

Founded on May 5, 1980, KARIDAT has to this day served thousands of residents. Moreover, in the early 1990s, through the leadership of Bishop Camacho, the diocese has maintained a Human Rights Advocacy Office. This office was instrumental in protecting the rights of foreign workers and upholding the church's social teachings.

However, due to founding constraints, the office was closed in the late 1990s. Over the years, Bishop Camacho has guided the faithful in facing major community issues by releasing pastoral letters on casino gambling, human trafficking, substance abuse, abortion and their impact on individual and family values. Mr. Zaldy Dandan, the editor of a local newspaper, *The Marianas Variety*, described Bishop Camacho as "the island's most trusted, most revered and most beloved public figure, an exemplary representative of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. He is the soul of Saipan, the conscience of the island, and the pride of the Northern Marianas."

In October of 2008, the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities presented Bishop Tomas A. Camacho its Lifetime Achievement in the Humanities award for his efforts in preserving the Chamorro language. Having tendered his resignation last year at the age of 75 as required by the law of the church, Bishop Camacho is now waiting for Pope Benedict XVI's appointment of our next bishop, pastor and friend.

Forty-eight years a priest and now 24 years in the Episcopacy, Bishop Camacho, the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, and the people of the Northern Mariana Islands will have to look back at the years and hear the Master say, "Well done, good and trustworthy servant; you have shown you are trustworthy in small things, I will trust you with greater, and join your Master's happiness," Matthew chapter 25 verse 21. Only God knows what greater things there are that are beyond what Bishop Tomas A. Camacho has attained. Only God knows.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GRAYSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. GRAYSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

□ 1830

#### REFORMING OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentle-

woman from Arizona (Ms. GIFFORDS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the most important domestic policy issue that faces our country, and that is the reforming of our health care system, this great debate that this country is having right now.

Before coming to the United States Congress, I served as a State Legislator, both in the House and in the Senate in the State of Arizona, so I had a chance to hear from people all over, from Tombstone all the way up to Flagstaff about the challenges that they faced with health care.

Before I was a State Legislator, I was the CEO of my family's tire business. And running El Campo Tires, I had a chance to make some important decisions for my employees, and that included making sure that they had good health benefits. Unlike many of my competitors, I offered health care upon hire. But year after year I saw double-digit increases when it came to paying for our insurance premium. Now, we weren't a very large company, but I thought it was important to provide those health care benefits. It was probably detrimental to the company, but I thought that was really critical.

We see right now in the United States, as a country, that we spend too much for health care per capita. We spend well more than any other country. Yet we have 47 million Americans right now that have no health insurance. We have probably 20 million additional Americans that are underinsured, and millions and millions every day that worry that the insurance that they have won't cover them, that it won't be enough. Nationwide, premiums have doubled in the last 9 years, which have basically increased three times faster than real wages across the United States.

I represent Arizona's Eighth Congressional District and it's unique because it's burdened in different ways than other parts of the country. This is a border district, one of 10 border districts. A large amount of the geography is rural, where it's very hard to get physicians or nurses to go out there. Many parts of the district are low income. We also have fewer doctors per capita than other parts of the country. From 2001 to 2006, the out-of-pocket expenses in my district went up by 32 percent; and in 2008, there were 950 health care related personal bankruptcies in my district. So we cannot continue to perpetuate the status quo. The time for health care reform is right now. Arizonans need reform that's going to protect us from being denied coverage based on a pre-existing health condition that they might have. Arizonans need reform that guarantees care, even if we lose our job or if we move or if our spouse loses his or her job. Arizonans need reform that fosters competition, which is critical to our free market system, across the insurance companies and delivers us, the

customers, the consumers, the lowest cost and the best service available. Arizonans need reform that puts the power of health care decisions back into the hands of the patient and back into the hands of their physicians. Reform is not an option, and most Americans simply know that.

As the health care legislation is being crafted and being discussed right now, we know that it has to be done responsibly. We know we need to pay for it. We can't continue to put today's expenses on to the shoulders of our children and our grandchildren. It is also critical that Americans know that if you like your plan, you can keep your plan. You should be able to make sure that your costs go down and not go up like they're continuing to do. There are savings to be had in our current system. We all know that. So we have to focus on squeezing those costs, every drop. We can do this, and we must do this. So it's really time to make sure, not that we do it fast, but that we do it right because our economy's at stake. Our children, our grandchildren, and America's prosperity are at stake right now with this health reform issue.

So thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time, and for my constituents back home, the importance that they know that we're going to work to make sure we get this health care legislation right.

#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Last week, Democratic leaders in Congress introduced the "America's Affordable Health Choices Act," which sets the tone for a Washington takeover of the health care system, one defined by Federal regulation, mandates, a myriad of new big government programs, and a significant increase in Federal spending. A recent poll, which was released at the beginning of July, indicates that Americans by a margin of 2-1 think a government takeover of health care would be a bad thing. Unfortunately, the Democratic leadership is not listening to the American people and they are pushing legislation which only offers more of what is wrong with the current system.

At least two different independent analyses of the House Democrats health care legislation estimate that more than 100 million Americans would lose their current health care coverage. In addition to losing their health insurance, Americans are going to lose control over their health care decisions. Under the Democrats' vision, Washington would have ultimate control over what is best for patients, what treatments are acceptable, and how long patients wait for needed care. Additionally, this misguided health care legislation is estimated to cost the