

throughout the Middle East, are working hard to create a civic environment in which our people will thrive.

“The basic requirement is an inclusive, democratic, civil society—one that guarantees rights, delegates responsibilities, honors merit, and rewards achievement.”

Jordan has also demonstrated strong support for the fledgling democracy in Iraq. Last year, King Abdullah was the first Arab leader to visit Iraq since the establishment of democracy in that country. Jordan has also become the first country to appoint an Ambassador to Baghdad since 2005.

Mr. Speaker, Jordan does, indeed, serve as a model for other nations in the region. It deserves our friendship and our encouragement, and its people deserve continued progress in political and economic reforms. Therefore, I strongly support House Resolution 833, which commemorates 60 years of diplomatic relations between Jordan and the United States, as well as the 10th anniversary of the accession to the throne of King Abdullah. It also expresses our profound admiration and gratitude for the friendship of the people of Jordan and shares their hope, and that of King Abdullah’s, for a more peaceful Middle East.

I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution, and I thank my dear friend, the distinguished colleague from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for introducing it.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 6 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SCHIFF).

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I want to thank my friend and colleague, the distinguished chairman from the Foreign Affairs Committee, for bringing this resolution to the floor. I am also grateful to the members of the committee and to others who have cosponsored it.

Today, we celebrate one of America’s strongest alliances in one of the world’s most unsettled regions. For decades, the United States and Jordan have been friends and allies. Today, that friendship finds renewed expression in this resolution which commemorates the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Jordan and the 10th anniversary of King Abdullah’s accession to the throne.

The cornerstones of that friendship are a mutual desire for peace in the region and a belief that the Arab and Muslim world must resist extremism. Jordan has been a key player in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinian people, a partner in the fight against al Qaeda, and an important part of the struggle for the soul of Islam. With its lengthy border with Israel and its majority Palestinian population, Jordan has long been a catalyst for peace in the region.

King Hussein, the current King’s father, engaged in decades of quiet diplo-

macy with Israel—an effort that bore fruit in 1994 with the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty. King Abdullah has continued his father’s quest for peace and has been a tireless advocate for a better future for all the peoples of the region.

King Abdullah’s 10 years on the throne have been shaped primarily by Jordan’s response to the 9/11 attacks and the Iraq war, and the Jordanian-American partnership has been strengthened in the 8 years since the attacks on New York and Washington.

Jordan has been an important ally in the fight against al Qaeda, but the steadfastness has carried a heavy price. Four years ago this month, al Qaeda terrorists struck three hotels in Amman. While the intention of the bombers was to drive a wedge between the U.S. and Jordan, they succeeded only in uniting our peoples in grief and in hardening the resolve of the Jordanian people to resist extremism even in the face of terror.

In Iraq, Jordan has provided vital assistance to American forces serving there, and it has also been the host to thousands of Iraqi police recruits who have trained at a state-of-the-art facility outside Amman. As that program has wound down, Jordan has converted it for the training of Palestinian Authority security personnel as part of the security assistance program run by American General Keith Dayton. These Palestinian forces have been instrumental in helping to stabilize the West Bank and in keeping alive the hopes for a future two-state solution.

Over the past few years, Jordan has been burdened by hundreds of thousands of refugees from Iraq. A small, water-poor nation of only 6 million, Jordan’s infrastructure and economy have been tested by the Iraqi refugees, with estimates of the total number generally ranging between 500,000 and 700,000. The influx of refugees has put enormous strain on the kingdom’s education and health systems, and it has also caused widespread distortions in housing and energy prices.

Despite the enormous burdens that these refugees have placed on Jordan, the government has allowed them to remain in the country even as the situation in Iraq has become more stable. In recent months, a few of the refugees have begun to return home, but the vast majority remains, and most observers expect them to stay in Jordan for some time to come.

