

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, I will support the health reform bill today; portability is long overdue. But I do have a question. What good is portability to many Americans who do not have a job?

It is about jobs, Congress, and around here jobs has become an absolute four-letter word to the highest degree.

Check out some of the new high paying jobs American workers could apply for: Deep fried foods specialist. Gizzard skin remover. Corn cob pipe assembler. Pantyhose crotch closer machine operator. How about a poultry impregnator? Tell me, Mr. Speaker, what exactly is a poultry impregnator?

I am going to vote for the health reform bill, but it is a help to those who have, but it does absolutely nothing for those that have not. A job, that is.

Think about that.

THE REFUSE-TO-LOSE BASKETBALL OF MY UMASS MINUTEMEN

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

Mr. TORKILDSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of the all-but-ordinary UMass Minutemen, the best basketball team in the country.

Center Marcus Camby has dominated as a scorer, rebounder, and shot-blocker, and is the best player in the country.

Starting guards Carmelo Travieso and Edgar Padilla personify teamwork. They combine their unique talents, under any circumstance, to make an assist, shoot a three, steal a ball, or steal a game.

Donta Bright is the best finisher in the country. And Dana Dingle is one of the quietest threats in college ball, averaging 14 points per game.

But no description of the UMass team would be complete without recognizing the enormous contribution made by Coach John Calipari, the best coach in the country. As the Minutemen sprinted from Midnight Madness to March Madness, Coach Cal reminded America that through hard work and determination, good guys can finish first.

As the only UMass-Amherst graduate ever to serve in Congress, I share great pride in our team.

And for all those who marvel at the success of refuse-to-lose basketball, and UMass itself, there is only one message: The best is yet to come.

HOUSE LEADERSHIP HAS SURRENDERED TO THEIR EXTREMISTS

(Ms. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, today we have an opportunity to give the American people something they want

and something they need, a guarantee that if they change jobs they will not lose their health insurance.

It is that simple. We know how to do it. The President, the Republican Senate and House Democrats all agree.

So I ask what is the problem? the problem is that the House leadership has surrendered to their extremists and loaded up a truly bipartisan bill with special interest provisions that would cost the American taxpayer millions of dollars.

My constituents are not asking for something for nothing. They are willing to pay for health insurance.

Let us push those special interests aside, work together, and give American families basic security.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the Republican leadership to put politics aside, clean up this bill so we can give Americans this important first step toward health care reform. It is the right thing to do.

WHO DO WE TRUST?

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

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, I listened with great interest to my colleague from Missouri. Many things she said I agree with: the notion of health insurance being able to be taken from job to job; the notion of affordability and portability is important. But again my friends on the other side would rather play politics and indulge in name calling than deal with sound policy.

No, it is not extreme to let the American people have medical savings accounts so that they can decide how to spend their health care dollars. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that will help American taxpayers and the hard-working men and women of America immeasurably, and once again, Mr. Speaker, it comes down to this basic question:

Why should we be afraid to let the American people have control of their own money, have control of their own future, and again, Mr. Speaker, it comes down to this question:

Who do we trust; the people of the United States or the Washington bureaucrats?

Mr. Speaker, I trust the people of the United States.

END HEALTH CARE INSURANCE DISCRIMINATION

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

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, the House later today can do something that has really been quite rare in this Congress. We can pass legislation which will actually help average Americans, and I would say to the gentleman from Arizona, we can pass legislation that 191 Members of this House

on both sides of the aisle support, that was introduced by a Member of the gentleman's side of the aisle, the 55 Members of the other body, a majority of the other body, support, that every group, from the American Medical Association and the American Hospital Association to the independent insurance agents and the National Association of Manufacturers support.

We can pass legislation that does away with insurance discrimination for preexisting conditions, that says, If someone loses their job, or they get sick, they can still retain their right to buy insurance that has common sense market reform, that everyone should agree with, and not load it up with special interests' gobbledygook which will kill this bill forever.

This Congress has accomplished virtually nothing, but today we have an opportunity to get something passed that the other body will pass in April, that the President will sign, and do right by the American people.

So the gentleman from Arizona [Mr. HAYWORTH] is way off base with what he is saying. Let us do right by the American people and pass a democratic substitute of health care reform.

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION REFORM

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

Mr. BURR. Mr. Speaker, the United States has the best health care system in the world. It is unthinkable for Americans to have anything less than superior access to lifesaving drugs. By safety streamlining the drug approval process we can not only help families and seniors by lowering drug prices and keeping high paying jobs on American soil, but we will give terminally ill patients access to lifesaving treatments.

Yesterday patients from across this country came to Washington and told us their hard stories about being denied access to drugs that may, in fact, save their lives. It is these courageous people that inspire us to reform the Food and Drug Administration.

America's health care industry and patients are chained to a FDA process that provides no flexibility, no common sense, and has no human face. The average time for the drug approval in this country is a whopping 13 to 15 years. For terminally ill patients with no hope that timeable simply will not do.

I urge my colleagues to watch FDA reform as it comes to this House floor later this month.

DO NOT KILL HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, by adding these medical savings accounts to

the health care reform bill today, the Republican leadership is essentially killing health care reform. What they are doing is making it possible for the wealthy and the healthiest among us to get into these medical savings accounts and take away their contribution from the risk pool, so that what is left is that the average person's premiums are going to go up, because if someone is not wealthy and they are not healthy and they have to stay in the traditional health insurance pool, they are actually going to have to pay more, and the bill is going to be less affordable.

