

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, if I were talking to America, I would say, This is NANCY PELOSI's answer to health care. It's going to cost \$2.25 million per word, and we don't even have the manager's amendment yet, which is probably going to add another 600 or 700 pages to this. This is going to cut Medicare and Medicare Advantage by about, oh, \$460 or \$470 billion. Seniors are really going to feel it. It's going to end up rationing health care, maybe for everybody, but certainly for seniors. The taxes are going to go through the roof, and nobody's read this turkey. Nobody. They'll tell you they have. We've got a reading room right now; we're going to go through it. But even when we read this, we still don't have the manager's amendment.

We don't need this rush to judgment. We need to get it right. We need to take our time and get a real bill that's going to help the American people, not something that's going to cost an arm and a leg.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. HERGER. Mr. Speaker, we need the facts about this massive 2,000-page prescription for government-run health care. Financial experts at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and other independent analyses have found that the Democrat plan for government-run health care will not only fail to reduce skyrocketing health care costs, it will actually increase them. Now with a vote looming on one of the most important bills to come through this Chamber in our Nation's history, I'm urging Speaker PELOSI to allow time for a proper analysis on how her bill will affect us in the long term instead of keeping Congress and the American people in the dark on the impact of government-run health care.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, health care reform is important, but it shouldn't come at the expense of the public's number one concern: the gut-punch of joblessness. The massive plans now under consideration threaten to disrupt one-sixth of our economy through tax hikes and punishing regulations. This is all in the service of a health care bill that is a budgetary train wreck. This bill forces drastic changes on a deeply divided public. It promises radical government intrusion in every sector of health care. It will have the effect of breaking the President's promise that you can keep what you have. It will not bend the cost curve down. It will burden the States with

huge new mandates. It will send insurance premiums through the roof. It cuts Medicare, seriously threatening popular Medicare Advantage plans; it allows for government funding of abortion; and there is no real liability reform.

We need health care reform, but we can do better than this. We must do better than this.

TROOPS IN AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. BUCHANAN. Mr. Speaker, I returned yesterday from a 4-day visit to Afghanistan to meet with the troops and our military leaders as part of a bipartisan congressional delegation. It's clear to me that our soldiers are performing at a high level in a challenging environment. Their dedication and spirit is strong as they work to prevent al Qaeda from regaining a foothold. It's also clear that we need to increase the number of troops there to help them succeed. I believe firmly that this is the best means of protecting the United States and our people from terrorist attacks. There is no question that the Taliban is a destabilizing force with ties to al Qaeda. The Taliban is a threat to the national security of America. We need to provide the resources to our troops to ensure that their counterinsurgency strategy is successful. The new troop level should be determined by whatever is needed to accomplish the mission. Congress should give strong consideration to our military leaders in answering this question.

Let me close by saying that I'm very proud of all the men and women serving in Afghanistan. They are highly skilled, motivated, and I am confident that with the additional troops, they can achieve their mission. They are genuine heroes.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. BAIRD. My colleagues, I have enjoyed the comments by my friends from the other side of the aisle. I just would rise today to point out one thing. The largest expansion of an entitlement program in the history of the United States of America since our creation happened under the watch of the Republican majority. It happened on a piece of legislation that we had less than 30 hours to read, there were no amendments allowed, and it increased the debt per decade by more than \$750 billion. The amount of Federal borrowing from foreign countries doubled under the watch of many of my colleagues here.

Now I am pleased that they're concerned about fiscal responsibility. Speaker PELOSI has pledged that the

bill will be available online, plus the manager's amendment, for 72 hours. We had less than 30 on the Medicare bill. We are at least trying to pay for this legislation. We will not, with this legislation, increase the debt \$750 billion, as did the Medicare prescription drug bill, passed by the former majority party.

Americans need health care reform. My friends on the other side of the aisle had 12 years to try to do something constructive, and they failed.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. AUSTRIA. Mr. Speaker, this week marks a defining moment for this Congress and our Nation, with an \$11.9 trillion national debt that continues to grow as government encroaches into every aspect of our lives. We're about to vote on a nearly 2,000-page bill. We've heard all the details of this bill. It will increase the health care premiums for millions of Americans who are happy with their current coverage. It will cost nearly \$1 trillion, placing even more debt on our children and grandchildren. It will force businesses, large and small, to provide health care for their employees or pay fines to the government. It would unbelievably cut \$170 billion from the Medicare Advantage Program to pay for this bill, putting nearly 10 million seniors enrolled in Medicare Advantage at risk of losing their health care coverage. In Ohio, there are nearly 500,000 seniors on Medicare Advantage and nearly 30,000 of them are in my district alone.

Mr. Speaker, we all agree that our health care system can and should be improved. Unfortunately, Members of Congress are not listening to the American people, that more government is not the answer.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Mr. Speaker, before the Federal Government got heavily into health care in the mid-sixties, medical care was cheap and affordable for almost everyone. Doctors even commonly made house calls. We took what was a very minor problem for very few people and turned it into a major problem for everyone.

The people want medical care that is less expensive and less bureaucratic. The bill that we will apparently vote on later this week is 1,990 pages of bureaucratic gobbledygook. It will make health care even more expensive and even more bureaucratic. As Senator JOE LIEBERMAN said on Face the Nation, this bill "will actually hurt the economic recovery and our long-term financial situation."

