

I yield back.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. And that's highly important because our hospitals oftentimes are taking care of folks who do not have health insurance. So there is a great amount of uncompensated care, and it feeds that vicious cycle in America where someone has to pay that cost. And it is put on to the backs of families with insurance oftentimes having to pick up the tab for some people who have not taken personal responsibility for their health.

As we launch into the debate, it is very heartening that we have groups like the American Medical Association and AARP on our side, along with the American Cancer Society, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Ophthalmology, the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids. I mean, these lists go on and on. These are Americans and interest groups from all across the country that have been involved for years in trying to get to this point to provide meaningful health care to American families, to ensure that that insurance, when you pay those premiums and copays, is really something you can count on. It's coverage that you can count on.

And then correspondingly, as we've gotten smarter and realize we need to do more in prevention and wellness, we're going to invest in a great new health care workforce. It means a lot to my home district in Tampa because we have a large research university, the University of South Florida, with a College of Medicine, College of Nursing, College of Public Health, Physical Therapy directly across the street from the busiest VA hospital in the country.

The new loan repayment scholarships that will be provided to young people, or anyone that wants to find a job in the health care workforce, this is a landmark investment in that new workforce. When you look at the unemployment numbers across America right now, the one sector where jobs are being created and there are opportunities is in health care. It might be in IT, in the electronic medical records, but we are going to need a modern health care workforce. Fortunately, that's what our initiative provides.

I yield to my friend.

Mr. PALLONE. Well, I will just say, I don't want to call it a jobs bill because that's not the major focus of it, but it essentially is.

This is an economic issue. We are creating jobs, and we are certainly making it a lot easier for businesses to function because they don't have all these additional costs that are associated with more expensive health insurance.

So this bill actually addresses a lot of economic problems in a significant way. I would characterize it as a jobs bill, and in some ways as an economic recovery package as well. And, again, I yield back. Thank you.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Well, I think as we begin to close our hour out, we

are eagerly looking ahead to the debate. We've had many, many months—many years waiting for real health reform for American families and older Americans, and we are very close. I would really like to thank my colleague, Chairman PALLONE, for his years of service on behalf of New Jersey families and Americans when it comes to health care.

The Democratic bill that will soon be on the floor will finally deliver for American families, building upon those fundamental values and early initiatives that came under Social Security in 1935 and Medicare in 1965. It has taken us awhile to get to this point, but I think we will get home.

REPUBLICAN PRINCIPLES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, I have some prepared remarks tonight about the Pelosi health care reform bill, but you know what I would like to do here in the beginning is just to talk about some things that Republicans believe in.

I have plenty of criticism about Ms. PELOSI's bill, and I will definitely make that known in a few moments; but you know sometimes I think it is incumbent upon all of us in this place, rather than just saying what we're against, to say what we're really for.

Republicans have believed since the beginning of the party that no matter who one was, that they had the right to be free, the right to live, and the right to pursue their dreams. This is something that we have felt was the essence of America from the very beginning. In fact, the Republican Party was born out of a commitment on the part of a group of people that believed that African Americans were human beings deserving of the same protection that all other human beings had, even though the Supreme Court of the United States had said that, under Dred Scott, that Dred Scott, a slave, was not a human being or not a full person under the Constitution.

Of course, you know there was some unpleasantness about that debate, Mr. Speaker; we had a great Civil War in this country. But the commitment on the part of Republicans to restore equal protection to all people regardless of their station in life sustained them in that crucible of that horrible Civil War, and I hope that Republicans will maintain their commitment to that no matter what happens.

We have been debating a great deal on trying to make equal access to health care in this country, and Republicans believe in that with all of our hearts. I've often heard in this Chamber, What are the Republican ideas? They have challenged us and said that we really don't have anything that we

believe in, that we are just the Party of No. That is such tragic injustice because there are about 40 bills that have been introduced into this House by Republicans saying what we wanted to do with health care reform, and we have not had the opportunity for any of those bills to be presented on this floor, and oftentimes even our amendments are not allowed.

Mr. Speaker, for a moment let's just ask ourselves, What has given America the most powerful economic engine and force of productivity in the face of human history? It has been that thing called freedom, that thing that allows each person to pursue, to the greatest extent possible, what they believe to be true and good, whether it be in the area of their own self-interest or the area of trying to help other people or in the area of just trying to make a better world, that we believe freedom created innovation, it created a sense of almost dreaming about what could be. That innovation, I think, is probably the most important difference in the effect of the Republican's version and the Democrat version of health care reform.

Republicans believe that when health care is in private hands, that even the providers of health care—sometimes because they want to make money, sometimes because they want to help others—but the providers of health care are always seeking new ways and better ways to do things, new innovation, ways to come up with new, less expensive, but more effective procedures. I think that we all delude ourselves if we believe that we can accomplish making affordable health care available to everyone if we don't focus on this thing called innovation.

Let me, if I could, deviate and give an example, Mr. Speaker. There was a time in America where the government controlled our telephone company. It was true that our telephone company—at that time we called it Ma Bell—was a private company, but it was almost entirely controlled and regulated by government. Of course you know you had one old clunker telephone and you had to dial the number, and of course sometimes the operator would get smart with you if you asked her what time it was. It was a government-run system with all of the attending bureaucratic nightmares.

