

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

#### THE WALKABOUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight to recognize a great organization that has helped so many disabled individuals: the Walkabout Foundation. This terrific organization was founded by siblings Luis and Carolina Gonzalez-Bunster.

Sixteen years ago when he was 18 years old, Luis was in a car accident that left him paralyzed from the chest down. Luis was not going to allow this tragedy to define him or limit his ability to lead a full life. Just a few months after his accident, Luis moved to south Florida and enrolled at my alma mater, the University of Miami. Soon after, Luis started driving again and began to live on his own.

Leading an active lifestyle, which included being an avid swimmer, Luis took advantage of the University of Miami's extensive and accessible facilities. However, during a trip to the Connecticut YMCA a couple of years ago, Luis could not access the indoor swimming pool, so Luis and Carolina decided to take action.

Not only did they promote awareness of paralysis and disabilities in their community, but they also made the Connecticut YMCA accessible for all the disabled.

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Out of this victory, the Walkabout Foundation was born.

The Walkabout Foundation's mission is twofold: first, to actively pursue a cure for paralysis by helping fund research programs; and, second, to provide wheelchairs to those who cannot afford one.

The foundation's unique efforts have garnered widespread support and attention. What makes the Walkabout Foundation singular is its drive to make sure that disabled individuals continue to lead full and active lives. This is due to Luis' character and unyielding belief that people should not be victims of their circumstances.

The Walkabout Foundation has not limited its services and generosity to just our Nation. Last month, the foundation provided 200 wheelchairs to Haiti in addition to the 400 they had already donated last year.

As someone who has seen the devastation and the human tragedy that has befallen the poor island nation of Haiti since last year's tragic earthquake, I know the impact and benefit the efforts of Luis and Carolina will bring to

help the lives of so many disabled individuals in Haiti.

They have also provided 100 wheelchairs to the Dominican Republic. These wheelchairs will go to children, teenagers and adults afflicted by paralysis, polio, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, as well as to amputees.

I commend Luis, Carolina and their Walkabout Foundation for all that they do. They are truly an inspiration for all.

#### THE ASSAULT ON OUR RIGHTS, OUR FREEDOMS, OUR DEMOCRACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, for everyone who has been listening to the dialogue and debate around health care reform, I want to make something crystal clear: regardless of the vote in the House, health care reform was not repealed today; and despite what some might be projecting and promising, all of us on both sides of the aisle know that this is true.

We also know that the next step in the larger plan to repeal health care reform will involve directing committees of jurisdiction to revisit the health care reform law.

Now, if this is going to be a process that includes meaningful hearings and honest dialogue about how to strengthen and bolster—not dismantle and obliterate—health care reform, then I would support that strategy. It would allow us to work together to build upon the many successes that the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act has already demonstrated: successes for our children, our seniors, the poor, and the already insured. That was the kind of process that led to the development and passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

But, to be honest, that was then; and I do not believe that such a process will occur this time because those calling for repeal don't seem to be interested in socially, fiscally and medically sound public health strategies to solve our Nation's public health problems.

Instead, the supporters of repeal have been steadfast in their efforts to minimize and even downplay the devastating steps backward that H.R. 2 would mean, not only for our Nation's most vulnerable residents—children and our seniors—but also for small businesses, the middle class, rural and low-income populations, and the financial as well as the physical health of our Nation.

So I urge not only my colleagues here, but every American who wants a healthier and stronger tomorrow to be engaged and active and to be alert because the real health care reform repeal efforts begin, not with this vote, but in the months ahead. All of us, everyone in this country—the insured

and the uninsured—have too much at stake to sit on the sidelines and remain silent.

We know that there is an appropriations strategy to ensure that the health care freedoms in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act are not adequately or appropriately funded, making their implementation an utter impossibility. We can't let that happen.

We also know that efforts are under way that will allow the chairman of the Budget Committee to set spending limits on his own, without committee consensus and clearly without a fair, transparent, and democratic process. This is an assault on our democracy.

Finally, we also know that all of the harsh realities that repeal will mean to millions of Americans and their families will not be highlighted or even mentioned. For example, those calling for repeal won't admit that repeal would mean more uninsured Americans—54 million uninsured by 2019.

Those calling for repeal will never admit that repeal means an increase in the number of American families who will file bankruptcy, lose their homes and suffer other financial hardships because their health care costs are so high.

Those calling for repeal will never admit that repeal means a loss of jobs, increased unemployment and an increase in the deficit, even though they know, as we do, that without health care reform the Federal deficit will explode by \$143 billion over the next 10 years and by more than a whopping \$1 trillion over the next two decades.

Those calling for repeal will never admit that repeal will mean a drastic increase in the health disparities that we know leave racial and ethnic minorities and low-income and rural Americans in poorer health, who are more likely to die prematurely from preventable causes. A recent Joint Center study found that eliminating racial and ethnic health disparities would have reduced direct medical care expenditures by \$229.4 billion in just 4 years.

Finally, those calling for repeal will never admit that repeal, literally, could be a death sentence for thousands of innocent Americans every year. A recent IOM study suggests that more than 15,000 deaths per year could happen just because insurance was taken away.

So repeal did not take place today, but the assault on our rights, our freedoms, our democracy, as well as our very lives are on the line in the planned committee process, the budgetary sleights of hand and a targeted appropriations process. So let's not find ourselves repenting for the silence of good people.

#### TODAY, WE VOTED TO REPEAL

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