

West and the upper Midwest. There are also innovative health care practices in the Mayo Clinic, the Cleveland Clinic, and Gunderson Lutheran.

The government, itself, has proven how to be more efficient. The Veterans Administration has a practice model for older citizens with complex health problems that face our veterans. The VA has automated its medical records system. It pays its doctors for performance, not procedures, and they figured out a way to get better prescription drug costs for millions of our veterans.

Many of the techniques for reducing the number of unnecessary hospital admissions, for bundling services, for having accountable care organizations are known and actually supported by my Republican friends. They've been embraced by Republican Governors.

This is not foreign territory. We know it can work. The path forward is clear. It is important not to lose 2 important years in reforming our medical system, giving better health care, and starting to reduce these massive future deficits.

After having identified weak spots in the implementation, let's work to hold people accountable. Don't attack the CBO for scoring the bill as written, which is their job. Attack efforts to undermine the cost-saving elements of the bill. If States can more creatively provide health care envisioned in the exchanges, let them do it. Give them the waivers, and encourage them to experiment as long as they meet minimum national standards.

Absolutely allow people to purchase insurance across State lines to improve competition and choice, but only after everybody agrees to provide insurance according to the same quality standards of accountability. That prevents gaps in coverage. We don't want massive marketing budgets while denying the money for essential treatment. We need not to have long protracted battles over if we understand and agree upon the terms.

We've reached a critical point where we cannot continue on the path that we've been headed. We do have reform legislation that encourages much of what has bipartisan support. We are spending more money than we need to and there are huge opportunities to improve the quality of service. I would hope that this exercise would be the last of the political ritual on health care. Instead let's turn to working with the Administration to figure out how to achieve the objectives, so critical for our citizens.

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

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

SUPPORTING THE REPEAL OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H.R. 2—legislation to repeal the so-called Affordable Care Act—a new effort to strengthen our health care system.

This will be the first step in ensuring that the American people will remain in control of their own health care through a system that is patient-centered and provides health care choices, not government-imposed mandates.

Many people question why we are doing this. They ask, Why repeal the new health care law if there are good provisions in it?

Well, there may be some aspects of the 3,000-page bill, which is now law, that were commendable 10 months ago. However, those few positive provisions do not outweigh the fact that the new law's most damaging aspect is that it turns over to the Federal Government individuals' rights to make their own health care choices for themselves and for their families. The new law has given Washington bureaucrats extraordinary power to control the health care decisions of all Americans:

Forcing us to buy health insurance that Washington deems to be acceptable; potentially fining us for refusing to do so, which I believe would be unconstitutional; determining our choices of doctors, hospitals and home care; deciding which medicines we can take and which medical procedures will be available to our families; putting one-sixth of our economy under government control.

Let me be clear. I support health care reform. However, I do not support this new health care law, which represents, to a very great extent, a Washington takeover of our health care system. This law is creating over 150 new boards, bureaus, committees, commissions, offices, pilot programs, working groups, and agencies which will issue onerous regulations that will change our health care system forever—and not for the better.

Remember, over 90 percent of Americans have health coverage for themselves and for their families. Why did the last Congress insist on a virtual takeover of the other 10 percent?

That is why I support the repeal, coupled with major changes to assist those who do not have coverage, without harming the plans of hundreds of millions of Americans who do.

My colleagues, why is this repeal necessary today?

Because the negative effects of this new law are already being felt and are threatening the practice of medicine as we know it. This new law has eroded your right to choose your health care and your doctors, and it is putting bureaucrats and politicians in charge.

Despite predictions from the White House, insurance premiums are not going down. To the contrary, premiums are rising across the Nation for people who have insurance as insurance companies struggle to pay for the costs of a raft of new mandates imposed by Washington.

Even as we speak, doctors are changing their practices because this new law discourages their ability to work as single practitioners or in group practice. In addition, doctors face more paperwork, more red tape, and more risk to their licenses to practice.

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Furthermore, the new law does nothing to solve or diminish the wave of junk medical lawsuits that force doctors, medical professions, and hospitals to practice expensive defensive medicine.

Also missing from the law is any program to promote and support medical education in America, the next generation of young people who we will count on for care. At the same time, doctors and hospitals will face reduced Medicare reimbursements and even more onerous Medicare rules and regulations, causing even more physicians to refuse to treat senior citizens.

And what about the promises we heard about the benefits of the new law? To protect Americans from being denied coverage due to preexisting or other conditions, 27 States have created their own high-risk insurance pools. Others have used an option in the law to let their residents buy coverage through a new Federal health plan. Last spring, Medicare's chief actuary predicted that 375,000 people would sign up for one of these special plans by the end of 2010. In fact, the Department of Health and Human Services reported last month that just over 8,000 people had enrolled. This difference of 367,000 enrollees raises real questions about the then-majority's demand for this provision.

And with claims to provide coverage for another 34 million Americans, we need to be reminded that 18 million of these newly insured people will gain coverage through the financially stressed Medicaid program, which is almost broke. My colleagues, current Medicaid enrollees are already having trouble finding doctors who will see them because of low reimbursement rates. This law proposes to add another 18 million patients to a struggling and absolutely necessary program.

In addition, our hospitals are already reeling. Passage of the new health care law has accelerated the layoff of hundreds of employees in hospitals in my congressional district. When further Medicare cuts take hold, how are these institutions going to maintain their quality of care? They aren't.

And what of the advertised benefits of the new health care law? Backers actually claimed the new law would reduce the Federal deficit. This claim is based on dubious economic assumptions, double counting, and other budget gimmickry. And it is astounding that this law counts 10 years of anticipated revenues to offset 6 years of new spending. Here's a simple fact: If ObamaCare is fully implemented, it will not cut the deficit. The law will actually add more than \$700 billion to the deficit in its first 10 years.