The pattern seems to be that the Federal Government makes a problem

so bad that the only solution people can see is for the government to take it all over. But a famous man once wrote that there is a simple solution to every human problem, one that is neat, plausible and wrong. This bill is the socialist approach, and all it will do over the long haul is make a bad situation even worse.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. REHBERG. Supporters of Speaker PELOSI's 2,000-page government takeover of health care are fast to cite opinion polls in their favor and dismiss anyone who objects if they have legitimate concerns. However, they are much slower to demonstrate the coverage of their convictions by holding public town hall meetings. Americans have a right to be heard, so I have hosted 17 town hall meetings in Montana since August. This weekend in Billings, more than 500 people came to voice their concerns. They weren't there at the request of the insurance industry. Out in rural America, people are speaking out against this bill. I heard them loud and clear at my listening sessions. It is time for the rest of Congress to listen, too. Our authority comes from the people, and we must not ignore them.

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HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, there are people all across this country who are very worried that Congress is about to do something that will do great harm to the quality of their lives and will change America forever. They want us to do something to bring down the cost of health insurance. They want us to do something to make it easier for the uninsured and the hard to insure to get coverage. But, they want no part of a 1,990-page bill with 111 new Federal programs and offices, with new taxes, with Medicare cuts, all at a cost of more than \$1 trillion.

The Democratic majority may be able to twist enough arms to ram this monstrosity through the House, I don't know. But they are leaving the American people behind. This is no way to deal with an issue as important as health care. This bill must be stopped so real, commonsense reform can begin.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring the voices of my constituents in Virginia's First District to

the House floor. Here are the words of some of my constituents.

Elizabeth from Williamsburg said, "Please consider small business owners when evaluating the health care proposals. My business ends up with an 8 percent profit margin, so an 8 percent of payroll contribution penalty rate would be significant."

John from Newport News says, "Over the 20 years I managed health care plans for corporations, managing cost increases was paramount not only for my employer, but also for my employees. I know how hard I worked at managing health care expense and have zero confidence that the government can handle the job. The bottom line is that more government involvement in our health care system is not the answer."

Sandra from Seaford said, "I am not in favor of a government-run health care bill. I want to choose my own health insurance. I am opposed to passing a health care bill for the sake of passing a bill. I am opposed to a health care bill that will cost trillions of dollars over the next 10 years, and I am not in favor of being penalized because I do not take part in a government health care bill."

Mr. Speaker, they have said it better than I could.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, it is nice to see you in the Chair again, and I think you are getting the short straw in your caucus when we give these 1-minute speeches.

It is always nice, Mr. Speaker, when the veil lifts and you finally get to understand something. I have been puzzled since 2007 when the Democrats became the majority party in the House of Representatives, when gas prices went from \$2.22 to \$4.14 over the summer. I was puzzled why they passed such meaningful legislation as National Train Day and so forth and so on.

But two that caught my eye was the bill honoring cats and dogs and then the Monkey Safety Act. I thought they were chastened in this Congress, as we saw the unemployment rate go from this level to this level, and if I had a bigger chart, it could keep on going up.

But again, there is sort of a theme. While people are losing their jobs in America, they again passed the Monkey Safety Act and the Shark Conservation Act. I am thinking to myself, What's their fascination with animals? And it wasn't until I read Speaker PELOSI's government takeover of health care bill, if you go over to page 1,255, it makes veterinary students eligible for up to \$283 million in Federal scholarship and student loan forgiveness.

What's with the animals?

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair asks all Members to heed the gavel.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. SHUSTER. Mr. Speaker, we do need health reform in this country, but not this plan. We need a plan that uses common sense to fix what is broken and keep what is good. Eighty-five percent of Americans have health insurance, and 85 percent of those people are satisfied with what they have.

President Obama has said over and over that no one will lose their insurance if they are happy with it. And just a couple of weeks ago he said that seniors on Medicare Advantage will have to go on regular Medicare, and that means 38,000 seniors in my district will lose their current Medicare plan.

I have many small business owners who have come up to me and said they will be forced to abandon their current plans and go on the public option, not because they want to but because, if they don't, it will hurt their businesses.

Finally, on page 94, it will prohibit families and businesses from changing plans unless the plan has been approved by the health czar. That is not freedom. This is not the plan that America wants. Let's vote this bill down.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, in South America there is a tenacious parasitic plant that attaches itself to trees. As it climbs to the top of the tree canopy seeking the light, the plant thrives. But eventually, in the end, it kills the tree.

That is what an unfunded mandate by the Federal Government does to States. Putting more people onto Medicaid arguably is a good thing that takes people off the roles of the uninsured. But the Pelosi health care bill will cost all of the States an added \$34 billion in new burdens.

My Pennsylvania colleagues and I warned our Governor back when we thought people at 133 percent of the poverty level would be eligible for Medicaid. That would have cost the State \$2.2 billion over 10 years. Now we are looking at those at 150 percent of poverty level. That will add 15 million to the Medicaid program nationwide.

Tennessee Democratic Governor Phil Bredesen called it "the mother of all unfunded mandates."

We may soon be saying our prayers for many of our States, when a program intended to help poor women,