

big one, the biggest of all the trade agreements that we have ever negotiated is with the South Koreans.

As a matter of fact I just yesterday had eight South Koreans who represented businesses in South Korea that were in my office, and they were describing to me how they wanted us to be able to pass this agreement, be able to have a vote here in the House and the Senate on this very important agreement, that their concern was that they wanted to do business with our American companies. They wanted to do business with us and that the European Union, the EU, was already negotiating, was in the process of having an agreement with them.

If their agreement went through before ours did, they would lose their ability, obviously, if they could purchase more economically from the EU, that, economically, is what they would need to do. I was looking at some statistics, that just with South Korea, not only would we not pick up that extra business, those extra jobs, hundreds of thousands of jobs here in the United States, but we would actually lose business that we already have because we would lose part of this market—it was estimated by staff on our Ways and Means Committee, we could see an 8 percent or \$1.1 billion decline in our U.S. exports to South Korea.

Again, at a time when nationally we have 9.8 percent unemployment; in California, 12.2; and in my rural northern California district it's up around 14 percent unemployment, the last thing we want to do is be losing jobs. We need to be gaining these jobs is why it's so particularly paramount at this time that we move forward.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for getting back to this issue of job creation and economic growth, which is what these agreements are about. It's about improving the standard of living and the quality of life for people here in the United States of America by not only allowing them to have access to products from around the world, but to create good jobs so that we can continue to export to those 95, 96, 97, 98 percent of the consumers who are outside of our borders.

I am happy to yield further to my good friend from the Woodlands.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Let me just say this, because I have enjoyed this discussion. It's about jobs, it's about America falling behind.

There is this principle in trade we should not forget. The principle is if you and I build a better mousetrap, we should have the freedom to sell it throughout the world without government interference. If someone else builds a better mousetrap we should have the freedom to buy it for our family and for our business.

That freedom to buy, sell and compete is critical because you forget, other countries, because others compete to sell to you and I. We have a wide choice of automobiles and clothing and electronics and all. They say,

by studies, that we save so much money because of that trade, that competition, that most families in America can go to a grocery store once a month for free because of the benefits of free trade here in America, which is even more puzzling on raising our standard of living why we allow ourselves to fall behind and why we are giving up on those jobs, why America isn't leading.

That is a question I believe only our President can answer.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend for his very thoughtful remarks.

Mr. BOUSTANY.

Mr. BOUSTANY. Very briefly, I would say my friend from Texas is absolutely right. This is about growing U.S. jobs and creating job opportunities for our small businesses.

As these export markets open up and that greater connectivity is created between our country and our trading partners, the standard of living goes up in those countries and those markets expand. It creates more opportunities for our small businesses to create jobs here and to continue to export.

So, at a time where we are having these discussions, when this country is seeing high unemployment, we are coming out of a recession, we should be vigorously pursuing these types of agreements.

And what are we hearing now from this White House? Silence. Silence. It makes no sense.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my friend. Let me express my appreciation, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues from Louisiana, Texas and California and to say that it's very important for us to get back to bipartisanship on this issue of trade. I have been troubled with the fact that the President has not sent up these agreements for us to consider, as I know my colleagues are. I have been troubled at some of the decisions made by the Democratic leadership.

But I have to say this, there are Democrats with whom we serve who share our commitment to the issue of global leadership by expanding these trade agreements. They understand the improvements that have taken place in Colombia, where unionists are not, in fact, being murdered by the Government of Colombia. They share our recognition that we could have jobs created for Caterpillar and for John Deere if we were to go into the Panama agreement. And they understand the implications of this U.S.-South Korea Free Trade Agreement.

This is the right thing for us to do, Mr. Speaker. I believe that we can come together in a bipartisan way. If we will simply have the vote here in the House of Representatives, we will have strong, bipartisan support for the right thing.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SCHAUER). Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, my good friend and colleague from Michigan, Congressman THADDEUS MCCOTTER, is known here for his extremely subtle wit, his use of metaphors that challenge the most intelligent among us, and for incredible insight into issues. He talks a lot about freedom, and he published a piece today from the Republican Policy Committee that I would like to use as the basis of my comments tonight.

