

before this Congress literally as-tounded by the health reform plan offered by the loyal opposition.

After all this time, this is the best you could produce? It seems that you have backtracked. Now you don't believe in health reform. Instead, the Republicans have embraced a plan that will drive up the cost of health insurance for the sickest and most vulnerable, a plan that will start a race to the bottom where insurers drop the sick and flock to States with the weakest regulations. Yes, that's exactly what I said.

A plan that bails out the insurance companies, relieving them of any responsibility to cover the individuals that need insurance the most. You are going backwards instead of forwards.

I must admit that I congratulate them for somehow turning the status quo into 230 pages of legislative text. I contend there is only one real reform plan, and we will be voting on it in a few days.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would remind Members to address their remarks to the Chair, not to others in the second person.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, God tells us in Hosea 4:6, My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Mr. Speaker, the American citizens need to know that the Pelosi health mandate bill that we are going to be voting on evidently Saturday night is going to destroy our economy. It is going to destroy jobs. In fact, the President's own economic adviser says 5.5 million people will lose their jobs if this bill becomes law.

Mr. Speaker, the American people need to read the bill and need to know what is in it. It is being forced down the throats of the American people. Mr. Speaker, this is a dead, rotten, stinking fish that the Speaker is trying to force down the throats of the American people before they have an opportunity to see it. I encourage the American people to know what is going on here and to tell their Congressman that they reject the insurance mandate that is proposed by the Speaker in the Speaker's health insurance mandate bill.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. SCHWARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Mr. Speaker, central to finding a uniquely American solution to America's health care chal-

lenges is strengthening Medicare for our Nation's seniors. Our health care reform effort renews our commitment to the health and security of American seniors by ensuring the long-term fiscal health of Medicare and improving the quality of care that seniors receive. The House bill adds valuable new benefits for seniors and improves access to primary care.

Seniors now pay up to 20 percent of the cost of preventive services like mammograms and colonoscopies and vaccines. As of January 1, 2011, seniors will no longer have to pay any copay for preventive services. This is a major win for America's seniors.

Health care reform also sets us on a path to close the coverage gap in Medicare part D, known as the doughnut hole. In 2011, Medicare will pay \$50 more for seniors to get drugs, and they will receive a 50 percent discount on brand name drugs. Health care is good for our seniors. Health care is good for America. Now is the time to act.

ENROLL CONGRESS IN PUBLIC OPTION

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, in July, I offered House Resolution 615, which urged my colleagues who vote for a government-run health care plan to lead by example and enroll themselves in the same public plan. The resolution has 96 Republican cosponsors and prompted almost 2 million Americans from across the country to contact my office in support of this.

Yesterday, I and several of my colleagues offered an amendment to the Pelosi health care bill that, if passed, will automatically enroll all Members of Congress and all Senators in this public option. This amendment is a direct response to the outcry of millions of Americans who have contacted me.

Members of Congress are exempt from this government takeover of health care, and I believe that if a law is good enough for the American people, then it should be good enough for the elected officials that represent them.

Tonight I will host a Webcast at 7 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, and I urge anyone watching to join me through my Web site, fleming.house.gov, to talk more about it.

CONGRATULATING MICHELLE WILMOT

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

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate a Chamorro soldier, Michelle Wilmot, for receiving the 2009 Outstanding Woman Veteran Award.

Michelle was a member of Team Lioness, the first female Army team attached to Marine infantry units to con-

duct operations such as raids, checkpoints, and personal searches for weapons and explosives. She also served as a medic and a retention NCO during her 8-year stint.

As a member of Team Lioness, she was featured in a documentary film entitled *Lioness*, and in a chapter of Kirsten Holmstedt's book, *The Girls Come Marching Home*. Michelle holds a bachelor of science degree in political science and speaks Arabic and six other languages.

Having personal understanding of the difficulties facing soldiers returning from war, she was chosen as program director of the Northeast Veteran Training and Rehab Center in Gardner, Massachusetts. The center specializes in treating veterans who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder.

On behalf of the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, I want to congratulate Sergeant Michelle Wilmot, winner of the Massachusetts 2009 Outstanding Woman Veteran Award.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, across the country, the American people have been calling for months for Washington to pass responsible reform that will lower the cost of health insurance to small business owners, working families, and family farms.

Yesterday, House Republicans answered that call by putting forward commonsense legislation that will reduce the deficit, lower health insurance premiums, and ensure coverage for those with preexisting conditions. You can read all about it by going on www.healthcare.gop.gov.

As a result of the House Republican bill, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office now confirms, families will see their health insurance premiums reduced by up to 10 percent, and hardworking taxpayers can expect deficits to decrease by \$68 billion over the next decade.

The Pelosi health care plan: more government, more spending, more deficits. The Republican plan: less government, lower deficits, and lower health insurance premiums.

That's your choice, America. Let your voice be heard.

HEALTH CARE REFORM FOR WOMEN

(Ms. HIRONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, few Americans have more at risk or at stake in health care reform than women. Forty States allow private health insurance companies to gender rate their premiums. As a result, a 25-year-old woman may pay between 6 percent and 45 percent more than a 25-year-old man for the same coverage.