And what about jobs? Our first priority should be creating private sector employment opportunities, especially in America's small businesses.

However, the evidence is clear: by raising taxes, imposing new health mandates and regulations, and increasing uncertainty for small business employers, investors and entrepreneurs, ObamaCare is already destroying jobs in our country.

With nearly 10 percent unemployment and massive public debt, the American people want us to focus on cutting spending and expanding our economy.

That's why I will urge my Colleagues to support this important repeal legislation and take the first steps towards replacing it with reforms that will bring down costs, expand health care accessibility and protect American jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this week we have the opportunity to ensure that our constituents remain in control of their own health care through a system that is patient-centered and provides health care choices, not Washington-imposed mandates.

I urge support of H.R. 2—the repeal of Obamacare.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S INAUGURAL ADDRESS

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

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address and celebrate the many moments of altruism that have emerged from the simple words, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." It is this expression of love of country, this spirit that President Kennedy evoked in all of us that causes me to rise today for my maiden speech on the floor of the House of Representatives. Even 50 years later, we take from this speech the reminder that we still have work to do to improve our country, and that work is incumbent upon us to finish.

As a young child, I remember watching the ceremony on January 20, 1961. I remember the poet Robert Frost read a poem from the podium as his eyeglasses fogged up. I remember President Kennedy taking the stage, and I could have never imagined the impact he would have on my generation and the generations to come.

Here in Washington, President Kennedy is never far from my mind because I have the distinct honor of coming to work to the same office that President Kennedy had when he was a Member of Congress. Our space is a historic treasure. I am so fortunate to be entrusted with the safekeeping of this memorial and all that it represents to the people of Massachusetts and every American who has been inspired by President Kennedy.

My first days and weeks in Congress have been an incredible privilege, serving my community in Massachusetts and working to find solutions for the challenges that our country faces.

President Kennedy's words are timeless, and we can and should learn from them today. He called on our country to remember that "civility is not a sign of weakness." His words should inform our national conversation as we hopefully renew our commitment to respect and graciousness, where politics means more than stark division and glaring partisanship.

Our country needs healing, and Kennedy would believe that it is up to all of us to participate in restoring this type of civility. Fifty years ago he said, "Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us." I welcome this challenge, and I will spend my time in Congress living up to those words.

Good ideas are not restricted to one political party or the other, so I look forward to hearing from my constituents of all political stripes. If my neighbor in Weymouth has an idea to create jobs, I want to hear it. If a resident of Plymouth has a proposal on how we can move our country forward, I want to help. If a fellow citizen in Barnstable has a plan to make our country safer and stronger, I look forward to working together.

In closing, let us remember that President Kennedy had a long-term vision for this country. He understood that a change in direction takes time, and we understand that a return to the values that he kept will not be immediate. As he said, "All of this will not be finished in the first 100 days, nor will it be finished in the first 1,000 days, nor in the life of this administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin."

So as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of President John F. Kennedy's inauguration, let us begin anew.

PATIENTS' RIGHTS REPEAL ACT WILL HAVE DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LOWEY. Tomorrow, the House will vote on the Patients' Rights Repeal Act. While none of us thought that the landmark reform bill passed last year was perfect, repeal would only recreate many problems that last year's bill solved. Instead of identifying specific improvements, Republicans have proposed to repeal every single consumer protection, protections that benefit all of our constituents. We cannot allow this irresponsible bill to become law.

During the debate over health insurance reform in 2009, I received countless letters from individuals throughout my district who testified to the dire need to address high costs and inadequacy in service. For example, a constituent from White Plains told me about her 27-year-old son who was battling cancer and cannot afford some of

the treatments. She wrote, "From discrimination by insurance companies against the millions of us with 'pre-existing conditions' to lack of affordable care, we've had enough."

By ending denials of coverage based on preexisting conditions, 9,200 residents of my congressional district with preexisting conditions will now have access to health insurance. That is just one benefit of reform that's at stake.

If the repeal law were to become law, insurers could impose devastating annual and lifetime benefit caps. Young adults would lose coverage on their parents' plans. Pregnant women and breast cancer and prostate cancer survivors could be denied coverage when they most need it. Seniors would pay higher prescription drug costs. Consumer protections for 445,000 constituents who have private insurance would be rescinded, resulting in higher health care costs and reduced coverage. 22,100 businesses and 91,000 families in my district would not receive tax credits to access better and more affordable coverage. Large insurers would no longer be required to spend at least 85 percent of premiums on health benefits and justify large rate increases.

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And reforms the Commonwealth Foundation estimates will lower the rate of premium increases by \$2,000 on average by the end of the decade will be undone.

I am very happy to work with anyone who genuinely wants to improve health coverage and make it more affordable. I am deeply concerned that this vote tomorrow is about keeping campaign promises without serious examination of the impact of this repeal, especially on Americans like my 27-year-old constituent in White Plains who has cancer.

To my colleagues, if you want to help your constituents who have insurance and the millions of Americans who don't, I urge you to vote "no" on repealing every consumer protection that benefits them.

Thank you.

ARLENE BUSH

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise to commemorate the service of my dear friend Arlene Bush, who is entering her 30th year as a member of the Bloomington School Board of Minnesota. Arlene, who turns 80 later on this year, first joined the school board in 1981. And while times have changed since then, Arlene's dedication to Bloomington students and the schools that they attend has not.

She started her own educational journey in a small two-room schoolhouse in the tiny town of Odin, Minnesota. Later, she moved to Minneapolis, where she graduated from