

Despite the fact that tort reform would help reduce health care costs, the administration refuses to propose this commonsense solution. Why is that?

According to former Democratic National Committee Chairman Howard Dean, "Tort reform is not in the (health care) bill because the people who wrote it don't want to take on the trial lawyers."

In the handful of States that have enacted tort reform, health care costs have fallen, and the availability of medical care has expanded.

Tort reform and reducing the number of frivolous lawsuits against hospitals and doctors would help all Americans.

NO PUBLIC FUNDING FOR ABORTIONS

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

Mr. INGLIS. Madam Speaker, there are many things wrong with the Pelosi health care bill. Some of them rise to moral issues, and certainly the moral issue that I am focused on right now is the abortion issue.

There are a lot of people who want to say, Well, there won't be public funds used for abortion, but really, please, when we debate this bill, let's not insult the intelligence of other Members of Congress or of the American people. There is a clear commingling of resources. If you set up a public option and then there is money flowing into that from taxpayers, that money will ultimately find its way to abortion services.

So what we need in order to avoid that problem that many of us have of funding abortions with taxpayer money is an expressed prohibition on abortion services. There needs to be a bright line in this bill saying there will be no support for abortion services anywhere in the bill, similar to the Hyde amendment in HHS appropriations.

So, Madam Speaker, this is something that needs to be done in order to make it clear and to avoid this moral challenge.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. TITUS). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE FOR AMERICA ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Madam Speaker, I am compelled to address this body tonight after having listened to my col-

leagues over the last few days fabricate falsely about the Affordable Health Care for America Act.

Every 12 minutes, an American dies in the greatest country on Earth simply because he cannot afford to live. Americans lie right now, as I speak, in their homes while in pain, suffering because they cannot afford the care that would bring them relief.

I meet people in my district who choose between medication and food, parents who go without medical treatment to pay for heat and clothing for their children, and family members who believe with all their hearts that loved ones have died because they lacked adequate health care.

Like the misrepresentations about this bill, these injustices must stop. The time to act is now. In the words of President Obama, we must have the urgency of now.

H.R. 3962 helps uninsured Americans immediately. It immediately creates an insurance program with financial assistance for those who are uninsured or for those who have been denied policies because of preexisting conditions. It also allows those who are unemployed to keep their COBRA coverage until the exchange is operational.

Health insurance reform will mean greater stability and lower costs for all Americans. That means affordability for the middle class, security for our seniors, and responsibility to our children. It also will mean coverage for 96 percent of Americans. According to the CBO, the bill reduces the deficit by \$30 billion over the first 10 years.

In their speeches, Republicans have described this bill as the Speaker's bill. They call it the "Pelosi bill." This bill does not belong to the Speaker, although she has done a phenomenal job in helping us to craft it.

This bill belongs to the hardworking Americans who have insurance but who want a more transparent and stable health care marketplace that focuses on quality, affordable choices for all Americans, and that keeps insurers honest.

It belongs to 47 million Americans who are suffering and who have no help on the horizon.

This bill belongs to the seniors living in rural areas all over our country who will receive better Medicare coverage because of this bill.

It belongs to the children throughout our Nation who are so poor that their parents cannot even afford checkups. These are the children whose lives will be crippled by diabetes simply because doctors have not diagnosed them as being at risk.

Our children are our living messages we send to a future we will never see. The question is: What type of message are we sending? They will suffer simply because they do not know how to reverse the symptoms leading them down a troubled road.

This bill belongs to 44,000 Americans who die every year because they lack insurance. They have been guaranteed

life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness by founding documents to which my colleagues on the other side of the aisle constantly refer. Americans are denied those things by the thousands. They cannot afford care and so they die.

That's right, Madam Speaker. For every page that Republicans have printed out and have used as props, for every page, 22 Americans will die this year because they cannot pay for the care that will save their lives.

It is telling that, using valuable tax dollars, they printed those pages to make copies of a bill that is available, searchable, and downloadable online. It is a perfect metaphor for the millions of dollars this bill will save Americans.

Our health care system will save more than \$150 billion every year, a call that President Obama made in the beginning of his campaign. The bill moves America to a health care system with an electronic recordkeeping system, cutting fraud, excessive administrative costs and medical mistakes.

Republicans do not care about those savings or about that progress. Like the pages of the taxpayer-provided paper used here today on this floor, they are props—only interested in being weights to drag down, to slow down, and to eventually stop true health care reform.

It pains me to say these words, but this is how I feel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. POE of Texas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ABRAHAM LINCOLN ON PRESERVING OUR FREEDOM

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, in the ongoing debate over health care reform, the topic of freedom is often overlooked, but it ought not be. The Democrats' health care bill is a massive expansion of government that will alter the lives and livelihoods of every person in America. For many, that means higher taxes; and for even more, it will mean an unprecedented intrusion of Federal Government bureaucrats into the way we receive health care. This is a fundamental erosion of our freedom.

The great freedom fighter, Abraham Lincoln, gave a speech in Springfield, Illinois, in 1838 where he touched on the idea of the loss of freedom. He was very explicit. He explained that our country could one day suffer a loss of freedom, not by an outside attack but from within. I will quote what Lincoln said and then give it in its larger context:

“At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer: If it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time or die by suicide.”

