

is moving forward with long overdue legislation to reform our Nation's health care system. With 47 million Americans without health insurance and costs rising well above the rate of inflation, health reform is an issue that can no longer be ignored. Health care affects every individual, every family and every business in America. Less than half of all small businesses in this country can afford to offer health insurance to their employees. Tens of millions of insured Americans live in fear of losing their coverage due to skyrocketing health care costs, and families are one accident or illness away from losing everything.

Together we can put an end to the decades of roadblocks that have prevented meaningful health care reform. Let us not let this opportunity pass us by again.

HURTING AMERICANS SEE TOO MUCH GOVERNMENT SPENDING

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

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, to Speaker NANCY PELOSI, I say American taxpayers, American families, Americans are all hurting. They are getting pink slips. They are seeing job layoffs. They are seeing their wages cut. They are seeing their wages go down. They are seeing their income go down. And what do they see out of this House in Washington they are seeing spending going through the roof. They are seeing 10 percent increases on top of other 10 percent increases. They are seeing more than one-quarter of the Nation's growth and wealth all being sucked right into this Nation's Capital and spent in this city.

Mr. Speaker, the American people did indeed vote for a change. But this is not what they were hoping for.

H.R. 759 WILL ENSURE A SAFE FOOD SUPPLY

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

Mr. STUPAK. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, I have held nine hearings to examine the safety and security of our Nation's food supply over the past 2 years. A recent peanut butter salmonella outbreak is just the latest in a string of food-borne illnesses that affects 76 million Americans every year. For this reason, I joined with my colleagues, Chairmen DINGELL and PALLONE, to introduce H.R. 759, the Food and Drug Administration Globalization Act of 2009.

H.R. 759 would give the FDA not only the financial resources, but also the regulatory tools to ensure the safety of food we eat and the drugs we take. If this legislation would have been in

place, the FDA would have had the authority, as well as the resources, to prevent the current salmonella outbreak from occurring, tools such as resources for increased inspections, access to inspection records, mandatory recall authority and strong penalties that will require testing facilities to send their results to the FDA.

Congress faces an ambitious agenda in the coming months, but more than 600 illnesses and nine deaths linked to the current salmonella outbreak underscore the importance of wasting no time in enacting this legislation.

EARMARK REFORM

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

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, in about 1½ hours, President Obama is expected to announce major earmark reforms as he signs an omnibus spending bill with 9,000 earmarks. This gives voice to St. Augustine's lament, give me sobriety—but not yet.

But Mr. Speaker, it is still a good thing. And it is still long overdue. And we still shouldn't have to look to the President to save us from ourselves. This earmark problem is our problem. But gratefully, I believe he will announce, and I hope that he will announce, that he will not sign legislation that will allow no-bid contracts, congressionally directed no-bid contracts, to go into effect. We have seen what that has done to the Congress, the kind of circular fundraising that happens and the campaign contributions that result. And it does not uphold the dignity and decorum of this body.

So I hope we can make major earmark reforms with the President.

MARCH AS RED CROSS MONTH

(Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate March as Red Cross Month. Since 1943 we have been celebrating March as Red Cross Month to promote the services provided to the public by the Red Cross. The Red Cross has been at the forefront of helping individuals and families prevent, prepare for and respond to large and small-scale disasters for more than 127 years.

Over the last year, more than 5 million people throughout the United States took advantage of educational opportunities from the Red Cross for CPR training, first aid and lifeguard training classes. And in Orange County, California, the local Red Cross chapter places great emphasis on community training. On April 18, the American Red Cross in Orange County will be hosting the fifth annual CPR day at, of course, Angel Stadium in my City of Anaheim, which will train over

1,500 people in adult and child CPR and first aid.

Once again, I want to thank the American Red Cross for making our communities safer and for providing needed resources to communities that are affected by floods, by fires, earthquakes, mudslides, hurricanes and other natural disasters.

THE SCOTT GARDNER ACT

(Mrs. MYRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MYRICK. I recently reintroduced the Scott Gardner Act, which would make it illegal and grounds for mandatory detention and deportation if an illegal alien is caught driving drunk.

Scott Gardner was a beloved father, teacher and husband in my district. And he was tragically killed by an illegal alien driving drunk who remained in our country despite the fact that he had previous DWI convictions. It would aid in the enforcement of our immigration laws by requiring the Federal, State and local governments to all share and collect information during the course of their normal duties. And local law enforcement agencies would have the resources to detain illegal aliens for DWI until they could be transferred to Federal authorities for deportation.

It is a travesty that we in this country allow illegal immigrants to remain here after being found guilty of driving drunk. Some in my district have recently argued that traffic violations are minor offenses. I'm sure Scott Gardner's family and all of the families who have lost loved ones to DWIs would disagree.

STEM-CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. ARCURI. Mr. Speaker, this week the President took a critical step to boost groundbreaking stem-cell research and restore scientific integrity across government. The President signed an executive order lifting the ban on Federal funding for promising embryonic system cell research. In doing so he affirmed the administration's support of finding cures for diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, heart disease and diabetes that cause pain and suffering all over the world.

