

The Democrats' goal should not be to get this done fast, but to get it right for the American people. That's what I'm fighting for, and that's what this debate should be all about.

HEALTH REFORM INITIATIVE

(Mr. SARBANES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I wanted to just take a moment and speak about two very important elements in the health reform initiative that we are considering in the House. Both of these are things that will help to strengthen the relationship between the physician and the patient.

The first is something called medical-loss ratio. That's a technical term, but it basically means how much does that insurance company use of the premium you give them to actually spend on medical care. If they don't spend at least 85 cents on the dollar, it means they're not giving the kind of care to the patient that they deserve.

The second important thing is the investment in preventive care that we're going to make in this bill so that a physician can spend more time with the patient. There are elderly patients all across the country who wish that their physician could spend a little bit more time with them to really understand their situation. We don't reimburse for that right now. But going forward, we can do that, and that will promote the relationship between the physician and their patient and lead to overall better care for that patient and a better relationship with that patient's family.

□ 1415

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. HERGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have a plan to make health care more affordable and promote choice and competition among health plans. Unfortunately, the House Democrats' health care bill is light on cost control and heavy on government control.

A recent New York Times editorial expressed support for the House bill, but described the prospects for lower health care premiums as "unclear" and "distant."

Mr. Speaker, if that's the best the bill's supporters can say about it, it's time to start over. We need a bill that gets health care costs under control without bankrupting our country or setting the stage for a complete government takeover of our health care system.

WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

(Mr. SHUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, the Obama administration and congressional Democrats promised us that the trillion dollar stimulus that they passed and put into law would create jobs immediately. Well, last month alone we lost almost a half-million jobs, unemployment stands at 9.5 percent and going higher. It's clear that the stimulus package didn't work.

And their response has been, first, they passed an energy tax that's going to make America less competitive and drive American jobs offshore.

They're now in the process of increasing spending in the appropriations process by 12 percent.

And now this week they're trying to ram down a health care plan that's going to raise taxes on American business, cost jobs, and force people into a government-run, rationed health care plan.

All one has to do is look at this chart to understand the complexities and the inefficiencies they're going to put into this system. I might add this is a chart that they won't allow Republicans to mail out to our constituents to try to explain the complexities that they're going to put into health care.

The height of hypocrisy, though, was when in committee Republicans offered an amendment that would force all Members of Congress to participate in their health care plan, and what did they do? They voted it down. They won't allow the Congress to be in the health care plan that they're trying to pass.

JUST WHO ARE THE "UNINSURED"?

(Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, as the House majority presses hard to force-feed to Congress a government takeover of health care in the next few days, it would be very instructive to answer the question: Just who are the "uninsured"?

The most recent Census Bureau report of 2007 said that there were roughly 46 million people in this country labeled as "uninsured": 9.5 million were noncitizens; 18 million were between the ages of 18 and 30; 12 million people had household incomes less than \$25,000, which means they already qualify for existing public health care programs; 7.3 million had annual incomes higher than \$84,000, putting health coverage within their own financial reach; and 9.1 million were uninsured for less than 1 year—and half of these people regained their health coverage within 4 months.

This leaves 7.8 million lower income Americans who can be characterized as the long-term uninsured. Yet the majority is promising trillion dollar legislation that "significantly expands the Federal responsibility for health care costs."

And how do they pay for it? Taxes, more taxes, more taxes.

THE DEMOCRAT PLAN: A GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF PRIVATE HEALTH CARE

(Mr. RADANOVICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, if the need to reform our health care system wasn't so serious, the Democrat government takeover of health care might actually be humorous. It's laughable that their idea of "cost-cutting reform" is a bill that will increase the Federal deficit by \$239 billion over 10 years and includes a \$1.3 trillion spending increase. Only in Washington, D.C., does cutting costs mean spending more money.

America's small businesses, including our Nation's farmers, are going to be hit the hardest by this huge expansion of government through billions of dollars in new taxes and mandates, and yet the bill doesn't even address the seasonal workforce that farmers rely on to harvest their crops. Once again, small business and rural America are swept under the rug and forgotten, but not before they get a huge tax bill.

The bottom line is that the Democrats' public option is a sneaky plan to take over private health care.

Mr. Speaker, get me a doctor. The idea of government taking over health care is enough to make you sick.

THE HOUSE HEALTH CARE BILL SETS THE TONE FOR A GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

(Mr. ALEXANDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. Speaker, we all know that the health care system that we have in America is the best that the world has to offer. Do we need to improve it? Absolutely. But the question is how far do we go?

Do we tax the employer, who is now struggling to make ends meet, increase payroll taxes by 8 percent? No. We give that employer an advantage, an incentive to provide health care. Give him a tax break. Give the employee a tax break so they can go out and buy their own insurance. So give them an incentive.

But if we go and pass this bill, the government-run-all health care plan, we are going to break the backs of small businesses across this Nation that are the backbone of this Nation. Then we will hear a cry, Where are the jobs?

THE NATIONAL DEBT

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, the national debt has topped \$11 trillion, unemployment has reached a 26-year high of 9.5 percent in June, and some believe it

may go to 11 percent; \$56 trillion in unfunded obligations. Countries like China and Saudi Arabia are buying up America and the future of our children; a \$1.84 trillion deficit this year and it may actually go to \$2 trillion; and Standard & Poor's said we may lose our AAA bond rating by 2012.