And the equivalent in today's dollars for long distance would be about \$3.10 a minute. It was a real disaster. Now, it was nice just to have a phone system, but the reality is we never really saw a great deal of innovation.

But then, when I was just a young man in the legislature, we decided that maybe it was time to break this thing up and give it to the private sector and see if they couldn't do something better with it. And what happened was profound; we created a system that would serve everyone. In other words, we told those companies that if you're going to provide telephone service, you've got to make sure you provide it

to the senior citizens up in the mountains or something like that that wouldn't be able to compete in the regular process. We've got to make sure that they're taken care of, and they were.

But something else very wonderful happened, Mr. Speaker. When we turned the telephone company and broke it up and said now we're going to let the private sector come up with the innovations that they could and we're going to see if they can provide a better mousetrap for the country, if they can provide better telephone service at a cheaper price, look what happened, Mr. Speaker, look what happened.

Today we have cell phones, almost everyone does. You can pull up the Library of Congress on your cell phone. It is astonishing. The BlackBerrys that we carry around here can send messages anywhere on Earth, and we can even pull up our Web site. Boy, I'll tell you, for those that are narcissistic, that is a great little item. And it is just an amazing thing what has happened.

And guess what else has happened, Mr. Speaker? Today, long distance is around 3 cents a minute; sometimes it's less than that. It's getting to the point where a lot of the companies are just offering a system that you can say, well, you've got unlimited dialing and phone and voice and text now that you can use all you want for \$50 a month. Isn't that amazing, Mr. Speaker? But that was because innovation occurred.

I truly believe that this country has shown a proclivity to create innovation that could absolutely revolutionize the health care industry in a way that almost none of us can imagine at this moment. Would we have imagined 25 or 30 years ago that the telephony, the telephone systems of this country, would be so amazingly transformed when we put it into private hands? Now, it was true that some of the people that were in that area were motivated by profit. Some of them made money, some of them lost money, some of them went broke. It was a typical free enterprise situation. All the chaos and the attending realities went along with that. People went broke; people made money. But the end result was the American people were served in a wonderful way and today we have the most magnificent communication systems in the world, and almost everyone takes part in that.

The poorest of the poor have a better life because we deregulated the telephone companies. And it had this magnificent effect on all of America. And now we are able to do things that we never could have done before.

□ 2145

Yet it seems like, when government has something, that innovation is stifled and that the things that would create a better system are somehow suppressed. Because, after all, what is the incentive for innovation in a government-owned system?

If you're a bureaucrat, you have a certain amount of money, and you are tasked with the job of delivering the service in your mission plan. It's not an evil or a bad thing. It's just a bad system. It just doesn't work very well, Mr. Speaker, because the bureaucrat kind of has two options. He is not in charge or she is not in charge of innovation. He is in charge of the delivery system that government doesn't deliver very well.

He has to make kind of a calculation. Well, we've got so much money, and we want to make the services available, and sooner or later, he or she runs out of money from the budget—it always happens—and they have to make some very hard choices. When that occurs, there is rationing or somehow they will distribute it in ways that are more amenable to the budgets that they have. It's just a very difficult situation.

I'm sorry that bureaucrats have that difficulty. It's a difficult thing to be a bureaucrat, and I kind of feel sorry for them, but I don't want to make more of them, Mr. Speaker. I don't want us to lose sight of the greatness of America and forget that it is not too late to make a better world. We cannot give up our freedom and expect that somehow socialist policies will do the same thing for the family of man as this thing called "freedom" has done for America. It has never happened.

Any time you have ever turned over any major process to a socialist environment or to a socialist enterprise—that's really a bad word. "Enterprise" and "socialism" don't belong in the same sentence. Any time you turn it over to a socialist, bureaucratic system—again, "system" is probably being pretty charitable—what happens is that all of the ways to improve the system are diminished or are completely eradicated.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we don't lose sight of what made us a productive country. In that sense, what Americans need to realize is that there are ways that we can improve the health care system. There are ways that we can fix what is broken without breaking what is working.

About 83 percent of Americans believe that the health care system is working for them. Now, there are many people who simply cannot afford health care insurance, and they need it and they want it. Republicans have come up with a very simple approach to that, and that is either through tax credits or through some type of drafts or vouchers or something along those lines that we can put in the hands of people who cannot afford health care insurance, and we let them then be empowered to go out and to buy health care policies from the private sector which best meet their needs.

Now, there is still a raging debate about how much we should do or how we should do it or if we should do that. I understand that because I think that can move us in a dangerous direction

as well, but it is still the safest way that we can use the mechanism of government to somehow provide for those who are less fortunate.

In the final analysis, it is important that we empower the individuals and not empower government, but if we did it the right way, if we could see innovation occur, Mr. Speaker, and if we could put this thing back the way that the Founding Fathers first envisioned it, health care would be one of those magnificent advanced systems in which everybody would be able to go to their own doctors and say, Well, you know, I've got this problem, and they say, Well, you know, we've got this new system that could really fix it.

I'll give you one example, Mr. Speaker. It is something that is completely untested yet, and it is something that isn't finished, and it is something that doesn't work yet, but there is an effort to try to treat cancer in a new way by injecting a substance into the body that disperses throughout all the cells in the body. It even passes the blood-brain barrier, and it literally is able to be disseminated into every cell. Now, that is the theory. I want to emphasize in the strongest possible terms that we don't have this kind of process or procedure yet, and it's too bad that we don't.

