

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, Article I, section 5 of the United States Constitution states, "the yeas and nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the Journal." This is to ensure that important pieces of legislation, like the one before us this week, are given a clear up-or-down vote. Yet here we stand today with the possibility that a massive, trillion-dollar government takeover of our health care system would actually not be voted on in this Chamber. Not only does this violate the spirit of fairness within the rules of the House and the confidence entrusted in us by our constituents, it potentially violates our Constitution. Legislative gymnastics should not be used to pass a bill of this magnitude that will impact the life of every American. Change is needed within our health care system. We can all agree on that. But in an effort to pass a health care bill—any bill—this congressional majority has lost their way.

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

Mr. HELLER. Another day, another missed opportunity. Nevada's unemployment rate is at 13 percent. So you have to ask the question: Where are the jobs? I do tele-town hall meetings weekly in my district. I survey thousands. The question asked is: What should be the priority of this Congress? Should it be jobs and the economy or should it be health care? Over 80 percent say we should be concentrating on jobs and the economy. Instead, the majority leadership wants me to vote for the Louisiana purchase or the Cornhusker kickback or the Gator-aid. The list goes on and on.

Despite the majority's effort to hide this vote, the American people will not be fooled. The American people know the purpose of this health care bill is to make sure all Americans have the same bad health care. I encourage my colleagues to listen to the American people, create bipartisan health care reform, and get Americans back to work.

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

Mr. ROONEY. Madam Speaker, I'm astounded by the Democrats' blatant abuse of the House rules established in our Constitution by entertaining the possibility of what is known as the

Slaughter rule. If they choose to deem the Senate health care bill law under this self-executing rule, without a traditional up-or-down vote on the actual text, they will strip the American people of their right to checks and balances in a bicameral Congress. If my colleagues on the other side of the aisle truly believe that this health care bill will solve the Nation's health care problems, then why are they afraid to go on the record and put their names on it?

Like most Americans, I am disillusioned with this Congress. We need to go back to the drawing board and focus on reducing health care costs, where constitutional, and not by creating a new entitlement in a backroom deal.

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(Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I come to the floor today to speak out on the Democrats' proposed "Slaughter solution." This is a sleight-of-hand with an unconstitutional move to avoid a true vote. Article I, section 7 of the Constitution reads, Every bill shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate before it is presented to the President of the United States.

With the Slaughter solution, leadership is attempting to manipulate the rules to circumvent this fundamental constitutional requirement. In the Senate, they have a bill there with so many special deals—taxes on insurance, coverage for abortion—even they cannot pass it for a second time. And so Democrat leadership here in the House tried to avoid a traditional up-or-down vote. The Supreme Court has even spoken on this and said a bill must contain the exact text before it is approved in one House and then the other—precisely the same text.

Madam Speaker, if we ignore the basic requirements of the Constitution, whether by disregarding procedural restraints or overstepping our congressional authority by dictating people's health insurance, we will descend from the freedom of democracy toward the tyranny of a dictatorship.

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(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, Medicare will be expanded. Medicaid will be expanded to allow more people to be insured. Our children will have more health insurance. It will be a major change for America—a positive change. It is interesting that every time America makes a historic and catastrophic change for the better, there are large voices of opposition—

confused voices; voices without the facts. I'm reminded of the history of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. They did not pass with large margins. The Dixiecrats raised their voices in opposition. Africans Americans, Negroes, should be second-class citizens forever.

It is time now for the courageous to recognize that Americans cannot be second class and third class in the climate of needing health insurance. That they must be able to go to hospitals and not be kicked out; that they must be able to get insurance without saying you have a preexisting disease; that women cannot be discriminated against.

Where's the courage to stand up as we did in the time when African Americans needed their freedom? It is now time to free others who do not have health insurance. Do you have the courage to make these hard decisions when others are chatting away, saying the wrong thing? It is time to pass health care reform. I want to stand with the courageous on behalf of the American people.

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

Mr. BISHOP of Utah. Madam Speaker, it is very difficult to criticize a bill that is still being put together behind closed doors. But we do know that it is more about consolidation of power in Washington than about real health reform for the American people. We also know that a poor process always equals poor public policy, and the procedural shenanigans being proposed by the Speaker and Democratic leaders to slip this past the American people make all of Lucy Ricardo's schemes to be a part of Ricky's show look like clear and logical plans of action. This also would be a comedy if it wasn't such a tragedy for the American people.

Madam Speaker, my State has already instituted real health care solutions that deal with our demographics and give people options in the State of Utah. All of our efforts will be destroyed if this one-size-fits-all, trillion-dollar tragedy is actually passed here on the House floor.

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

Mr. TERRY. There will be no straight up-and-down vote on a health care bill. Instead, the leadership has chosen a procedural trick to insert the Senate bill into a rule deeming the Senate bill passed. So if you vote for the rule, you are voting for the Cornhusker kickback, the Louisiana

purchase, and language that allows funds to flow to abortions. What won't be in this bill is the Terry bill or amendment that allows people to join the same health care plans that we have as Members of Congress. Why? Because it's not controlled by the government and its bureaucrats.

