

ones that top you out at some small amount of benefits when you have some terminally ill condition. These are the real death panels in this country. And that's why we need a public option.

So I'm asking the Speaker and the leadership, if we have to vote on this Senate bill that doesn't have a public option in it, if we have to vote on this reconciliation amendment that doesn't have a public option, isn't it time that we finally did something good for America? Isn't it time that we gave all Americans the right to buy into a public plan like this? Isn't it in fact past time that we did something like that? And what's the harm?

I say to those people on the other side of the aisle, if you don't want to buy into the public option, that's fine. But don't prevent me and my family and the ones who I love from doing the same. Let us have our alternative. And remember what you said so many times before: you say the government can't do anything right. Well, let's see. Let's see right now. Let's let people buy into the public option through this bill, H.R. 4789, and we'll give it a shot.

#### HEALTH CARE ALTERNATIVE

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. You know, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to come down here and speak tonight, but I saw my learned colleague who's a trial lawyer coming down here to talk. The trial lawyers have been doing very well over the years suing doctors and driving up the cost of medical care because of the suits that have to be paid, and the insurance that the doctors have to buy to protect themselves against malpractice claims is astronomical in some States. In some States, doctors are actually leaving the State or retiring from their practices because they can't afford to pay those premiums and/or they're worried to death that they're going to lose everything they have worked a whole lifetime to attain through a lawsuit.

And so it's not a surprise to me that my colleague that was just here, who is a trial lawyer, would be down here talking about the changes that he thinks ought to be made in health care.

We have an alternative. Our alternative is to allow small businesses to bind together to buy insurance for their employees at the same rates as a major corporation; to allow small businesses and individuals to buy insurance across State lines so there's more competition in the system; to come up with tort reform, which will limit these astounding settlements that these trial lawyers get.

There's a whole host of things that we have talked about putting into legislation that will help solve the problems of health care, but they don't want to talk about it. In fact, what

they talk about is that we're the Party of "No," we're being obstructionists, and we don't want to solve the health care problems. We do want to solve the health care problems. And we can solve the health care problems without destroying the free enterprise system.

They are for government takeover of medicine. That is socialized medicine. And they want to see the government telling all of us what kind of care we get, who we get it from, when we get it, and what rationing might take place. And there will be rationing of health care if their plan passes. And that's something I don't think the American people want.

And then you start talking to the senior citizens. They want to take \$500 billion out of Medicare and Medicare Advantage. What's that going to do to the seniors and the health care they're getting right now? That's going to add to the problem that they say they're going to solve. Just putting the government in complete control of health care is not going to be the answer.

We have problems that need to be solved. They can be solved. They can be solved within the free enterprise system. We don't want to destroy free enterprise in America. There are those on that side and I believe at the White House that believe government should run everything. They should run health care; they should run energy, like the cap-and-trade bill; they should run the automobile industry. We now have Government Motors that took over General Motors. They want to run the finance industry. And the crown jewel is health care, because health care is one-sixth of our economy. They get that. They're on their way to the government controlling every part of our lives, at least in large part.

This is something that we don't believe in in America. We believe in the free enterprise system and the people that have the ability to succeed to have that opportunity, the people who come from nowhere can make money because the system works. And we don't want the government telling us what we can and we can't do. We believe in freedom in this country and not more and more government control.

If their health care bill passes, there will be rationing of health care. There will be bureaucrats coming between people and their doctors. And government here in Washington will be making decisions for people's health care. Are they taking care of the other problems we're facing in this country? Are they solving the problems without the costs going through the roof? Their program is going to cost at least \$1.5 trillion to \$3 trillion that we do not have. And our kids and our grandkids are going to have to pay for that. That's unbelievable that we pass to the next generation all the problems that we face today.

We could come to grips with this, and we could solve the problem if they'll sit down and work with us. They keep say-

ing, Well, we're not working with them. They've got about an 80-vote majority in this House. In the other body, they've got 59-41. They can pass anything they want. They've got the guy in the White House. The reason they can't get it done is because you, the American people, don't want it. You don't want government control over our lives, and you don't want socialized medicine.

We can solve these problems. And we can do it within the free enterprise system if we just sit down and get the job done. Let there be competition in the free enterprise system and medicine, and we'll solve these problems.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### RULE OF LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. CARTER. I'm honored to be here. I think some might remember in this body that for the last about year, year and a half, I've been getting up here and talking about the rule of law and how the basic foundation of American society is based upon a set of rules, a set of laws. Without that foundation, that surrender of sovereignty of the American people to pieces of paper that describe how we will behave in this world, we would be an uncivilized Nation and we would not be the great Nation of liberty and freedom that we are today. I've talked about the fact that when we talk about the rule of law, we're not just talking about abiding by the laws of this country. We're talking about abiding by the rules that we set to operate whatever we operate in this country.

I'm reminded to tell a story. When my oldest son was, I believe, in the seventh or the eighth grade; he played football. He was the best punter. He was also the center. So the one time he didn't snap the ball was when he was the punter. He punted the ball. He did a pretty good job of it. We played a team—I won't mention where it is, but if he's listening, he'll know what I'm talking about—where the first time he kicked the ball, a guy came through and knocked him flat, and they didn't throw a flag. It's young kids playing and not, I guess, the most professional referees. So he took it and I took it and there was no problem.

The second time he punted the ball, somebody came in and knocked him flat again. At this point in time, I was really concerned about it. The third time he punted the ball, somebody