In any case, the dream—the hope—is that this substance would disperse throughout the entire body and that the person would be left in a dark environment and that within about 24 hours this substance would disperse out of the body or would be changed in nature to where it would be diminished or dispersed or eliminated and that the only cells which would retain it would be cancer cells and that, when this substance is exposed to very bright light, it would turn toxic and would kill only the cancer cells.

What an incredible idea. What an incredible dream. Now, I know it's a long ways away. I know there will be people who will like to pursue something like that. It's just not available yet, Mr. Speaker, but it could be, I believe. I believe, if we turn the minds of free people loose, that all kinds of wonderful things can happen. Something like that would cost a few thousand dollars, not the tens of thousands or the hundreds of thousands that are spent on advanced cancer surgeries and treatments today. It could change everything. Yet, if we don't allow the free market and free people to pursue those kinds of things, they will never occur, because one thing is very certain in a government-run plan: There are just no pursuits of those kinds of things. That is one of the great tragedies of forgetting that freedom still works.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans believe that there are ways that we can empower individuals to be able to go out and do things for themselves and that we can empower even those who cannot afford health insurance to buy it on their own and that we can still maintain this free market freedom that we talk about so often.

I truly believe in things like allowing us, as individuals in America, to be able to buy our insurance from any insurance company in America. We can't do that now. If you're in one State, you can only buy, in most cases, across the State that you're in. There are about 1,400 or 1,500 insurance companies in this Nation. If we could allow people to buy insurance from any of those, can you imagine the competition that would occur? Can you imagine the ways that they would work to try to be the ones to sell you your insurance? Can you imagine how much nicer they would be on the phone? Can you imagine that, when something would go wrong, they would try to work with you as much as possible because they would know, if they didn't, they would lose your business?

Unlike a private system like that, in a government system, if bureaucrats make you mad, tough luck. It doesn't really matter to them that much. There is no incentive for them to even be kind to you. You only have one place to go, and they know that. They have a monopoly as it were. I just think that that's one of the Republican ideas that could be very helpful.

Another one is just tort reform. You know, a lot of people don't know what that word "tort" means, and sometimes I wonder how they came up with that term. It simply means that we would try to have some sort of legal reform that would end these frivolous lawsuits which cause medical malpractice insurance to rise through the roof, and it would make all the difference in the world.

I mean the fact is that just what we could save on stopping frivolous lawsuits, Mr. Speaker, would buy every one of the 11 million people who we are projecting don't have health care insurance, who can't afford it but who would like to if they could, a Cadillac health care insurance policy. I just think that it is astonishing that we don't pursue things in that direction. There are so many things that we can do, and Republicans have some ideas to do that.

I told you, Mr. Speaker, that I have about 15 minutes of prepared remarks on Ms. PELOSI's bill, and I intend to give those, but first, if he would be inclined, I would like to yield to my friend, Congressman HOEKSTRA, if he is prepared to speak to the issue at all.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I thank my colleague for yielding.

As we are moving forward now—and it looks like we are going to move forward on this debate and vote on the Pelosi health care bill, and we're going to have a massive government takeover—I would just like to have a dialogue with my friend to talk about some of the issues that the American people need to consider.

Before I came over, I think I heard my colleague talking about some of this, and I know what a fan you are of this document right here, called the Constitution.

You know, as you go through the Constitution and as you go through the

first 10 amendments—the Bill of Rights—people wonder, now, if you can build a Nation off of 37 pages, why does it take more than 2,000 pages to build a health care system? It's very simple.

If you go through and take a look at the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, the first 10 amendments to the Constitution are all about enshrining freedoms: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. The right to bear arms shall not be infringed. The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects shall not be violated. It's all about "the government shall not." "The government shall not." Again, it enshrines your freedoms and my freedoms.

The health care bill is 2,000 pages. What's in that bill? What's the difference between that document and this document?

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Reclaiming my time here, Congressman HOEKSTRA, the main difference is that that document that you hold in your hand primarily chains down government. It dictates to government, not to the individual. It empowers the individual.

You know, when George Washington and some of the other Founding Fathers put this together, they did something that was singular in history. They were in a position to arrogate all kinds of power under themselves. They had just thrown off the Crown. They had done some amazing things. The people of this Nation loved them, and they could have had any kind of power, any kind of government mechanism, really, that they had tried to put together, but they did something very amazing, and it has changed the world. They said, for once, we are going to empower the individual. We are going to give the individual the rights, and we are going to tell government what it can't do rather than tell the people what they can't do.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. If the gentleman would yield, I was having this discussion with a friend of mine.

He said, You know, you've got to get away from that term "empower."

Actually, that's exactly it. It's empowering the very foundation of American society and American Government. We made that decision more than 200 years ago that, in America, we would empower the individual, and the Constitution enshrined that, and it has worked phenomenally well.

This bill—I don't have it with me. I don't take it with me because you don't carry it too many places. It's 20 pounds. Tomorrow, we are going to unroll this bill. We rolled it up as a scroll. It's more than a third of a mile long, meaning that I could leave my district in West Michigan and go to Chicago. I could stand on top of the Sears Tower, and then I could put the Washington Monument on top of it. I could drop it, and it would be from the top of the Washington Monument on top of the Sears Tower, and it would just about get to the ground. That's how long this bill is. It's more than a third of a mile if you lay the pages from end to end.

