

1997, and it has resulted in strong protections for both patients, doctors, and insurers. But under the Bush-Norwood plan, the Texas patients will have their case heard under federal law but in State court. So we are changing the rules in the State of Texas.

Mr. Speaker, I know the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) worked long and hard on this issue, but every compromise in this proposal is in favor of the HMO and not the patient. I came here to vote for a strong patients' bill of rights, not an HMO's bill of rights.

#### IN SUPPORT OF THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. FOLEY. Mr. Speaker, if we listen to the other side of the aisle, we get a clear theme coming out this morning. If it is not our way, send it down the highway. They say bipartisanship, but all they do is deride the things we have worked so hard for.

I have worked with the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. NORWOOD) since 1995 on a Patients' Bill of Rights and that man's heart is with patients. Their hearts are with trial lawyers. If we want to see how quick it is to file an action in court to get health care relief, our constituents will be waiting 5 years for a court to render a verdict.

Under the Norwood bill and the President's proposal they will get health care now, not 5 years from now. To malign this bill and say it was done in the dead of night does a disservice to every Member who has fought for good patient protection.

Now they are abandoning the very architect of that plan in the name of politics. They want to win the next election, but they will do it on the back of sick people. I believe people need help today; and if we pass the bill, they will get it today, not 5 years from now when a court may or may not rule in their favor.

#### REPARATIONS FOR AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

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

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, it is bad enough that Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Reports now confirm that Japanese companies like Mitsubishi and Matsui forced American soldiers into slave labor camps, many even murdered.

If that is not enough to eat your Toyota, our VA Secretary said and I quote, "America demands an apology."

Beam me up. American prisoners of war from World War II do not deserve an apology. They deserve compensation

for Japanese war crimes, period. I yield back all those Japanese cars on American streets, painted and tainted with the blood of prisoners of war, American prisoners of war from World War II.

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#### NEW BEGINNING FOR INDONESIA

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to extend my congratulations to Megawati Sukarnoputri, the new President of Indonesia, and I commend the people, the government, and the military for the smooth, nonviolent transition of power.

I also urge President Megawati to use her leadership to address widespread human rights abuses, such as the bloodshed and destruction in the Maluku, the arrests and deaths of innocent civilians in Aceh and Irian Jaya, the shaky court cases established against pastors in Poso, and the intentional manipulation of religious tensions in a number of areas of the country.

The instability and human rights abuses can be involved through the arrest and bringing to justice of the perpetrators, such as Laskar Jihad leader, Mr. Jafar Umar Thalib, and his cohorts.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Indonesia deserve a peaceful and prosperous nation in which the fundamental rights of all people are respected. The President has a real opportunity to shape a new future with her cabinet appointments to shape the new future for the Indonesian people and ensure that democracy and civil society will reign.

#### VIOLENCE IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. SNYDER. Mr. Speaker, the violence in the Middle East continues. In December, I visited with wounded and with family members of the dead on both sides. Let me share with my colleagues some of the faces of violence.

This lovely young woman, a Jewish family and her in-laws, her husband was executed with a bullet to the head in an Israeli office in Arab East Jerusalem 6 weeks before I arrived.

This young man was shot in the chest, a Palestinian young man, the day before I arrived. This is at a hospital in Ramallah.

And finally, this mother and her son. This man was shot in the upper abdomen about 10 days before I arrived. Several years before she had had another son that was shot in the head in the violence. This is also at a Ramallah hospital in the West Bank.

An end to the violence, a solution, a peace agreement must come, because every traumatized family plants the seeds of more rage and more violence in the Middle East.

#### REPUBLICANS GIVETH AND DEMOCRATS TAKETH AWAY

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

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, while traveling in Iowa recently, the minority leader said, in reference to the very, very large tax cut in 1993 that raised income taxes, gasoline taxes, and taxes on Social Security benefits, he said, I will do it again. He went on to say that the biggest tax increase in U.S. history was the right thing to do.

My colleagues, the message is clear, Republicans giveth and Democrats taketh away. Americans are just now receiving their tax refund checks, and Democrats are already trying to yank it back so they can spend more here on wasteful programs in Washington, D.C.

It is not terribly surprising that Democrats want to raise taxes, but one would think that they would let the American people get the check first. An enormous tax increase would be the wrong thing, the worst thing for our fragile economy at this time.

Mr. Speaker, now it appears the minority leader is back-peddling from the statement he made earlier. We need to find ways to get money back to the people, not to the Federal Government.

#### REJECT PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

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

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, as the representative here in Washington for the capital city of the Lone Star State of Texas, I take pride in the fact that our State has provided national leadership in protecting patients from their insurance companies with a model patients' bill of rights.

Now, all America should know that our success in Texas came despite the continual objection of then-Governor Bush, who threw up as many roadblocks as he could to those meaningful guarantees, in fact, almost as many as he now throws up to the bill we consider today on the Federal level for a national patients' bill of rights.

Incredibly, President Bush now seeks to override the effective State guarantees that we got enacted over his objection in Texas. And like the fine print in one of those policies that only pays if you get struck by lightning at leap year on a midnight summer day, this patients' bill of rights is riddled with loopholes for insurance companies to