Do not load down this bill. Just listen to this quote from Senator ROBERT BENNETT, a Republican who says, "The Republicans on the House side are going to turn this bill into the vehicle to attach MSA's and other things, and if they do that, it'll die."

That is what the Republican leadership is doing today, killing this bill with all this extraneous material that only helps wealthy people and exposes the rest of the country to higher premiums for their health insurance.

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LASALLE LANCERS: 1996 OHIO STATE DIVISION I HIGH SCHOOL BASKETBALL CHAMPIONS

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, I want to take a moment this morning to pay tribute to the 1996 Ohio State Division I high school basketball champions, the LaSalle Lancers of Cincinnati, OH.

After finishing in last place in their league during the regular season, LaSalle refused to give up. The team confounded the experts by going all the way to Columbus, knocking off powerhouse Toledo St. John's in the State championship game on Saturday night and winning the entire State championship.

I will admit to some personal bias in this instance. LaSalle High School is not only in my congressional district, it is my alma mater. In fact, I got my start in politics at LaSalle running for student council office. I realize some people probably still hold LaSalle responsible for getting my political career off the ground, but that is life.

Coach Fleming and Coach Scott Tillett, about whom a wonderful front page article appeared in the Cincinnati Enquirer yesterday, and all of the fine young men that were on the team at LaSalle, they brought so much glory to our hometown, they certainly are entitled to our tribute.

I want to thank the LaSalle Lancers and congratulate them for winning the State championship this year. Way to go, Lancers.

PRESERVE BIPARTISANSHIP IN SUPPORT FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, as Members well know, bipartisanship are those rare occasions on which the Democrats and the Republicans agree. We have found some agreement. We agree we need health care reform that provides portability so people can change jobs and keep their health insurance. We agree that we need to prevent people from being barred from insurance because of preexisting conditions. The question becomes, why do we not pass the bill that we both agree on. I will tell Members why: because the Republicans want to ruin this bill, kill this bill with extraneous material to benefit their wealthy friends.

Once again, they ruined bipartisan support by putting on benefits for the wealthy. Just like the tax breaks, here they come again. These medical savings accounts are basically a boondoggle to benefit wealthy, healthy people. They take their money and put it in savings accounts and get a tax advantage. That leaves the rest of us, those who are poor, those who are sick, the regular working guy, to pay higher insurance rates. That is not right.

Every major editorial paper in this country has criticized these medical savings accounts because they only benefit a few wealthy people. We need bipartisanship. We have an opportunity. Please, Republicans, do not ruin it.

VOTE FOR THE REPUBLICAN HEALTH CARE REFORM PLAN

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to this health care debate, we have to ask ourselves: What are the Washington liberal Democrats afraid of? Why are the Democrats so anticonsumer choice? Why are they so against power to the people? Why are they doing everything possible to defeat medical savings accounts, which would allow their own constituents to have more health care choices without the edicts and interference of insurance companies, health care agencies, managed care business types? Why are Democrats afraid of consumer choice?

It is simple. If their constituents find out that they are in a better position to make choices that suit themselves better than what Washington liberals want them to do, then their consumers and constituents are going to figure out, you know, "We do not need all the bureaucracy that the Democrats keep taxing us for. In fact, we do not need these Democrats." They will probably invite them to come home. That, Mr.

Speaker, seems to be why they are so afraid of anything that would give more decision-making power to the American consumers and less to the Washington bureaucracy. Vote for the Republican health care reform plan.

SUPPORT GOOD HEALTH CARE REFORM: SUPPORT THE KENNEDY-KASSEBAUM BILL

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in the name of bipartisanship and good health reform, but I wonder if many of us know the story of Robin Hood and the seven thieves, because that is just what we have today. The whole issue of health reform has already gotten bipartisan support. The Kennedy-Kassebaum bill simply says we want to give people the ability to have health care if they lose their job. If, tragically, they have a preexisting disease, lung disease, cancer, or heart disease, then we still care about them, and they can have insurance and be able to survive.

But Robin Hood and the seven thieves, the House Republican leadership, wants to say, "We want to give the money to the rich. We want to make sure we have a medical savings plan," which allows people to hoard money away, and those who are working and the working poor and those who are sick will not have the ability to have good health insurance because the medical savings plan is applicable only to the wealthy and the healthy. We will find out that under this Republican medical savings plan, working people will be left out in the cold. They would leave less healthy people to buy ordinary medical insurance at elevated prices because of this proposed medical savings plan. People who in fact lost their jobs would not have insurance.

Let us not kill this bill. Let us support good health reform. Let us pass the Kennedy-Kassebaum bill in a truly bipartisan manner for all Americans to have portability in health insurance coverage and coverage if you have a preexisting condition.

SUPPORT H.R. 3103, THE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE AVAILABILITY AND AFFORDABILITY ACT

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

Mr. NORWOOD. Mr. Speaker, today we will make a great step forward, in my opinion, in making health care available to all Americans. The Health Care Coverage Availability and Affordability Act will give Americans the two things they need most: increased access to health care and decreased cost. We will give hardworking Americans increased access by addressing the issues of preexisting conditions and portability. We will decrease the cost by