The Constitution is just 37 simple pages.

Like you said, which is a great way of putting it, the Constitution chained government and put limits on government. This health care bill chains you and me and each and every one of our constituents because, in this bill—I've not counted them all, but I think someone has said that it has the word "shall" in it—what?—over 3,000 times.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. If the gentleman would yield, I will give you the exact number. The word "shall" appears in this bill 3,425 times.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. So, where the Constitution has in it the words "shall not," I would bet that those two words "shall not" do not appear together very often in this health care document, but over 3,400 times it says "shall." It's the Health and Human Services "shall," and most importantly, it is the commissioner "shall."

What we've done is we've taken the rights from this. We've taken them away. We've put them into this health care bill, and we've said the commissioner now shall make these decisions; shall make the decision as to what kind of insurance policies are available to you and to me and to our constituents and which ones are not; shall determine what benefits are going to be in a basic plan and which shall be available in a premium and in a premium plus plan.

The commissioner shall decide whether you and I can get health savings accounts. Actually, we've already made that decision. That's a decision that we in this House shall decide because health savings accounts will no longer be available.

So it is a great transfer of power from where the Founders wanted it to be to where now this House believes it should be, because this House now believes or may believe—I hope we stop this bill because, before I came here, you outlined some issues. They're not simple. They are complicated issues—tort reform, competition, availability, and those types of things.

□ 2200

But those are the types of things that we could do that would address the specific problems that we have in the health insurance market and that we have in the health care area today that would specifically fix those areas and make insurance more affordable and more available for the people who don't have it today, whereas this new massive bill says it's going to change for all of you. The commissioner shall decide.

For those of you that have a health care plan, you can keep it for 5 years maybe. But after 5 years you can be pretty well assured we all shall have a new plan that shall be determined by the commissioner, and we shall not be able to buy anything else.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. HOEKSTRA, the reality is that word "shall"

should be pointed out as to what that means in this place. "Shall" is the pre-eminent word of law. In other words, that is, if there is any single word that makes law, it's that word "shall" in this place. You can say "may," that's permissive. But "shall" or "shall not," those are the key crux of all law in a sense.

It's astonishing to me that we forget that law is force. I had a wonderful friend many years ago that was in the State Senate. He said always remember, TRENT—I was a very young man—he said, remember that law is the gun.

He had big envelope on his desk. He had an old World War II pistol in it that was disarmed, and he always pulled it out and he said, The law is the gun. It is force. The word "shall" is what puts force to it. When you have this word "shall" 3,425 times in a bill, that's a lot of force. That's a lot of government arrogating great power unto itself and taking it away from the people.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. You and I have a tremendous amount of background in dealing with legislation that has a lot of "shall" in it. We can go back, you and I weren't here, but we can go back to a very novel and noble idea, the highway transportation bill back in 1956 under the administration of President Eisenhower. The goal was very, very good—build an interstate highway system, something that was very, very much needed, and we built it. That thing still exists.

Now what has it become? It has become this massive bill, this massive process where we take all of this money from the States, so a State like Michigan, and I don't know if you are a donor or a donee State.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Arizona is a donor State.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. All right. Let's explain to our colleagues and our visitors in the gallery exactly what a donor State means. It means that Michigan, we send, on every gallon of gas, there is something like a 19-cent tax. For the 53 years that this program has been in existence, for every dollar that we have sent to Washington, Michigan has gotten back 83 cents. People wonder why roads in Michigan aren't in great shape.

I had a constituent a couple of weeks ago come to me and say, Congressman, why can't our roads be like West Virginia? We checked. For the average of 53 years, West Virginia has gotten \$1.74 back for every dollar that they put in. That's a pretty good deal. No wonder their roads are better than our roads in Michigan, because they get \$1.74 back. Michigan gets 83. I don't know what happens in Arizona.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. It's in the low nineties, Mr. HOEKSTRA.

It seems like what happens every time you send something into the Federal Government for them to send back or disburse, they always whack a little piece of it off as it goes by, don't they?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. They whack a little piece off, it goes into this bureaucracy.

Then they allocate it according to people who may be more powerful than others, that's why your State and my State, why we are donor States. At one point in time it was to build an interstate highway system. Today that money is used for all kinds of things. That money now comes back to Michigan, and we've got to put up matching funds. Two years ago the money came back and it had to go to highway enhancement. You kind of look at it and say, What's highway enhancement? Well, our Governor figured out, working with the Department of Transportation, that the "shall," you shall use this money for highway enhancement meant that rather than improving our interstate highway system by expanding capacity, perhaps putting on a new interchange, perhaps extending it into an area where we needed it extended, the "shall" meant you shall build a turtle fence.

And what's a turtle fence? Well, in Arizona, you probably don't have many turtles.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. We don't have many turtles.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Well, in Michigan we have quite a few. It was \$400,000 for you shall build a turtle fence, you shall not use it for an interchange, you shall not use it to fill potholes, you shall build a turtle fence. I didn't really know what a turtle fence was. I had an idea, but I asked.