Especially vital has been the King’s effort to reassert, on behalf of Muslims around the world, the true meaning and teachings of Islam. In 2004, he issued the Amman Message—an important step in combating al Qaeda’s attempt to hijack one of the world’s great religions in the name of hate. While America can work to eliminate the conditions that give rise to extremism, we must also rely on Muslim leaders to press the case that al Qaeda is a perversion of Islam and not a pure form of the religion that values human life and peace.

In a region roiled by conflict, characterized by poor governance and stifling economic mismanagement, Jordan has remained an island of stability and an example to its neighbors of a Middle Eastern nation that is seeking to create a peaceful and more prosperous life for its citizens even though it lacks the oil and natural gas that many of the other Arab States in the neighborhood enjoy.

Much work remains to be done, but King Abdullah and other senior government leaders are determined to build a better society for the Jordanian people. For that commitment and for six decades of friendship, I am proud to co-Chair the Congressional Friends of Jordan Caucus with my colleague from Louisiana (Mr. BOUSTANY) and with the assistance of our terrific vice-Chairs, Mr. BAIRD and Mr. FORTENBERRY.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution and in reaffirming the broad ties between the United States and Jordan and in congratulating King Abdullah on the progress that he has made in his 10 years on the throne.

Again, many thanks to Chairman BERMAN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. MCMAHON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 833, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair’s prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

RECOGNIZING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF IRANIAN HOSTAGE CRISIS

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 209) recognizing the 30th anniversary of the Iranian hostage crisis, during which 52 United States citizens were held hostage for 444 days from November 4, 1979, to January 20, 1981, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 209

Whereas, in the face of internal political upheaval in Iran, the United States Government maintained a diplomatic presence in

Tehran following the fall of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi in January 1979, and sought to engage the new provisional government of Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan;

Whereas, on November 4, 1979, Iranian militants scaled the walls of the United States Embassy in Tehran and took 63 United States citizens and diplomats hostage;

Whereas three more United States citizens were taken prisoner at the Iranian Foreign Ministry, for a total of 66 hostages;

Whereas the occupiers bound and blindfolded the embassy staff and military personnel and paraded them in front of photographers;

Whereas a total of 52 United States citizens were held hostage for 444 days until January 20, 1981, in isolated and under psychologically intimidating and onerous conditions;

Whereas Iranian militants violated the principle of diplomatic immunity and United States sovereignty;

Whereas Ayatollah Khomeini endorsed the seizure of the United States Embassy and detention of United States hostages and toppled the Bazargan government, instructing that no Iranian officials hold discussions with United States representatives;

Whereas the Soviet Union vetoed United States initiatives at the United Nations Security Council to impose collective economic sanctions on Iran;

Whereas the United States broke off diplomatic relations with Iran on April 7, 1980, following unsuccessful diplomatic efforts to free the hostages;

Whereas, on April 24, 1980, the United States launched Operation Eagle Claw, a high-risk rescue operation to free the hostages;

Whereas the rescue mission was aborted when three helicopters malfunctioned;

Whereas the following United States military personnel from the all-volunteer Joint Special Operations Group lost their lives and three more were injured in the Great Salt Desert near Tabas, Iran, on April 25, 1980, in the aborted attempt to rescue the United States hostages—

(1) Capt. Richard L. Bakke, 34, Long Beach, CA, Air Force;

(2) Sgt. John D. Harvey, 21, Roanoke, VA, Marine Corps;

(3) Cpl. George N. Holmes, Jr., 22 Pine Bluff, AR, Marine Corps;

(4) Staff Sgt. Dewey L. Johnson, 32, Jacksonville, NC, Marine Corps;

(5) Capt. Harold L. Lewis, 35, Mansfield, CT, Air Force;

(6) Tech. Sgt. Joel C. Mayo, 34, Bonifay, FL, Air Force;

(7) Capt. Lynn D. McIntosh, 33, Valdosta, GA, Air Force; and

(8) Capt. Charles T. McMillan II, 28, Corrytown, TN, Air Force;

