health care. Life is so unpredictable.

And Obama cares enough to include a provision that prevents insurance companies from charging higher premiums for women just because they happen to be women.

The law of our land says that if you have a car you must insure that car. If you have a mortgage, you must insure that mortgage. If you have a body, insure it. Keep it healthy. Get your checkups, take your medication. What is more important to you, your luxury car, your beautiful house, or a healthy body?

Every Member of Congress has wonderful health care insurance, and our pharmacy bills are so cheap it's unbelievable. It's simply great being covered by my health care in Congress.

Shouldn't we want the same for our constituents who sent us here to serve them? Shouldn't we care?

President Obama cares. NANCY PELOSI cares. STENY HOYER cares. JAMES CLYBURN cares. JOHN LARSON cares. XAVIER BECERRA cares, and I care.

Republicans out there, can you hear me?

You should make all Members of the U.S. House of Representatives care.

Contact and let them know that everyone needs the same health care amenities that they enjoy.

Don't be hoodwinked by the tax rhetoric. Listen to the facts. Read the fine print. You deserve access to affordable health care. You need affordable care.

Power to the people. Power to ObamaCare.

CIVILIAN AID TO AFGHANISTAN: IF IT'S SO IMPORTANT, WHY AREN'T WE DOING MORE OF IT?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, there was a very compelling op-ed piece in The Washington Post last week by U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, Ryan Crocker. In it, he paid tribute to the many American civilians who are risking their lives doing important humanitarian work to bring security and stability to Afghanistan.

I couldn't agree more with Ambassador Crocker that those men and women working for or contracting with the State Department or USAID are doing extraordinary work rebuilding infrastructure, helping children to go to school, improving infant and maternal health, wiring the Afghan people to the Internet.

Mr. Speaker, the burning question is this: If this work is so important, why aren't we doing more of it? The human need in Afghanistan is far greater than the resources we're devoting to the effort.

For the last few years, we've had a military surge in Afghanistan, a surge that's led to more death, more violence, more instability, and more strength for the extremists and insurgent forces we're trying to defeat.

What we need, Mr. Speaker, is a civilian surge. We need a great emphasis on development and diplomacy, on democracy promotion and debt relief, on peacekeeping and conflict resolution, not just in Afghanistan, but in impoverished and unstable countries around the developing world.

All of this is at the heart of the SMART Security proposal that I've been promoting since 2004 that I introduced during the middle of the Iraq war. Contrary to the conventional wisdom we've been fed, military aggression does not advance our national security goals. It undermines them. It makes us less safe, not more. It emboldens terrorists, instead of vanquishing them.

We've tried it this way for more than a decade now, Mr. Speaker, and it simply has not worked. It hasn't fundamentally changed the fortunes of the Afghan people, and it hasn't driven the Taliban and other terrorist networks into oblivion.

At an international conference on aid to Afghanistan this past weekend, Secretary of State Clinton said that the administration would request Afghani-

stan aid funding at or near levels provided over the last decade. But at or near is not enough. It comes to somewhere between \$1 billion to \$4 billion a year, which seems like a lot of money, until you realize that's what we spend on military operations in Afghanistan roughly every week or so; \$10 billion a month waging a destructive war on Afghanistan that is killing civilians, but only a few billion dollars a year rebuilding Afghanistan and empowering civilians.

That just doesn't make sense. Ambassador Crocker has pointed this out. Our priorities are totally out of whack.

We can't continue on the same current destructive course, Mr. Speaker. This military occupation is failing America and failing Afghanistan.

Let's finally end this war. Let's bring our troops safely home and start investing in civilian aid and other SMART security initiatives, and let's do it now.

Let's also expand these initiatives to prevent war around the world.

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THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Oregon (Ms. BONAMICI) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that we are here once again talking about repealing the Affordable Care Act, a bill that passed almost 2 years ago and that, as we all know, was recently upheld by the United States Supreme Court. We should be focusing on jobs and the economy. The repeal bill we are about to vote on isn't going to go anywhere, and we all know that. It won't pass the Senate, and it won't be signed into law. We could be doing real things to help Americans and the economy right now. Yet here we are, for the 31st time, voting on the same thing. So, instead of repeal, let's talk about the benefits to Americans as the Affordable Care Act is implemented.

Because it will result in more people having access to health care, the Affordable Care Act will change the lives of millions of people. It will prevent more of the heart-wrenching stories like those we all hear about with regard to the consequences of a lack of access to health care. I know someone whose life would have been changed by the Affordable Care Act.

Bob, in Oregon, lost his job. Because he lost his job, he lost his health insurance, so he got on to COBRA. He had that expensive option for a while, and at least it gave him coverage, but then his COBRA ran out for him, just as it does for so many other people, and he was forced to live without health insurance. It was quite a risk that he had to take, and it didn't work out so well for him. Like many people without insurance, he had medical troubles, but he put off treatment, hoping for the best. In the end, though, he ended up in the

emergency room, which is exactly what the Affordable Care Act is designed to prevent. He had surgery, and was then in the hospital for almost a month. Because of the sky-high medical bills, he almost lost his home.

Fortunately, he is doing okay today, but it was a very close call. This would not have happened under the Affordable Care Act, and it will not happen under the Affordable Care Act. Bob would have had access to affordable health care coverage, and he would not have put off preventative care, which is covered under the Affordable Care Act. He would have seen his doctor at the first sign of a problem, and he would not have ended up in the emergency room, which raises health care costs for everyone—a cost shift that the Affordable Care Act is designed to prevent—and he would not have come so close to losing his home.

The benefits of the Affordable Care Act are undeniable: Already in my home State of Oregon, 43,000 young people have taken advantage of the opportunity to stay on their parents' health plans; children can't be denied insurance because of preexisting conditions; and 54 million Americans now receive free preventative care, and that's just after 2 years.

There are more and more benefits that will be implemented over the next several years: Insurers will no longer be able to discriminate against women; insurance marketplaces, called "exchanges," will be created to make sure that everyone has access to affordable health insurance options; and starting just next month, women will have access to free preventative health care and contraception. All of these will be put into place, and as they are, more people will see how the Affordable Care Act positively affects their health and their wallets.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act has no benefits. In fact, doing so would take away every single benefit I just mentioned and more. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the repeal would increase the deficit—increase the deficit—by \$210 billion over the next 10 years. We can all agree that such an increase is unacceptable and fiscally irresponsible. So this will mark the 31st time that the House has voted on some form of repeal of the Affordable Care Act. I hope it's the last so that we can focus more on the things that really matter.

WALL STREET V. MAIN STREET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for 5 minutes.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about what is nothing less than the largest transfer of the American people's wealth from Main Street to Wall Street. It is likely the largest transfer in American history due to the fallout from the financial crisis of 2008.

Banks at the heart of the crisis all got larger as their CEOs made more