A turtle fence is exactly what it's intended to do, what you would think when you hear the term. A turtle fence is intended to keep turtles from crossing the highway.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. We need a rattlesnake fence in Arizona.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. I don't know if a snake can go over a fence or not. But in Michigan, they decided to make sure that this fence would be turtle-proof, to make sure that no turtle would go over the fence, they built it about 3-feet high and then they put one of these round things over the top of it, 3- or 4-inch diameter, to make sure that for those turtles that were climbing turtles, they couldn't climb and climb over the fence.

The irony of this whole thing is I still drive that road and I drive it quite often; and I still see turtles that have been hit by cars. You say, now, how can that be? We've spent all of this money. We spent \$400,000 to build this turtle fence and to study it. Why are there still turtles being hit on that highway?

Then you think about it and it's like, I know why, because this protects the turtles that are outside of the fence, because they can't get to the highway. But it's really a bad deal for the turtles that were fenced in. They have nowhere to go. They can't get out. Most of their living area now is the median, and a little bit of land on each side of the highway before you get to the fence. But for the turtles that are in the fenced-in area, they can't get to the river anymore, because that's

fenced in, and they can't get out anywhere else. The only place they can go is stay in the median, or if they want to move at all, they get on the road. It really didn't work that well. The Federal Government, in its infinite wisdom, saying you shall spend it on a turtle fence. And the people say, PETE, why do you bring this up in the context of health care? Why are you and TRENT talking about this?

We will see the same kinds of decisions in health care. The money will come here, and it will not be fairly distributed to the States, just like you are a donor State and we are a donor State, and there are other States that are getting an unfair share. The same thing is going to happen to health care.

One of these days a Congressman from Michigan is going to come back home and someone is going to say, I was traveling through West Virginia, we got sick, and why do they have such better medical care, and their facilities are so much better than Michigan?

And the answer will be, well, you know, over the last 30 years of this Pelosi health care, West Virginia got \$1.74 back for every dollar that they sent in taxes and Michigan and Arizona, they got 83 cents. There will be an inequity in health care.

Then the other thing it will be is we'll start spending it on foolish things because people here in Washington will all have their pet projects, whether it's rattlesnakes or whether it's turtles, they will start siphoning the money off and growing it to something it was never intended to be.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I've heard a lot of strange stories about bureaucratic programs, but one that drives peace-loving turtles to suicide is just about too much, isn't it?

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Well, it is.

You and I have another program that I believe you and I fought together: No Child Left Behind. Congress in its infinite wisdom in 2001, again with the noblest of goals, just like building an interstate highway system, just like making sure we left no child behind, just like making sure we want everybody to have quality health care? What did we do in 2001? You and I voted against it, I believe.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Yes, we did.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We said taking power from parents, and you and I are working on this constitutional amendment together that enshrines in the Constitution that parents have the right to raise and educate their kids, protecting parental rights.

Again it says, Congress shall not, government shall not infringe on the right of parents to raise and educate their kids. We are enshrining rights. No Child Left Behind took rights away from parents and gave them to government.

Washington now forces States and local school districts to go through this paperwork and determine this process. Well, we'll determine whether your kid is making progress or not.

We'll tell you who is a good teacher or a bad teacher, what school is a good school or bad school.

You know what? I don't need to send money to Washington and have them come put a bunch of paperwork and try to tell me that.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. You know that's right, Mr. HOEKSTRA. It's amazing to me the parallels that we see in these things. When we talk about education, I think it's pretty significant to remember one basic equation. That is, that one of two people will decide the academic, the spiritual, the philosophical nature or the substance of a child's education. One of two people will decide what that's going to be. It will either be a parent that would pour their last drop of blood out on the floor for that child that they love very much; or it will be a bureaucrat who doesn't even know their name.

I would suggest to you that that's the same thing with this health care bill, that the parallel is profound here. We are either going to have one of two people make decisions in health care. I mean, we might have a little bit more involvement by the doctors, but ultimately the ones that decide what treatment they have or don't have, it's either going to be the patient or some bureaucrat.

Because the patient, when they are talking to their own doctor, if the patient is empowered, they can always go to some other doctor. But when we have this Pelosi nightmare shoved down our throats, I am convinced that all of a sudden those decisions that were better made by the patients will be made by some bureaucrat.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. You and I in 2001, we didn't call it the Pelosi nightmare, we called it, in not so many words—maybe we're a little kinder—but we both genuinely felt it was the President Bush nightmare for education. What have we found out? There were 41 of us, 41 of us that I believe stood up for the Constitution, stood up for parents, stood up for local public schools, stood up for the States and voted “no” on No Child Left Behind.

Eight years later, there are a lot of people who now recognize that program doesn't work, it's leaving more kids behind, it's wasting money. And the answer some people have now is, we've got to spend more. And it's kind of like, no, when you're sending a dollar to Washington and the thing that you highlighted, Washington skims off the top or bureaucracy skims off the top.

We now know that under K-12 education, when we send \$1 from Michigan, whether it's from Holland or Lansing or Detroit or Pontiac and it comes to Washington, before it ever gets back into a classroom, we are actually doing what education dollars should do, which is educating children. We figure that we lose about 35 cents of that dollar in wasted bureaucracy.

I tried to talk to the superintendent—he and I have not been able to connect yet—the superintendent of

Pontiac public schools. I give him credit. They took the Federal Government to court and said this is unconstitutional; it is unfair and inappropriate for the Federal Government to have these kinds of mandates on our schools, because what's the other thing that they do? When they say in No Child Left Behind, you shall, they don't give them the money to do it.