Whereas the Algerian Government brokered a January 19, 1981, agreement between Iran and the United States, to which the United States agreed, under duress, resulting in the release of the hostages on January 20, 1981;

Whereas President Reagan asked former President Carter to welcome the released hostages at Rhein-Mein Air Base; and

Whereas the Iranian Government's commemoration of the 30th anniversary of the Iranian hostage crisis was met with street protests against the repressive Iranian regime: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) recognizes the 30th anniversary of the Iranian hostage crisis, during which 52 United States citizens were held hostage for 444 days;

(2) honors the sacrifice and service of the United States diplomats and military per-

sonnel held hostage and servicemen who lost their lives and were wounded in a valiant attempt to free the United States hostages;

(3) in recognition of this sacrifice, hopes that the people of the United States and Iran may embark on a new relationship that fully reflects their most noble aspirations for life and liberty;

(4) expresses its support for all Iranian citizens who embrace the values of freedom, human rights, civil liberties, and rule of law; and

(5) urges the Secretary of State to make every effort to assist United States citizens held hostage in Iran at any time during the period beginning on November 4, 1979, and ending on January 20, 1981, and their survivors in matters of compensation related to such citizens' detention.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. McMAHON) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. McMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. McMAHON. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 209, which recognizes the 30th anniversary of the seizure of the United States Embassy in Tehran on November 4, 1979.

In February 1979, shortly after the collapse of the Shah's regime, exiled religious leader Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Tehran and whipped popular discontent into rabid anti-Americanism. When the Shah came to America for cancer treatment in October, the Ayatollah incited Iranian militants to attack the United States. Shortly thereafter, on November 4, the American Embassy in Tehran was overrun and its employees taken captive. The hostage crisis had begun.

Sixty-six Americans were taken hostage by the Iranians. They were separated into small groups which were not allowed to communicate with one another. They were completely cut off from the outside world, even from their families. They were blindfolded whenever their captors took them outside their rooms. Meals were served irregularly and were often inadequate.

Particularly worrisome for the hostages was the lack of adequate medical care. Many of them were senior Embassy staff with serious health concerns. Above all, there was the psychological pressure of never knowing if they would be harmed or executed, if and when they would be released, or what, if anything, the American Government was doing to help them.

Mr. Speaker, our brave diplomats and servicemen were held for well over a year. The Iranians released a few of the

hostages along the way, but 52 of the original 66 who were captured were held for the entire 444 days. All of the hostages made a heroic sacrifice for our Nation, and they deserve our eternal gratitude.

We also lost eight courageous soldiers when their helicopters crashed in the Iranian desert on April 25, 1980, in a failed attempt to rescue the hostages. We honor their bravery and we mourn their loss. Our thoughts and prayers continue to go out to their families, Mr. Speaker.

The Iranian regime's support for the holding of American hostages was a disgrace of the highest order, and it was far from the last time that the Iranian regime would show contempt for its international obligations, as we know. Iran continues to flout the will of the international community today with its nuclear weapons program and with its support for terrorism.

Annually—and outrageously—the Iranian regime continues to mark the anniversary of the Embassy takeover as a celebration rather than as the badge of shame they should acknowledge it to be. This year, thousands of Iranian demonstrators turned the tables on the regime, fittingly using the occasion to declare their contempt for the Iranian leadership.

Mr. Speaker, several of those who were taken hostage 30 years ago remain active in serving our Nation's interests today. One of them, Ambassador John W. Limbert, was a young political officer, already an accomplished Persian scholar, who was just finishing his third month at the Embassy when Iranian thugs took him and his colleagues hostage.

Today, 30 years later, he is starting an assignment as Deputy Assistant Secretary for Iranian Affairs at the State Department's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs. For the past 3 years, he has been a professor at the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, which has granted him leave so he can assume his critically important position. He is not only a scholar but a first-rate diplomat. We honor him today, wish him well on his new assignment, and look forward to working with him.