The larger context of those words is as follows:

“In the great journal of things happening under the sun, we, the American people, find our account running, under date of the 19th century of the Christian era. We find ourselves in the peaceful possession of the fairest portion of the Earth as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under the government of a system of political institutions, conducting more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty than any of which the history of former times tells us. We, when mounting the stage of existence, found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the acquirement or establishment of them. They are a legacy bequeathed us by a once hardy, brave and patriotic but now lamented and departed race of ancestors. Theirs was the task, and nobly they performed it, to possess themselves and, through themselves, us, of this goodly land; and to uprear upon its hills and its valleys a political edifice of liberty and equal rights; 'tis ours only to transmit these—the former, unprofaned—by the foot of an invader; the latter, undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation, to the latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know. This task of gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species in general all imperatively require us faithfully to perform.

“How then shall we perform it? At what point shall we expect the approach of danger? By what means shall we fortify against it? Shall we expect some transatlantic military giant to step the ocean and crush us at a blow? Never. All the armies of Europe, Asia and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the Earth, our own excepted, in their military chest, with a Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a trial of a thousand years.

“At what point then is the approach of danger to be expected? I answer: If it ever reach us, it must spring up amongst us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time or die by suicide.”

□ 1745

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. TOWNS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TOWNS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

SUPPORTING BETTER HOME CARE FOR OLDER AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. GRIFFITH) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, almost one in seven residents in my home State of Alabama is over the age of 65, a sector of the American population that is expected to grow dramatically over the next 2 decades. As our citizens age, many will develop costly and debilitating health conditions that will require additional care and additional expenditures for the Medicare system.

Advanced home health treatments are now targeting some of the most serious illnesses and have been successful in keeping more of the elderly out of the hospitals and reducing the cost to Medicare. There are numerous cases in Alabama where home health care has been instrumental in preventing emergency room visits and hospital readmissions and helping older residents to live more independently at home for as long as possible.

Our goal is to improve the care of Americans and control rising costs, especially in our Medicare population. Home health care is meeting these goals and has the potential to do even more.

Yet there are provisions in the House health reform legislation that would cut \$57 billion from the Medicare home health program over the next decade. If these reductions remain in the bill, they will surely have an adverse effect on the access to home care for our senior citizens.

The cuts in home health care services in the bill are significantly disproportionate to other provider sectors. The bill seeks 14 percent of all Medicare cuts from home health care, while home health makes up only 4 percent of the Medicare program currently. This disproportionate impact is further magnified by the fact that, unlike most other health care providers and insurers, expanding health insurance will have no meaningful increase in the home health care business.

Home health patients average nearly 80 years of age and are already insured by Medicare and Medicaid. This means that the Medicare cuts to home health agencies are not offset by new revenues from newly insured patients. Instead, the proposed cuts of over 14 percent of spending on home health services will be as can be.

For these reasons, I urge my colleagues to reject the proposed cuts to home health care and support better care at home for all older Americans.

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

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HONORING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF FURMAN BISHER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the accomplishments of famed Atlanta sports reporter Furman Bisher upon his retirement from the Atlanta Journal Constitution after 59 years.

Furman Bisher was born on November 4, 1918, in Denton, North Carolina, and became the editor of the Charlotte News in 1940. During World War II, he honorably served our Nation from 1941 until 1945.

In 1950, Furman Bisher became a sports editor for the Atlanta Constitution, and in 1957 he became sports editor and columnist for the Atlanta Journal and the Sunday Journal-Constitution.

Furman Bisher's accomplishments are legendary. He was the president of the Football Writers Association of America in 1959 and 1960 and named one of the Nation's five best columnists by Time Magazine in 1961. Furman was president of the National Sportscasters and Sports Writers Association from 1974 to 1976, and he covered every Kentucky Derby since 1950. He also covered every National Football League Super Bowl, except the very first one played in 1967.

As an Atlanta Braves fan, I am particularly grateful for the crucial role Furman played in facilitating the arrival of the Braves baseball team to Atlanta, which was Atlanta's very first professional sports team.

Furman Bisher is a member of the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame, the International Golf Writers Hall of Fame and the National Sportscasters and Sports Writers Hall of Fame, and he was a recipient of Professional Golfers Association's Lifetime Achievement in Journalism Award in 1996.

A testament to Furman's reputation from the very beginning can be traced to 1949, when he became the only person since 1919 to secure an interview with “Shoeless” Joe Jackson, who had been banned from baseball.

Furman Bisher retired from the Atlanta Journal Constitution on October 10, 2009, after 59 years of service, typing his last column on the Royal typewriter that was the instrument of his first Constitution column back in 1950.

At age 90, Furman is still going strong, splitting his time between a homestead in Fayette County and a retreat on St. Simons Island with his wife of 21 years, Linda.

Furman Bisher's legacy is lasting. He wrote over 10,000 columns in the Atlanta Journal Constitution and hundreds more in newspapers in North Carolina dating back to 1938.