Yes, this is about government control, where bureaucrats and Congress will be in control of your health care. And somehow the leadership and authors of these tricks in this bill wonder why the American people don't want this bill.

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

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Madam Speaker, to paraphrase James Agee, "In every child who is born, under no matter what circumstances, and of no matter what parents, the potentiality of the entire human race is born all over again." The Democrats say compassion is the fundamental motivation behind this government takeover bill. But if compassion was the motivation, Madam Speaker, Democrat leadership would not be so doggedly determined to include the increased taxpayer-funded murder of little unborn children in this bill. Nothing so completely destroys the notion that this bill is about compassion than the arrogant disenfranchisement of those who are helpless and have no voice. It is an unspeakable disgrace.

Madam Speaker, it is obvious that Democrats are determined to ram this bill down the throats of the American people using the so-called Slaughter solution, a shameless political gimmick that would avoid even an up-or-down vote on the bill. But if they do, Madam Speaker, the world will know that it was never about compassion, and Democrats will find that they have dangerously underestimated the American people.

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Madam Speaker, later this week the Speaker is going to ask the House to take the final vote on health care reform, including the Senate health care bill. The Senate bill contains such rarified legislative compromises as the Cornhusker kickback, the Louisiana purchase, and Gator aid, and for the first time ever, it allows for Federal funding for abortions. Nevertheless, the Speaker has asked us to vote on it. I understand my Democratic colleagues are being assured that the

Senate will take up the bill of fixes if the House will simply just pass their underlying reform bill.

I offer a word of caution to my friends on the other side of the aisle: once you pass their bill, there is not a guarantee that can be made that will force the Senate Democrats to take up your fixed bill and pass it. The bill that passed out of the Senate satisfies 59 sitting Senators, all of whom voted for it. The compromise that will pass out of this House will please far fewer. Simple logic tells us that the Senate Democrats do not have a real and abiding interest in bailing out House Democrats for having passed the Senate bill. Of course, simple logic has never really been a part of this debate.

Madam Speaker, my Democratic colleagues are playing a game of chicken with the United States Senate. In the end, the President might just go ahead and sign this Senate bill into law, along with the Cornhusker kickback, Louisiana purchase, Gator aid and abortion funding, and every other twisted deal jumbled into this mess.

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

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, of this massive almost 3,000-page bill, there is not one thing that lowers cost; not one. A recent Heritage Foundation article focused on the fact that the health care system is fraught with perverse economic incentives that generate artificially high and rapidly increasing spending. This system does nothing to incentivize the doctor, the patient or the insurance company, let alone the Federal Government, to spend the health care dollars efficiently. However, I'm not suggesting that patients have to bear higher out-of-pocket costs. By this, the doctor and the patient must be reengaged, however, with the cost of their care. And how can we do that?

One amendment that we have tried to get into this bill a number of times and has failed is a robust system of health savings accounts for all. This way, we get to have our cake and eat it too. By that I mean that a portion of the insurance premiums should be put into a special medical spending account for those on all government and private insurance programs who would, in turn, be able to use tax-free funds for discretionary health care purchases. This would be the first step in turning patients into savvy health care consumers. As they save money for themselves, they will save it for the health care system at large, thus bending the cost curve downward.

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

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, yesterday I held a town hall in Statesville, North Carolina, to hear from my constituents about health care reform. One thing was abundantly clear: they do not want this bill, and they're sick and tired of the backroom deals and provisions that have characterized this process. They wanted health care reform, but they were vehemently opposed to the Senate bill.

My constituents are asking me, If this is such a wonderful bill, why is the majority resorting to tricks and sleight of hand to get it passed? If this bill is so great, why not have a regular vote? The answer is simple: this is not a bill the American people want. Some Members acknowledge that.

Madam Speaker, we should listen to the American people. We should take an incremental approach to health care reform that the American people can support.

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, as we are here today on the House floor, at this very moment the Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives is smiling and dialing. They are calling Members of Congress on the other side of the aisle, cajoling them and coaxing them and urging them to do the equivalent of really political bungee jumping, but they don't know how long the cord is. They are saying, You be the first one to jump off. We're going to vote for this Senate bill, and you are going to trust in the Senate to take it up and fix it. Or alternatively, even worse, we're not going to have a final vote on this bill.

Can you imagine a process that is this manipulated that is at this high stakes, literally the Federal Government taking over one-sixth of the economy really in the twinkling of an eye? And it is as if the Democratic leaders are telling the American public, Oh, look, we have got a wonderful plan for your life. You are just going to love it. We are going to vote on it, and then we'll let you read it.

Madam Speaker, we can do better. The American public demands that we do better, to vote "no" and start over.

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to not only the Democrats' health care proposal but to the outrageous process by