The title of it is "Leeches vs. Laser Surgery: The Contemporary Crux of Health Care Reform."

He goes on to say that "Contrary to 'conventional wisdom,' on the issue of health care reform (and all others) the Democrats are the party of the past. We Republicans are the party of the present and the future.

"Bluntly, Democrats are fighting against the times. Their stale, government-run health reform proposals are as outdated and unsuited to contemporary life as a leaching is to laser surgery."

No one can quite put things in perspective like THADDEUS MCCOTTER.

But when I read that today, I wanted to share that with the American public, because I think it is a very, very good analogy.

Everywhere I go, I talk to people in my district and they say they are scared to death with what is happening in our country. And I talk to other people who travel all around the country, and they say they hear that, too.

What are people scared to death of? What they are scared of is losing their freedoms. We have people all over the world fighting to protect the freedoms that have been so dearly won in this country and to help other countries gather their freedoms and to get the freedom that they deserve.

Yet the biggest threat to our freedom in this country right now isn't anywhere else in the world; it's right here in this Capitol, right here in this room and in the Senate Chamber across the hall. That's the greatest threat to our freedom.

Republicans, though, have alternatives, and I want to talk a little bit about those alternatives. We should be looking at reforming medical liability laws, ending exclusions for preexisting conditions, expanding health savings accounts, providing tax credits for purchasing private health insurance, allowing association health plans, permitting health insurance purchases across State lines, encouraging individuals to ensure against changes in health status, giving incentives for preventive health care, and applying information technology to enhance transparency and increase efficiencies. All that can be achieved without trillions in new spending. In fact, most of it can be done for absolutely no cost.

Instead, what we have offered to us by the Democrats is an erosion of our freedom. It's a government takeover of the best health care system in the world.

I want to quote again from THAD-DEUS:

“Unfortunately, trapped in the past of a big government ideology and purblind to the people empowering wondering powers of our globalized world, the President and his Democratic majority cavalierly dismiss such sensible, affordable approach and determinedly toil behind closed doors to impose their radical health distribution scheme on unwilling Americans. If the Democrats prevail, their health redistribution will impel higher costs, lower quality, fewer choices and lost jobs during this painful recession. There is a better way, the Republican way: patient-centered wellness for our people powered world.”

This should not happen in the greatest country in the world. We must do everything that we can to stop this, and we will do everything we can to stop it.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order request of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is vacated.

There was no objection.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, today Speaker PELOSI, with a lot of fanfare and locked doors, invitation only, which didn't include any Republicans, just as the input in this bill included no Republicans, this is the bill, 1,990 pages. I haven't had a chance to read it. They just got it out today. I have been trying to get through it.

One of the frustrating things we have is we have had hearings and hearings, hours and hours of hearings on the Democratic health bill, H.R. 3200, hour after hour. Think about how many people in America have spent hour after hour reading H.R. 3200.

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They carefully examined it because this was the law that was proposed by the Democratic leadership. And they were concerned that this may be voted into law, and they need to know because this is going to be country changing.

So they spent thousands and thousands of hours all across America to review H.R. 3200. Some have gone to the trouble and spent hundreds or thousands of hours, when you consider all the people in America are reading these bills because they're scared, reading the Baucus bill, reading some of the other bills. And then it turns out those were all red herrings. The American public, all the Members of Congress were tricked into wasting their

time, spending all those hours reviewing a bill that they knew they weren't going to introduce.

