

due if Afghanistan slides back into chaos.

PROMOTING GENUINE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, our Republican colleagues would have you believe that there is a considerable amount of agreement between the two sides on how we should best enact health care reform. Well, I think the reality is we have substantial agreement on what the problems are, but very different opinions about how we go about approaching them.

As my colleague Mr. PASCRELL said, last week or 2 weeks ago they were waving this bill, one of many, H.R. 3400, at the President when he spoke here. They might as well have been waving the insurance companies' financial reports because this bill just provides another government subsidy to the insurance companies, which have put us in the big hole that we're in right now. Furthermore, they don't even pay for it.

We are interested in genuine health care reform that's going to provide security and stability for every American citizen and that will help fix Medicare so that it provides continuing great service to our seniors.

The Republican proposals don't do anything like that. We wish they would join us in a sincere effort to promote effective health care reform. We haven't seen that effort yet.

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MEDIA IGNORE HEALTH CARE POLL

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, a new Investor's Business Daily poll of more than 1,300 physicians found that nearly two-thirds do not support the administration's health care plan. More than 7 in 10 say the government cannot provide insurance coverage without harming quality.

IBD's findings contradict stories in the national media that claim most doctors support the administration's plan. The media know that the American Medical Association does not speak for all doctors. In fact, only 17 percent of all doctors belong to the AMA in large part because it is too liberal.

It's not a surprise that the national media ignored IBD's poll. It doesn't fit their agenda of more government control and less individual freedom.

NATION'S HEALTH INSURANCE SYSTEM IS BROKEN

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

Mr. HEINRICH. Mr. Speaker, it's clear that our Nation's health insurance system is broken and that the status quo is simply unsustainable.

Over the last decade, health insurance premiums in New Mexico have grown 118 percent for the average family, compared to just 50 percent growth in wages. Again, the cost of health insurance grew more than twice as much as wages earned by New Mexico's working families. That same trend has made health care insurance unaffordable for more than one in five adults who went uninsured last year.

Mr. Speaker, we must hold insurance companies accountable for these skyrocketing costs. If we are successful in health insurance reform, we will lower the cost of care for our families. Seniors will actually be able to afford their medications all year long, small businesses will save money, and it will end this impediment to this Nation's competitiveness in the 21st century economy. We simply cannot afford to let this historic opportunity slip away.

CONGRESS NEEDS TIME TO READ BILLS

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

Mr. WALDEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call my colleagues to join me and Congressman BRIAN BAIRD and Congressman CULBERSON in signing a discharge petition to change the rules of the House so that Members of Congress have at least 72 hours to read bills like this.

This is the so-called stimulus. We had 12 hours. Now, the Speaker has said we will all have 24 hours. We are asking for 72. The stimulus was 1,073 pages, \$787 billion.

This is the cap-and-tax bill, 16½ hours to digest it, 1,428 pages, \$846 billion.

We should have a chance to read these bills and understand them. Congressman BAIRD and about 90 of us are cosponsors of H.R. 544. It's time to bring it to the floor for a vote. Sign the discharge petition.

Let's bring sunshine into the process. Let's allow Americans, their Representatives and the press the time to read these bills before we have to vote on them here on the House floor.

AGREE ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. KAGEN. Mr. Speaker, let's all agree about three things when it comes to health care reform. The first message has to be we have to fix what is broken and improve on what we already have and make certain it's at a price we can all afford to pay.

Secondly, and this is in every piece of legislation moving through Congress

on health care, we have to guarantee that no citizen anywhere in this country shall be discriminated against because of preexisting medical conditions.

Isn't it time to finally establish a transparent medical marketplace where all prices for health care service and products are openly disclosed to the public at all times on the Internet? Isn't it time that every customer, when they go to the doctor or hospital or purchase insurance policies, gets to pay the lowest price that's openly disclosed and accepted as payment in full from everyone else?

It's time to have a transparent medical system and make sure that we can drive down prices for everyone.

CMS GAG RULE

(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, the Obama administration keeps trying to silence critics of its government-run health care plan. This week, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services decided that Medicare Advantage plans were offering the wrong opinions about the health care bill. So CMS ordered them to stop telling their customers about the proposed cuts to Medicare benefits.

Mr. Speaker, this Chicago-style politics is a shocking abuse of power that flies in the face of the President's call for open and honest debate. It's time to remind the President and CMS that all Americans have a constitutional right to speak their mind, even when that holds back a government takeover of health care.

HEALTH CARE REFORM MUST BE DONE

(Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, health care reform is an imperative. We must get it done now. People want to know and deserve to know what's in it for them.

If you are a senior, it means continued quality medical care and lower prescription drugs. If you are a small business, it means you can afford health care for your family, for yourself, for your employees, and you will get help doing it.

If you have a preexisting condition, diabetes, a heart condition, multiple sclerosis, even acne, you won't be excluded from getting quality affordable health care. If you are a young person no longer on your parents' insurance, it means you can choose insurance you can afford. If, like millions of Americans, most Americans, you already have insurance, you like it, you keep it and you won't see skyrocketing premiums, deductibles and copays.

For all Americans, it means lower cost, quality care, affordable care and choice. You can take your insurance with you when you change jobs. You won't go broke because of limits on yearly health care expenses. It means no copayments for routine preventive care like colonoscopies and mammograms.