I commend my friend, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), for introducing this important resolution, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROSLEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution put forward by my good friend, the gentleman from Nebraska.

Mr. Speaker, September 11, 2001, will be forever engrained in our collective consciousness as one of the most vicious attacks against our Nation. However, we have been targeted by a global, violent, Islamic extremist network since November 4, 1979.

On this day, Iranian militants overran the United States Embassy in Tehran, and took innocent American hostages, with 52 of these brave Americans held for 444 days. U.S. diplomats, Embassy staff, and military personnel were bound and blindfolded, humiliated, and paraded in front of news cameras by their captors.

□ 1830

They endured unspeakable suffering and abuse for nearly 15 months in captivity. Since the capture of the United States embassy in Tehran 30 years ago and the ensuing hostage crisis, Iran has increasingly viewed terrorism as a tool to achieve its ideological and strategic aims.

These aims include exporting the revolution, supporting and arming militant Islamist extremist organizations and other groups worldwide, especially in the Middle East, attacking Israel, and destabilizing the governments of the more pragmatic and reformist Arab countries.

One of the chief instruments for the implementation of these policies has been the jihadist organization, Hezbollah, which, since its inception, has been trained, financed and supported by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps. In return, Hezbollah has helped advance Iranian interests through a sustained campaign against the United States and our allies in the Middle East, including but not limited to the 1983 attacks on the United States marine barracks and embassy in Lebanon; the bombing of the United States embassy annex in Beirut in 1984; the 1985 hijacking of TWA Flight 847; the taking of American and other hostages in Beirut throughout the 1980's; the June 1996 truck bombing of the Khobar Towers United States military housing complex in Saudi Arabia.

Testifying at a subcommittee hearing that I chaired in February 2005, William Daugherty, a CIA veteran and one of the 52 Americans held hostage in Iran for 444 days 30 years ago, emphasized, "The undeniable truth is that the United States Government has utterly failed to hold Iran accountable in any sustained and effective manner for its role in the cumulative deaths of over 275 American citizens and the wounding of well over 600 more."

Mr. Daugherty continued, "Moreover, the United States Government has failed to undertake any action with the force or impact sufficient to deter the Iranian government from conducting terrorism against our interests.

"The absence of any credible response has served only to encourage the continuation of Iranian-sponsored terrorism, nor have those of us who are victims of Iranian terrorism received any justice from those acts."

Since Dr. Daugherty's testimony almost 5 years ago, Iran has been proactively involved in undermining United States and coalition interests in Iraq and Afghanistan, by providing

material support and all types of weapons to extremists in both countries, so that they can kill and wound Americans. The number of U.S. victims of Iranian-sponsored or Iranian-supported attacks continues to increase.

The threat to our ally Israel has grown incredibly as well, with Iran increasing its involvement in the West Bank and Gaza in support of such Islamist extremist organizations as Hamas, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Lebanon through its proxy, Hezbollah. Yet successive U.S. administrations have failed to properly recognize and confront the totality of the Iranian threat, from its history of supporting violent Islamic extremists, to its nuclear weapons program, unconventional weapons and ballistic missile development.

In response, the United States must impose a cost so high on Tehran that it threatens the Iranian regime's survival unless it changes course. This approach will require applying immediate, comprehensive tough economic sanctions. Again, former hostage Dr. William Daugherty said it best, "It is time for Iran to be called to account, not by pronouncements, but by clear, sustained and overwhelming action for its past, as well as for any future violations of international law.

"And it is time for American victims of Iranian terrorism, like those of us who were held hostage by the Iranian government, to receive the justice that is decades delayed. The Congress can see that this happens."

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to strongly support this resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, at this time I am proud to yield as much time as he may consume to the author of the resolution, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FORTENBERRY), an esteemed member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank the gentlewoman for yielding and thank her for her leadership and assistance in this important resolution as well.

