

Mr. Speaker, these are not just isolated anecdotes. The victims of managed care are our friends, our neighbors, our fellow workers, our own family members. That is why audiences cheered when Helen Hunt described with blistering language her HMO's abominable treatment of her asthmatic son in the movie "As Good As It Gets."

□ 1930

Mr. Speaker, that is also why the polls show that 85 percent of the public think that Congress should do something to stop HMO abuses like the ones that I have just shared.

So, Mr. Speaker, what is happening on Capitol Hill? Well, for weeks the Committee on Commerce has had a draft of patient protection legislation that the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. COBURN), the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) and I provided the chairman, and we still have no firm commitment on a date for subcommittee action, much less full committee action. There are rumors on Capitol Hill that because the majority of the committee probably would vote for a strong bill, the rumors are that our committee may not even get a chance to vote on the issue, just like a repeat of last year.

This week the Subcommittee on Employer-Employee Relations will begin voting on what can only charitably be called a series of protections for the HMOs, not for patients.

I urge my colleagues to look at the fine print of those many bills. Most of those "limited" bills that are going to be taken up in the Subcommittee on Employer-Employee Relations are taken from language of last year's bill which passed the House that was crafted in the middle of the night by the industry and that I would charitably describe as the HMO Protection Act of 1998.

So why is the Subcommittee of the Committee on Education and the Workforce not using a comprehensive bill as a markup vehicle? Why are they not using the bill offered by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD)? After all, he is a Republican member of that committee. Why are they not using my bill, the Managed Care Reform Act of 1999, which has the endorsement of many consumer groups like the American Cancer Society and professional groups like the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American College of Surgeons?

Well, the answer is clear. Last year the House rules were used to limit debate on this important issue, and the HMO industry is pulling strings again. I only hope that enough of my fellow Republicans on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce will say enough is enough. Let us do this right. And if they do not, let us hope that their constituents will flood their offices with pleas that they sign the committee petition that would make a real, comprehensive reform bill the vehicle for the markup.

Most of us are in Congress to try to make a difference. We feel that public service is important. As a Republican, I do not want bigger government, but I do want better government. And there are many big problems confronting us like securing the future of Medicare and Social Security and providing for our Nation's defense, but there are many problems that are less nationally portentous, but equally grave for individuals that many of us as Republicans want to help solve.

I am proud that I have contributed to helping pass legislation in the past few years to help make food safer, to help make water cleaner, to provide more life-saving drugs. And I am proud to come from a Midwest Republican tradition of common-sense government. It was Midwest Republicans like Bob LaFollette who called for minimum safety and health standards that work. It was Republican populists who called for the prohibition of child labor and for 1 day's rest in 7 for all wage-earners.

Republicans took up the causes of the muckrakers and helped pass the first food safety laws. It was the Bull Moosers who called for a system of social insurance for those who were injured on the job. It was Midwest Republicans who encouraged rural education and agricultural extension.

An Iowan, Carrie Chapman Catt, a Mason City, Iowa, high school principal, organized the National Women's Suffrage Association in 1905. Now, I do not know if Carrie Chapman Catt was a Republican or Democrat, but I do know that Midwest Republicans called for suffrage of women in 1913.

Mr. Speaker, it was Republican Teddy Roosevelt that broke up the trusts and stood up for the little guy, stood up for farmers who had battled the railroad trusts and the railroad robber barons.

I call on my Republican colleagues to remember our compassionate conservative heritage. I call on my Republican colleagues to tell our leadership and committee chairmen that we are not in the pockets of the HMOs. Teddy Roosevelt knew that the little guy could not stand up alone to the railroad barons without help from the government. The little guy today cannot stand up to an HMO with the way the deck is stacked against him.

So what does the HMO industry now want? They want the Federal Government to spend \$60 billion a year for tax subsidies for their industry; but, of course, with no strings attached, nobody telling them how to run their business, nobody telling them to stop abusing patients. They do not want any State insurance oversight, and they do not want any Federal requirements either. "Just give us the money."

These are the same people, Mr. Speaker, who are spending millions of dollars lobbying here in Washington against the Patients' Bill of Rights. Last year, Mr. Speaker, the industry spent more than \$100,000 per Congress-

man lobbying against patient protection legislation.

It is time for my Republican colleagues to remember our Teddy Roosevelt and our Bob LaFollette tradition and back a bill that would give the little guy some say over his medical care.

In 1993, the HMO industry told us we would lose our choice in health care and we would not get the coverage we needed if the Clinton health plan passed and became law, and it was true. Unfortunately, those same insurance companies went ahead and did the same thing they opposed in the Clinton health plan in order to increase their profits.

However, just as many of us were against a government bureaucrat running roughshod over patients, we should be equally outraged over an insurance bureaucrat doing exactly the same. \$60 billion a year of taxpayer money without real patient protection reform like my Managed Care Reform Act of 1999 would be to reward the HMOs for their patient abuses.

Do not get me wrong. I strongly support increasing tax deductibility for health care, I just think that the health care companies should not get something for nothing. It would make Teddy Roosevelt and Bob LaFollette roll over in their graves.

Mr. Speaker, I say to my colleagues on both sides of the aisle: Join me, fight the big money HMO special interests. Let us show our constituents that we cannot be bought or intimidated by special interests any more than Teddy Roosevelt could be. Let us pass strong patient protection legislation for all Americans this summer.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Pursuant to clause 12 of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 7 o'clock and 43 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 2103

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mrs. MYRICK) at 9 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1000, AVIATION INVESTMENT AND REFORM ACT FOR 21ST CENTURY (AIR21)

Mr. DREIER, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 106-185) on the resolution (H. Res. 206) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1000) to amend title 49, United States Code, to reauthorize programs of the Federal Aviation Administration, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.