He said, or the school district said, you can't put all of these unfunded mandates on us, because what you are forcing us to do is to spend money on programs that we don't think are a priority for our kids. We know our kids. We know their names. We know what their challenges are. We have got these sets of priorities that we think we need to spend on our kids. That superintendent and those teachers and those parents and that community, you are right. They know those kids' names. They know what those kids need, and they want to spend the dollars to get the most advancement for those kids.

□ 2215

The bureaucrats here in Washington, what do they know? They know the book of rules and regulations and say, sorry, it says right here, Congress says you shall do these things. All I can do is make sure that is what they do. That is, again, exactly what is going to happen in health care.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I would suggest that one of the more frustrating things about all of this, like in education, what happens when government controls it is the wealthy can still do pretty much what they want. Wealthy families in this country can choose private schools for their children, because they have the extra money to do it. The poorest of families do not. They are stuck in a system that government controls and runs and almost always makes it substandard because of that reason.

The same thing will happen in health care. The wealthy will figure out some way to get around this. We have offered amendments, as you know, Congressman, in this body to say for those people who either voted for it, or at least Congress, if they are going to have to pass this thing, should have to live under it themselves. Those amendments get voted down overwhelmingly because there are not too many Members of this body who want to live under a government-run health care system. But they are willing to put it on those people who have no choice, and there is something fundamentally wrong about all of that.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Yes. What we have seen in the highway system is where the money comes to Washington, it gets distributed unfairly, and it comes back to States with mandates on it as to where they will spend it.

It is hard to believe. You send the money to Washington, and to get it back you have to have matching funds. So now they are also starting to impose taxes on the citizens of each of

our States so we can actually get our own money back. So there is the infringement and the intrusion of the Federal Government on the highway system.

The same thing on education. Michigan has now gone through a process and they are considering some spending bills. And part of the spending bill is, well, you know, if we do this, we can get more Federal education money back, or we can get more Medicaid money back.

It is kind of like, why do we have to put up our own money to get our money back in the first place? And think if we left it in the States.

I think this is where we as Republicans lay out our vision for the future. I think one of the parts we are going to see on health care, on transportation, it is going to be devolution. Leave the money in the States. Send a penny out of every dollar to Washington to let them maintain and, if necessary, expand the interstate highway system. But leave 98 or 99 percent of the money in the States.

We ought to do the same thing with education. Devolve education responsibilities to the States. I don't need to send a dollar here and only get 65 cents back for the classroom.

Do the same thing for Medicaid and health care. Don't take health care down the same failed road of moving all of this power away from individuals, away from communities, away from States, to bureaucrats in Washington who will distribute it unfairly. The powerful will take more to their States. They will give less to the other States. The powerful will then establish the mandates so that we will run health care the way they believe it should be run, not the way that markets or individuals who want to direct their health care want it to be run. And they will be inefficient.

The bottom line is, it won't work. You and I know it. And we have seen the numbers. No Child Left Behind is not working. We are leaving more kids behind.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. It is always amazing to me, if we just happen to be a cursory student of history, that we can look back and see the highway of history is littered with the wreckage of socialist governments that thought they could manage productivity and that they could create a better distribution system than the private market. I don't want to join that litany, and I know you don't either.

You keep making the parallel in education. I think it is kind of interesting that, in Canada, they started this government-run system, and they ran into so many problems that people are now suing to get their freedom back. It is very difficult to get it back. It is the same thing with education.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. They also can opt out. They do two things in Canada. They cross the border and come across into Michigan to take advantage of our quality hospitals and our quality

health care; and for those that have a little bit more money, they fly down to Arizona, especially in the winter, and take advantage of your quality health care. They have got an escape valve.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. If they have a cold, they call a doctor up there. If they have cancer or something serious, they call a travel agent.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. If they have the resources.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, what I would like to do, I hope in the next hour I will be afforded the opportunity to give my written comments, but I would like, if I could now, to yield to the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. GARRETT.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. I appreciate the gentleman from Arizona yielding, and I will be listening on the edge of my seat to hear your written comments momentarily. But I wish to join in with the discussion.

I commend your work. I have been watching for the last 45 minutes your discussion, and I know you have begun to make the shift over in the comparison with regard to No Child Left Behind.

In reality, of course, maybe you have already said this, with the huge burden, intergenerational burden that this bill will create, of course, what we are really talking about is no child will be left a dime.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. We are not going to educate them, and we are going to put a huge debt on them. Yes. Thank you.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. We are indeed going to be placing a huge debt. This is going to be an intergenerational travesty for the next generation, for our children and their children as well, and that is the interesting thing.

Just yesterday, Thursday, at noon, there were literally tens of thousands of people outside, just outside the steps of this Capitol, people who are interested in freedom and liberty coming down here to have their voice heard. That despite the fact, I might add, I know there were some reports in the paper from Members of the other side of the aisle, the Democrat side of the aisle, that said, basically paraphrasing, I am not sure why people are coming to Washington and why people are calling, because they have made up their mind already, which is also a travesty.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. The amazing thing is they have made up their mind. The bill has been around for all of 8 days, and we have never had the opportunity now to take it home to any of our constituents or whatever.