Mr. Speaker, you know, Thomas Jefferson laid out the rules that we follow. They're not Robert's Rules of Order. They're Thomas Jefferson's rules that get modified with each Congress. And that's what we're supposed to follow. And the procedure is well thought out. You have subcommittees that are supposed to have legislative hearings and bring in witnesses and consider all these different aspects, and after they've considered all this, someone starts working together with other people. You're supposed to have bipartisan support. We were told all year long we would have that. Yes, big joke there. So someone, though, is supposed to put together the bill and lots of people working together to get it done, and then you give everybody plenty of time to review the bill at the subcommittee level. And then you have a markup, it's called, in subcommittee, where some of those hearings are very long when they're done properly because they're open to any amendment by anyone on the subcommittee. Once it clears the subcommittee, if it gets voted out of the subcommittee, then it goes to the full committee. And anyone in the full committee can make amendments, as many as they want, and you stay as long as you have to get through all the amendments. That's the process. And then once the amendments are done and the committee votes it out, that is the bill that is supposed to come to the House floor. You bring the bill that was amended and agonized over.

Not in this Congress, oh, no. We're going to spend thousands and thousands of hours, and there's no telling how many of the trees in America got cut down to print out H.R. 3200 so that people could read it because this is going to be really country changing, as the President said. He's going to transform America. He didn't say to what, but he's going to transform America. And then it turns out after all those hearings, amendments, considerations, all that work, behind closed doors they were working on a bait-and-switch scheme. And today it played out. And now we're told by the Democratic leadership, well, we want to make sure you have 72 hours to review this bill.

Well, I'm telling you what. You mark my words. You mark my words. We've got 1,990 pages here, but by the time this bill is voted on, there will be hundreds of pages added, as we've seen over and over, in the wee hours of the morning, and people won't have time to read it. And just like the crap-and-trade bill, it will be up there and they won't even have the whole bill put together in time for us to read the whole bill before we vote on this transforming bill that's going to change and, I would submit humbly, end some lives in America. Not because people are going to be denied treatment but because they're going to be put on lists and be

required to wait an inordinate amount of time because you can't cut \$500 billion from Medicare and not expect to have some people not get treated.

Another thing you need to realize too, in this new bill, from what we've been able to quickly discern, this Pelosi bill, the 1,990 pages, reduces the size of affordable credits for patients to purchase insurance in the exchange, and instead it expands the eligibility for Medicare to 150 percent of the Federal poverty level.

Well, our seniors are not as stupid as some people in this body think they are. They get it. You're going to cut Medicare \$500 billion and you're going to expand coverage to people that have never been covered before, and we're supposed to feel good that we're going to get more coverage than ever? They're not stupid. They understand what's happening.

I have been joined by some of my colleagues here, and I would love to get their input because we've been scrambling to see what we are facing here with this bill.

I would love to yield to my friend Mr. BRADY.

Mr. BRADY of Texas. I thank my friend from east Texas, where our districts border each other and whom I have gotten to know and respect here in Congress. And I thank you for this leadership.

The timing is now. The bill has been introduced. The fight is on. And rarely in our lives do we have the opportunity to make such a difference on a bill that can take us down such a wrong road for America.

I will be brief, but what comes to mind is recently a national pollster whom you would know and recognize did a survey of Americans, and he asked them two questions, and he said, which one is most true: The first question is America is going to spend \$1 trillion of your tax dollars to reform health care and it won't add a dime to the deficit. The second statement was there is human life on other planets. By a three-to-one margin, people chose human life on other planets as more true than we can spend all this money and not add a dime to the deficit.

The American public is smart. I held more than 50 town hall meetings during August and September, roundtables, all types of forums, and the truth of the matter is this Speaker and this House didn't listen to any of them.

This bill, Mr. GOHMERT, you talk about and show today, 2,000 pages, \$1 trillion, 31 new Federal agencies, mandates and commissions that come between you and your doctor, who ultimately decide what doctors you can see, what treatments the government thinks you deserve, what medicines they think you can get.

This bill today, the fight we are engaged in, government will inject itself in our most intimate health care decisions. It raises the costs of health care. It increases the deficit for generations