Now the House Democratic health care reform bill moving through the committee at lightning speed does not include, as CBO said, "the sort of fundamental changes that would be necessary" to reduce the skyrocketing cost of health care spending under Medicare.

This is not going to create jobs; this is going to kill jobs.

THE CURRENT DEMOCRAT HEALTH CARE BILL IS NOT THE RIGHT SOLUTION TO REFORMING HEALTH CARE

(Mr. BARTLETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARTLETT. Mr. Speaker, health care costs are increasing at two and three times the rate of inflation. If this continues, it will obviously ultimately consume us; so we have got to do something to reform health care.

But the bill making its way through the committee process can't be the right solution. According to economic modeling by the President's own chief economic adviser, the business tax hikes alone would destroy up to 4.7 million jobs. An independent analysis by the nonpartisan Lewin Group found that 114 million Americans would lose their current health insurance. And the CBO recently noted this health care plan would "probably generate substantial increases in Federal budget deficits."

Mr. Speaker, this can't be the right solution. We can do better. We need to keep working. And please include Republican ideas in this work product.

IN THIS RECESSION AMERICANS ARE CUTTING BACK TO MAKE ENDS MEET; CONGRESS SHOULD BE DOING THE SAME

(Ms. JENKINS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JENKINS. Mr. Speaker, this recession has forced Kansas families to change their ways. Folks are cutting back just to make ends meet. Now that's what Congress should be doing here in Washington.

But we aren't cutting back. In fact, the majority says we need a health care plan that will cost us jobs, when actually what we need is to take responsibility for our actions.

We need to rein in spending. We need to reduce the deficit. We need to stop legislation that will add hundreds of billions of dollars to the Nation's debt. We need to empower families to purchase health care that is the best fit

for them, without waiting lines and without mountains and mountains of debt.

I will continue to fight for common-sense solutions. Americans deserve no less.

HEALTH CARE AND PUBLIC OPTION

(Mr. SCHIFF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, as a Nation, we spend almost twice as much per person on health care as any other country, or about 16 percent of our gross domestic product. And for all the money that we are spending, our health care system does not produce the best outcomes.

Millions of Americans have no health care insurance and receive their care at the emergency room. Millions more must make the difficult choice of whether to pay their medical bills or pay their mortgage because they can't afford to do both.

I support reforms in the health care package that will bring down health care costs by tying payments to outcomes rather than the quantity of tests being run, by ending the government's overpayment for prescription drugs, by empowering an independent commission to put health care cost reductions before the Congress for up-or-down votes, and by investing in prevention and primary care.

One of the choices that should be made available in the health insurance exchange is a public health insurance option. I strongly believe that the advent of a public plan alongside private insurance coverage would achieve a number of beneficial goals, providing a greater choice to families and much-needed competition with private insurers. The new plan would also use its inherent advantages to control costs over the long term through lower administrative overhead and the ability to bargain for volume discounts.

In order to make sure the public plan has the legs to compete with private insurers, I believe it needs to be available now, not as a fallback, and that we need to allow it access to an established provider network, like Medicare, that will ensure the plan competes on a level playing field.

As a nation we spend almost twice as much per person on health care as any other country or about 16 percent of our gross domestic product. And for all the money we are spending, our health care system does not produce the best outcomes.

Millions of Americans have no health care insurance and receive their care at the emergency room. Millions more must make the difficult choice of whether to pay their medical bills or pay their mortgage because they cannot afford to do both.

I support reforms in the health-care package that will bring down health-care costs by tying payments to outcomes, rather than the quantity of tests being run, by ending the government's overpayment for prescription drugs, by empowering an independent commission to

put health care cost reductions before the Congress for an up-or-down vote, and by investing in prevention and primary care.

One of the choices that should be made available in the health insurance exchange is a public health insurance option.

DEMOCRATS' HEALTH CARE TAKEOVER—BAD FOR SENIORS

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, this is the Democrat health plan, and this over 1,000 pages of legalese is the Democrat health plan.

This thing is really bad for America, but it's even worse for seniors. It's going to result in cuts in Medicare benefits. It's going to destroy Medicare Advantage. It's going to end up rationing health care. And if you don't believe that, listen to what the President said:

"The chronically ill and those toward the end of their lives are accounting for potentially 80 percent of the total health care bill out there. There is going to have to be some very difficult democratic conversation to take place on this."

He's talking about rationing health care and talking about how we're going to deal with these people who are getting a little bit older who need care. But you know what they're going to do to make sure that the seniors are going to be happy? They are going to give them end-of-life counseling. Take away benefits but tell you how you're going to die.

INSURANCE COMPANY PROFITS

(Mr. STUPAK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, right now just about 60 percent of Americans receive their health insurance from their employer. But from 2000 to 2007, the annual health insurance premium for employers and employees rose from \$6,628 to \$12,153. The average worker's share of premiums grew by 116 percent, and the average employer's share rose by 75 percent, while wages only went up 4 percent.

Americans can no longer afford health insurance through the insurance company. In fact, a recent study found that 73 percent of all Americans who seek an individual insurance policy do not end up purchasing one, either because they were turned down due to preexisting conditions or their premiums were unaffordable.

Mr. Speaker, all Americans should be entitled to health insurance. But according to the SEC, Security and Exchange Commission, filings from 2000 to 2007, profits at the top ten publicly traded health insurance companies rose an astonishing 428 percent, from \$2.4 to \$12.9 billion.

Get the excessive profit out of health care. Provide health care for all Americans.