But I was struck by reading the same comment. It was also laced I think with some profanity and saying, we don't care. We have made up our mind. The inference was, I think, we could have 100,000, we could have a million people out there. We don't care.

Unbelievable. Who do these people think they work for?

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Right. I think you are being overly generous to the other side of the aisle when you

said the bill has been out there 8 days. In reality, of course, as we sit here or stand here on the floor of the Chamber of the House of Representatives, the People's House, upstairs right now is the Rules Committee still debating, or not even debating, just listening to the Republicans make their arguments against the bill.

The final bill, as you are well aware, has not been created. The final bill, as you are well aware, has not been put to text. The final bill has not been presented to the American public, which is really strange when you think about it. Because back on September 24th, Speaker PELOSI said to the media and to the American public that she would give the American public 72 hours to be able to read the final version of the bill before it came to a vote.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. If the gentleman will yield one more time, I think maybe that is why we are doing this on Saturday, because they will finish the bill tonight, sometime tonight, and file it, I would guess, sometime through the night. And since most people have Saturdays off, maybe the Speaker is figuring that maybe everybody can have Saturday morning and Saturday afternoon to really study this bill, and if they have some input they want to give us, if they have some input they want to give us, they can maybe do it before 6 o'clock on Saturday night, when we are currently scheduled to vote.

That is actually brilliant on the Speaker's part, because I think most Americans are going to be just eagerly waiting to get this bill and go online and read it tomorrow.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I think the gentleman is being entirely too cynical. I think the notion that any of the Americans are going to read a 2,000 page bill in the 6 hours that they will have, we have got maybe five speed readers in the country that can do that. So I think you are being too hard on them.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Cynical, or maybe overly generous to the other side of the aisle, that the majority and Speaker PELOSI would be so kind to allow the American public even that much time, when she specifically made the promise of 72 hours. Seventy-two hours, what is that? That is 3 days. And even at that, 3 days is a short period of time, I think we all would agree, to read 2,000 pages and get through it.

Remember back just several months ago, when was it that we had the cap-and-trade bill on this floor. That was the end of July, I believe, or August.

Mr. HOEKSTRA. Well, when they added 400 pages.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. When they added the 300 or 400 pages to the bill, and you had Members on the other side of the aisle say, well, they had read the bill. There again, you have to remember the somewhat disingenuous statements, because there again, looking at a 1,000 page bill, and you indi-

cated it was 3 o'clock at night, and the Rules Committee was doing what they are doing right now, and then slipping the bill basically in the dead of night to us, 300-some odd pages, and then having us vote on that bill, when you know that no one had actually read and understood the bill.

Just like that 1,000 page bill before, now we are looking at a 1,990 page bill. Even if you are one of those speed readers that can actually get through 1,990 pages, you know you will not understand the bill. And I will close on this and yield back, that that 2,000 pages also cross-references to a whole series of other pieces of standing legislation you have to understand as well.

So no one who is about to vote on this bill tomorrow, if we do vote on it tomorrow, will have read and understood the bill, and that is a travesty to the American public.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I yield to the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

For those that are unfamiliar with the Capitol grounds here, it is really a thing to behold. Here we are, the four of us that have this great privilege of being in conversation, not just with one another, not with just the House of Representatives, but really with the American public, on this season of our life that we have really not seen before.

I was walking outside a couple of minutes ago, and I glanced up at the dome, and the light on the top of the dome was on. And those who have not been to Washington, D.C., before know that that is really a symbol of freedom. When that light is on at the very top of the dome, that signals that freedom is under way, democracy is afoot.

And I just decided, I literally have my trench coat, it is a cold evening here in Washington. My trench coat is literally over there. I walked up the stairs and walked in, and I thought, who is on the House floor? And I wasn't surprised to find the gentleman from Arizona. I wasn't surprised to find the gentleman from Michigan. I wasn't surprised to find the gentleman from New Jersey. Because I think what the four of us have an understanding of is that this is a time of choosing.

We are all familiar with the book of Genesis and the story of Isaac. Isaac had two sons. One was Esau and one was Jacob. Esau was the oldest son; and, as the Bible tells that story and as we all know, in that culture at that time, the oldest son had the lion's share of the inheritance, right? Really, when the old man died, he had everything coming to him.

As the story goes, Esau is out in the field. He comes in. He is hungry. He says to his younger brother Jacob, "I am hungry." Jacob is making some stew. Esau says, "Give me some stew."

What does Jacob say? "Give me your birthright." And Esau, like a fool, gives his birthright away for what? For a pot of stew.

The political left in this country is coaxing the American people right now, who are very uncertain. We are in uncertain economic times. They see health care costs that are skyrocketing out of control. They have concerns about preexisting conditions and jobs and a whole host of other things. And the political left is saying, give us your birthright of freedom. Give us your birthright of opportunity. Entrust it to us, who can't balance a budget, who are spending your children's prosperity away, and trust us.

What I think I am sensing, and I think what all three of us are sensing, the American public is saying, whoa. Whoa. We are not going to trade a birthright away, for what? For nothing? To entrust the future to people that literally cannot balance a checkbook? People who have taken our national debt and will double that amount in 5 years and will triple that amount in 10 years? That is incredibly sobering.

So here we are on the brink of Speaker PELOSI grabbing control of one-sixth of the American economy, one-sixth of the American economy. As we speak, the Rules Committee is meeting. They have not had the opportunity to fully vet this bill.