You choose your doctor, you choose to change, you choose to stay the same. Choose a public plan, choose a private plan. It's time for Congress to get this done.

INFLATION IS COMING

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

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, when interest rates go up, the value of bonds go down. But this presents a dilemma for the newest and largest bondholder on Earth, the Federal Reserve.

With interest rates low, quantitative easing policies and record spending, inflation is coming. Normally, we would expect the Fed to raise interest rates to protect the value of our dollars from runaway inflation, but now that the Feds owe over \$1 trillion in bonds, an interest rate boost of only 70 basis points would trigger a loss of the entire \$51 billion of the Fed's remaining net capital.

Robert Eisenbeis, the former vice president for the Atlanta Fed, has highlighted this danger. With inflation coming, we do not want the losses that the Feds would have to their own holdings to stop them from doing what will be needed to protect us, and especially seniors, from next year's expected inflation.

MEDICARE CUTS WOULD IMPACT OUR SENIORS

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

Mr. BOUSTANY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Director of the Congressional Budget Office stated that seniors with current private Medicare plans could see their benefits cut or costs increase under one of the health care overhaul proposals currently being debated. Many seniors, including more than 140,000 in my home State of Louisiana, depend on these Medicare benefits for their health care.

Far too often, patients in our current government-run programs lack real access to a doctor. Now, under congressional Democrats' plans, they would see their benefits cut or higher costs, according to CBO, the official scorekeeper for Congress.

We can do better. We can achieve commonsense solutions in a bipartisan way. But the current bills in Congress focus on where we disagree. House Republicans have put forward a commonsense plan to revitalize the American

health care system to lower costs for families and businesses and to improve quality.

Our plan puts patients first and their doctors back in control of health care decisions. Our plan makes health care affordable and more accessible with patients able to see their doctor of choice.

Let's work together to put the patient and doctor back in control of their health care destiny.

STOP FUNDING ACORN WITH TAXPAYER DOLLARS

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, I rise again to fight on behalf of Kansans who are furious that ACORN, the political machine of President Obama, is being funneled millions of taxpayer dollars to carry out fraudulent and illegal activities.

It's no secret President Obama paid ACORN over \$800,000 to help him win the White House. For years, this organization has been funded by liberal Democrats, and they have used the money to promote voter fraud and tax fraud, along with other illegal activities.

Despite the dozens of ACORN voter fraud scandals and its 70 convicted members, ACORN receives an outrageous 40 percent of its funding from hardworking taxpayers. This must stop. That's why we are fighting to defund this political machine and prevent further abuse of taxpayer money.

In addition to taking away every single tax dollar ACORN receives, we should strip its tax-exempt status. That's why this week I am introducing a resolution calling for the IRS to stop giving ACORN special tax treatment.

Let's help stop ACORN from using its tax-exempt status to advance liberal political agendas filled with corruption. It's time for Congress to put an end to this fraudulent use of public tax dollars and start working to revive our economy and create jobs.

GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, it's clear from town hall meetings held across the country that the American people are rejecting the Democrat plan for a government takeover of health care. The President and Democrats in Congress need to start over on their health care plan.

House Republicans have a plan for reform that expands access to affordable health care and gives families the freedom to choose the health care that fits their needs. It's time for the President and Democrats in Congress to begin working with Republicans on real solu-

tions to the challenges our country faces, including health care reform.

According to economic modeling by the President's own chief economic adviser, the business tax increases alone will destroy up to 5.5 million jobs. An independent analysis by the non-partisan Lewin Group found that as many as 114 million Americans could lose their current health insurance.

The Democrats' health care plan also includes harmful cuts to Medicare Advantage, and according to the Congressional Budget Office, will raise seniors' Medicare prescription drug premiums by 20 percent over the next decade.

Despite claims that reform will reduce health care costs, the Congressional Budget Office has said the Democrats' health care plan will actually increase government spending and increase our national debt. The last thing we need is a government takeover of health care.

HEALTH INSURANCE NEEDS TO BE AFFORDABLE

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk of health care. Last week I had the opportunity to speak and listen at a town hall meeting in Bella Vista, Arkansas. This retirement community voiced their concern that insurance needed to be much more affordable and that we should do away with preexisting conditions. They did not want this paid for, though, on the backs of seniors.

In the current proposal, \$500 billion is taken away from Medicare. They do this by decreasing or eliminating the subsidy on Advantage plans, so most seniors would lose this opportunity to help them. There would be less money to providers when, in the situation we have now, it's very difficult to even find a Medicare provider in some cases.

Again, it makes no sense, Mr. Speaker, to cut Medicare \$500 billion, increase the patient load by 30 percent, not provide any more doctors to take care of the people, and no more facilities. We need reform, but we need commonsense reform. We must not do something just for the sake of doing it.

LIVINGSTONE AND JOHNSON C. SMITH TO RENEW 117-YEAR RIVALRY

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

Mr. WATT. Mr. Speaker, on December 27, 1892, the first college football game between two historically black institutions of higher education was played in Salisbury, North Carolina. On October 3, 2009, The Livingstone College and Johnson C. Smith University football teams will extend this 117-year rivalry in the 2009 Commemorative Classic football game.