Fifty-two percent of women reported postponing or foregoing medical care because of cost. Only 39 percent of men report having had those experiences.

Nine States allow private plans to refuse coverage for domestic violence survivors.

Eighty-eight percent of private insurance plans do not cover comprehensive maternity care. In many policies, a previous C-section and being pregnant are considered preexisting conditions.

Less than half of all women in America have employer-sponsored insurance. This is partly due to the fact that more women tend to work for small businesses or have part-time jobs where health insurance is not offered.

Women matter. Health care reform matters. I urge my colleagues' support to change this broken system.

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UNEMPLOYMENT EXTENSION

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, over 8 months ago, Congress passed and the President signed a so-called "economic stimulus" bill which added nearly \$1 trillion to our national debt, and now we are told by this administration, as the White House Council of Economic Advisors recently said, that we can expect 10 percent unemployment through the end of next year and that the economic stimulus bill will contribute little to further economic growth. However, since then, over 3 million jobs have been lost, and the national unemployment rate has soared from 8.1 percent to a 26-year high of 9.8 percent.

State unemployment numbers from my home State of Florida in September continue to reveal the sad fact that since the stimulus passed, unemployment has now risen to 11 percent, which is a record-high level not experienced since 1975.

Today, the House of Representatives will vote on legislation to extend unemployment benefits to those individuals who are unable to find a job. I have supported extensions of these benefits in the past, and I am proud to do so again today.

REPUBLICAN HEALTH PLAN

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

Mr. DEFAZIO. Unlike any other industry or business in America, the health insurance industry is exempt from antitrust laws. That means they can and they do collude to drive up your premiums, to exclude you from coverage, to rescind your policy, a whole host of abuses. We do have a little bit of State regulation, but the Republicans are going to take care of that. They're going to create a new

safe haven for insurance company abuses.

Insurance companies will be able to offer national plans—that's their big thing, yes—but they can choose any State in the 50 in which to base that plan. And no matter where you live and no matter what the laws are of your State, if you've got a problem—if they've denied you coverage, if they revoked your policy because you got sick, all the other abuses that go on every day within the insurance industry—if you live in Oregon, you'll have to be talking to the insurance commissioner in Delaware or Mississippi with your complaint. And guess what? They don't have consumer protections there for health insurance. The States will provide and compete, some States, the lowest common denominator, the least regulation to attract this great new business of abusive health insurers.

That's the Republican plan. They're always delivering for their buddies in the health insurance industry while the payments roll in at campaign time.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are limited to 1 minute and should heed the gavel.

PELOSI HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, when I talk with constituents in my district, it's clear that more and more of the American people do not support the Pelosi plan for a government takeover of health care. Sadly, that will not stop liberal Democrats from pushing forward with the Pelosi plan anyway.

Buried in the 1,990-page bill are more than \$700 billion in new taxes on small businesses and individuals and employers who can't afford health care. The Pelosi health care plan also includes more than 100 new bureaucracies, boards, commissions, and programs. What it does not include is coverage for 29 million of the 30 million people that Pelosi and President Obama say need health insurance. They will still not be covered by this huge tax increase and increased bureaucracy.

We need to reject the Pelosi health plan—it is a tax increase masquerading as a health plan—and take up the Republican alternative, which covers everyone.

HEALTH CARE BILL

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, America knows that we live with a health care contradiction: some of the best hospitals and doctors in the world providing health care to those who have

access to the best health care in the world, but a health care system that also shuts the door of access to 47 million Americans with exploding costs, putting a punishing financial burden on our middle class and on our businesses that are hanging on to their health care by their fingernails.

This system has worked very well for the insurance companies—unregulated, unsupervised, and unapologetic—but they have plundered the wallets of families and the profits of businesses to record record profits. That, Mr. Speaker, is the status quo.

On Saturday, this House of Representatives will face a question that has eluded it for 60 years: Will we accept the status quo or turn the page and provide health care to all Americans?

Our health care legislation is going to do what needs to be done to take that first step, extend access to 36 million Americans, insurance reforms, and a public option.

WHAT'S IN THE HEALTH CARE PACKAGE?

(Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, if you want to know what's in a package, you ought to open it up and take a look at it.

Let me just talk about one thing that's in this package we're going to vote on on Saturday. It's in the area of tort reform, litigation reform, a subject that every single audience I've spoken to in my district has said should be in any bill, because right now the litigation system puts tremendous strain on our health care system, adding additional trillions of dollars.

What does this program do? It says that it's going to provide an opportunity for pilot projects. But if your State has on its books a law which says there will be any limitation on attorneys' fees or any limitation on damages, including noneconomic damages, you are ineligible to participate. So my State of California, which had medical malpractice reform 30 years ago, will be ineligible, will be punished.

We're not talking about the status quo on litigation reform; we're talking about going back 30 years. If that's in this package, what else is in this package?

HEALTH REFORM FOR SMALL BUSINESSES

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of national health reform to help relieve the economic burden of rising health costs on small businesses.

Nationwide, 25 percent of the uninsured, 11 million people, are employees