Mr. Speaker, this week holds special significance for our Nation, especially for the courageous U.S. diplomats and military personnel who were captured when militant student activists stormed the U.S. embassy in Tehran 30 years ago on November 4, 1979.

Their 444-day hostage ordeal in Iran is forever etched in our Nation's memory. You cannot understand what is happening in the Middle East today without reference to this event. I introduced this resolution to remind us of the hostages' triumph in adversity, of the difficult lessons our policymakers learned during that grueling episode, to commemorate their service to our Nation and to honor those brave soldiers who were killed and wounded in a valiant rescue attempt.

Our diplomats took a difficult assignment at a difficult time in the Middle

East. Their courageous witness to the principles that we hold dear, just civil order and recourse to the orderly address of grievances, stands as a reminder of what is at stake now in the ancient land of Iran, a choice for peace and cooperation or a choice for repression, fear, and isolation.

The quest for national prominence and prestige to which Iran understandably subscribes, absent the enduring values we have been fortunate to see enshrined in the U.S. Constitution, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is an empty quest. In his oft cited work, "Democracy in America," Alexis de Tocqueville in essence concluded that America is great because America is good. We must constantly remind ourselves that the ongoing challenge to our Nation or any nation lies in the quest for what is good. This is the measure of greatness in a civilized world.

Greatness not to dominate, but to liberate. Greatness, not to rule and coerce, but to govern wisely and with the consent of the people who seek to determine their own destiny within the framework of the just rule of law.

This is the challenge before Iran today. To be a force for good in a region challenged to rise above longstanding grievances and injustices, to be a force for good in a world threatened by greed, terror and tyranny, or not.

When President Ronald Reagan welcomed the former hostages to the White House on January 27, 1981, he stated, "We hear it said that we live in an era of limit to our powers. Well, let it also be understood, there are limits to our patience." It is my hope, Mr. Speaker, that by honoring these brave men and women, we may inspire people throughout the world to work tirelessly for the freedom and justice they deserve and settle for nothing less.

It is also my fervent hope that in recognition of this 30th anniversary, the people of the United States and Iran may embark on a new relationship that fully reflects the noblest aspirations for life and liberty.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCMAHON. Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my privilege and honor to recognize for 4 minutes my distinguished colleague, the gentlewoman from Texas, Ms. SHEILA JACKSON-LEE.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. I thank the manager of this legislation, my dear friend from the Foreign Affairs Committee, for yielding.

It is interesting to have this day to commemorate the sacrifice of Americans some 30 years ago who were held as hostages. A few minutes ago I tried to depict and have people be reminded of the tragedy of lost children during the earthquake in China, just visually picture what happened to those children.

It is important as well to revisit visually what Americans had to go

through who were held hostage in Iran for more than a year. I saw some old video where I saw soldiers doing push-ups and trying to keep themselves busy, Foreign Service personnel and others who were in that embassy that fateful day.

This is an important acknowledgment of a transition that has frozen time for the Iranian people, frozen their rights, their opportunity for freedom and freedom of speech, the understanding of the concept of democracy. As we commemorate, not celebrate, those 30 years, we thank those Americans, those brave Americans who withstood all of that pain of being a hostage, being away from their family members when at the same time we owe them a debt, more than a debt of gratitude.

We owe them the recognition that there are dissidents, Iranians, who are now on the ground fighting against, I believe, an illegally situated government that cannot document that that was a fair process and the brutality that occurred after that election when the Iranians stood up to be able to demand justice and a fair election.

We must push for human rights in Iran. We must push for nonproliferation. We must demand transparency. Of course, their chief executive will suggest that we are demons, that we have no right to interfere into their business.

Well, I would say the name of those brave Americans that lost a lot of their life for a period of time in our history, we owe them our persistence in ensuring that there is an opportunity for freedom and democracy in Iran.

There were those, of course, who lost their lives in the attempt to rescue those individuals. I pay honor and tribute to them. In their name as well we must continue to fight for freedom.