It went from 1,000 pages that was fundamentally rejected by the American public over the August recess, fundamentally rejected by the thousands of Americans that showed up over the last couple of days, and yet now she has doubled down. With all due respect to the Speaker, she has doubled down and taken 1,000 pages and turned it into 2,000 pages.

It takes away my breath. I think it takes away most Americans' breath, thinking about the amount of indebtedness being created and, ultimately, this generational theft.

□ 2230

Mr. HOEKSTRA. If the gentleman will yield, I think we also put this in the context of already what's happened in this year. Very early on this year, we spent \$800 billion to stimulate the economy. It hasn't worked. Today we saw the numbers. They came out, 10.2 percent unemployment. If you include those who have stopped looking for work or those who are maybe working part-time because they can't find a full-time job, that goes up to 17.5 percent. So 17.5 percent of the American people are either unemployed, stopped looking for work or underemployed. You know, that's the effect of our stimulus bill that was passed. I don't think any of us voted for it.

Then we put on top of that the cap-and-trade vote that my colleague was talking about, which is going to just hammer manufacturing and put a huge tax on every American again and every business out of this new carbon tax. Then you put the health care bill on top of it, \$1.2 trillion, and people are wondering, Why isn't the economy coming back? Because we put so much

uncertainty into the business climate. We've loaded up the debt. People were talking about, you know, the debt under President Bush. In 1 year they've tripled the deficit from what, \$450 billion. And that was the deficit under the Democratic Congress. I think the last time Republicans had control, the deficit was around \$250 billion. It was going the other way. It was going down. Ever since the Democrats have been in charge of Congress, it's been going up, so that we are now at \$1.4 trillion in a single year deficit.

All of these new taxes and new spending out there—the deficit is projected to be what, \$1 trillion every year for as far as the eye can see, and people are wondering why there's not job creation? It's not hard to figure out. I yield back.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. I will just put this in my own perspective the best I can here. I have always believed, as I know the three of you have, that the true statesmanship was the effort to try to look to the next generation. Someone said that a politician looks to the next election, whereas a statesman looks to the next generation. Some of those issues have been my life. I was the director of what Arizona's version is of a children's department. We've always wanted to try to look to the future and look to next generations. That's why I was so intrigued by the gentleman from Illinois' comments about our birthright, about freedom because I believe of all the tragedies in the Pelosi bill, that the loss in freedom is the big one.

This is not the first time that we have struggled in this country about that. There was a time when the colonists were here that they were oppressed so badly by the Crown of England that they said that we have to somehow break free. But there were those who were afraid, and I understand that. See, they didn't have freedom at that time. They were trying to gain it. They were trying to go against all odds to try to do what they could. But some were afraid.

I will never forget Samuel Adams' words because I think it should apply to all of us here tonight. I think it should apply especially to those on the other side of the aisle that are struggling tonight with how they're going to vote. He said to the colonists who were afraid to fight the King, he said, If you love wealth better than liberty, if you love the tranquility of servitude better than the animating contest of freedom, go from us in peace. We seek not your counsel or your arms. Crouch down, and lick the hands that feed you, and may your change sit lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that you were our countrymen.

And I would say today that we need that same call to liberty that they had back then that made them march with bloody feet in the frozen ground to find liberty for us. I have got two little babies at home that are just a little over a year old, and I don't want to throw

away their birthright or the freedom that I hope that they will walk in someday. I want them to stand in the light of the freedom that we see on the top of this Capitol dome. May it be.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MURPHY of New York). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. KING) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. KING of Iowa. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the privilege of being recognized by you, the Speaker and address on the floor of the House of Representatives in this seamless effort that we have to stand up and defend the freedom that this country needs. This has been for a long time about socialized medicine, socialized health care, the reason that so many people came to this Capitol and so many people have all across this country laid out and stood up and gone to congressional offices and joined in their groups, the tens of thousands of people who were here yesterday and so maybe people that are looking across the country, jamming the telephone lines, doing everything that they can. Mr. Speaker, the American people don't want this socialized medicine. I understand that the gentleman from Arizona has a presentation that he would like to make in a window here for a few minutes, and I am happy to yield to the gentleman from Arizona for that period of time before we pick up the balance of this exchange.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona. Well, I certainly thank the gentleman. In the last hour, I tried to talk about some of things that the Republicans were for, but I had made a commitment to give some remarks on the Pelosi health care plan. So I really appreciate everyone's indulgence here because I feel like I'm taking more than my share, but I will make these comments and then I will make myself scarce, if that will be all right.

Mr. Speaker, only 1 week ago, on Friday, October 29, Speaker PELOSI and her fellow liberal Democrats introduced H.R. 3962. But they grossly mislabeled the Affordable Health Care for America Act. The bill would more accurately be entitled, The Big Spending, Big Taxing, Big Entitlement Pelosi Plan for Big Government Takeover of America's Health Care Act.

Despite House Majority Leader STENY HOYER claiming during their press conference that the health care bill was part of an open and transparent process to reform our health care system, the American people were oddly prohibited from even attending the liberal Democrats' publicity rally on the steps of the Capitol. Mr. Speaker, this really isn't surprising considering the Democrats' habit of closing Republicans completely out of the legislative process and negotiating the provision of this current health care plan behind tightly closed and locked doors.