An enormous tragedy occurred yesterday in Texas at Fort Hood, and we respect and acknowledge the loss of those brave men and women. We also say that freedom demands our attention, both in terms of national security but as well for those who sacrifice for us every day.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the 30th anniversary and thank the author of this legislation, of the Iranian hostage crisis, during which 52 United States citizens were held hostage for 444 days. I acknowledge their sacrifice, the days they stayed away from their family and, as well, the sacrifice of those who attempted to save their lives.

I express support for all of those Iranian citizens who now stand in the battle in the fight for human rights. I would argue that this legislation must be shown in action, and I ask my colleagues to support this initiative.

□ 1845

Mr. McMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by

the gentleman from New York (Mr. McMAHON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 209.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. McMAHON. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM

(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, we all agree that real health care reform is a necessity, but in the hurry of Congress to pass the \$1 trillion Pelosi bill, we are not listening to our mother's often-given advice, look before you leap. In this case, read before you vote.

The Pelosi bill takes the wrong approach in fixing what is broken in our health care system. Increased taxes do not translate into increased coverage. Eliminating seniors' health care choices and cutting their benefits do not translate into eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse. Cost shifting in the health care system does not translate into cost reduction.

Instead, what we need is true health care reform that helps bring down the high cost of care and the high insurance premiums. What we need is health care reform that will allow our families to keep the doctors and the coverage that they want.

Congress needs to end the search for complicated and convoluted ways that hide the actual cost of the Pelosi bill in taxes, mandates, and benefit cuts.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. COLE. Mr. Speaker, one of the impacts of the proposed health care legislation that has not received the attention it deserves is the huge unfunded mandate that it will place on our respective State governments.

As every Member of this body knows, each State in America is struggling to balance its budget, often cutting services to the bone. I asked my own State legislative leaders how the State of Oklahoma would be impacted by Speaker PELOSI's health care bill. They reported that in Oklahoma this legislation will result in at least \$128 million of additional annual cost to State government. That will require either dra-

conian cuts to existing State services, such as education, transportation, and public safety, or substantial increases in State taxes.

Mr. Speaker, the Democratic effort to mask the true cost of this legislation is a scandal. If passed, the Pelosi health care bill will bankrupt State governments, destroy jobs, and further cripple the economy.

Our State governments can't afford this bill, and neither can the American taxpayer.

EXPRESSING ARKANSAS THIRD DISTRICT CONSTITUENTS' CONCERNS ABOUT A PUBLIC OPTION

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, residents in Arkansas' Third District don't want a government takeover of health care. In a tele-town hall on Tuesday, I asked my constituents, are you supportive of a public option in health care reform? The overwhelming majority, 76 percent, said that they don't favor that plan.

The reality is, this 1,990 page Pelosi health care bill includes a public option. My constituents don't want to federalize their health care. Like them, I believe this bill is a prescription for big government and an expense our country can't afford.

Three weeks ago, my constituent, Andy Jacobs of Pottsville, Arkansas, sent me a letter, and he makes a great suggestion. "Make a list of all the projects and programs the Federal Government operates and those that have seen the operating costs decrease."

I urge my colleagues to write that list. It doesn't take long to see there are few, if any, government-run programs that are cost-effective.

Arkansas' Third Congressional District sees this bill for what it is, a tax increase.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose this so-called Democrat reform package. I know and I believe that health care reform is necessary. However, the looming health care legislation will only hurt American families and have devastating effects on our Nation's small businesses, especially like the ones in South Carolina.

This massive government expansion will cost nearly \$1.3 trillion, which is offset by job-killing tax increases. Small businesses will be hardest hit by these tax increases, which will total a staggering \$730 billion. This is especially troubling in South Carolina, where small businesses make up 97 percent of the businesses there.

According to the Heritage Foundation, 8,700 South Carolina small businesses will be required to pay this new