Many thoughtful and decent people are conflicted about or are strongly opposed to this research. The President understands their concern and respects their point of view. That is why the administration will develop and rigorously enforce strict ethical guidelines with zero tolerance for misuse and abuse. This order does not open the door for cloning for human reproduction in any way. We are all opposed to

that. Rather, it unleashes and unharnesses the potential of what this country can accomplish to eliminate the ravages of these diseases and the effects they impose upon humanity.

STEM-CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as a father, a physician and a Congressman to express my deep concern over the administration's decision to allow taxpayer dollars to incentivize the destruction of human embryos.

For the first time in our country's history, the Federal Government is going to encourage the destruction of human embryos. Newer techniques for making embryonic-like cells without destroying any embryos and advances in adult stem-cell umbilical cord blood treatments are showing that the use of embryos for stem-cell research is becoming obsolete.

Over 73 different diseases have been treated, at least experimentally, with adult or cord blood stem cells, including type I diabetes and heart disease.

Because of recent steps by our President, pro-life taxpayers are now footing the bill for the promotion of abortions overseas, doctors are in danger of being forced to perform abortions regardless of moral or religious objections, and now taxpayer funds are going to support the destruction of human embryos in the name of research.

Embryonic stem-cell research provides no guarantee of scientific advancement, but it does guarantee the innocent unborn have lost a critical battle.

STEM-CELL RESEARCH

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

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, we will never know how many millions of people around the world have suffered debilitating, shorter lives from Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, and a host of other illnesses and diseases as a result of President Bush's decision to severely restrict stem-cell research.

But we do know that human civilization has only progressed when its leaders had the courage to resist religious, political and economic dogma in pursuit of truth and scientific discovery. Science and medical research offers us all an opportunity to reduce human suffering and advance human potential. I believe that is God's will.

President Obama did the right thing in reversing that anti-science presidential directive, but now it is up to the Congress to reverse the existing Congressional restriction on Federal funding of stem-cell research.

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D.C. OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, the Senate passed the \$410 billion omnibus spending bill last night containing some 9,000 special interest earmarks. Sadly, it included a provision that will effectively kill a popular and successful program here in our Nation's Capital that provides a ray of hope for the children it serves.

The D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program provides low-income families with a voucher they can use to attend the school of their choice. For many students, this provides the opportunity to get out of dangerous and failing public schools into private schools that provide them with a safe environment and a quality education.

This program is under attack by politicians in Congress, many of whom send their own children to private schools. If school choice is good enough for their kids, why not school choice for everyone?

I urge the President, who has chosen private school for his own children, to veto this special interest, pork-laden bill and work with Congress toward meaningful education reform.

TRAGEDY IN ALABAMA

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

Mr. BRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, as many of you have heard, a tragic shooting occurred yesterday in Geneva and Coffee Counties in Alabama. Without question, this is one of the worst tragedies our State and our Nation has seen in quite some time. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims, and with the entire Wiregrass community in southeast Alabama.

The details are still being confirmed, but I do know that our community owes a debt of gratitude to the local law enforcement officials who bravely put themselves in the line of fire. Without their swift actions and courage, the tragedy could have been even worse than it was yesterday.

I will be returning to my district later today to assist local leaders and law enforcement officials in any way that I can and to be with my constituents as we mourn the loss of friends and neighbors.

I ask that all of my colleagues here in the House and people watching right now from around the country keep the people of southeast Alabama in your thoughts and prayers.

ECONOMIC ENGINE DOESN'T RUN ON PORK

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

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, hardworking Americans are the eco-

nomics engine that drives this great Nation. And America's economic engine doesn't run on pork.

Even though we are in a recession, Congress continues to take hard-earned tax dollars and send them toward pork projects like tattoo removal, Mormon crickets, and studying pig manure. In fact, the omnibus bill sent to the White House last night contains nearly 8,000 earmarks, costing taxpayers more than \$11 billion.

Monday night I had a telephone town hall with my constituents back home in Georgia. One caller, Mr. John Ahern from Athens, hit the nail on the head with his question on spending: "Why aren't politicians held accountable like families and taxpayers?"

Why indeed? There are Members on both sides of the aisle that are so used to the spending of yesterday that they cannot bear the thought of tightening their belts today. How are we going to justify picking the pockets of taxpayers to literally pay for pig poop?

This bill spends too much, taxes too much, and borrows too much. I urge a veto of the ominous omnibus bill and its 8,000 earmarks. There are John Aherns all over this country who demand accountability in government. A veto would give it to them.

STEM-CELL EXECUTIVE ORDER

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the distinct honor and privilege of witnessing an historic and defining moment in our Nation's history, one that I believe will fundamentally alter the course of science and medicine in the same manner as did the discovery of the first vaccine or X-ray or other significant scientific and medical discoveries in this country.

On Monday, President Obama signed an executive order lifting the ban on the Federal funding of embryonic stem cell research. As someone who has lived with a spinal cord injury for over 28 years, I have always held onto the hope that one day I might walk again.

But this executive order is not about me or even about spinal cord injuries. It is about the millions of people living with chronic and disabling diseases, illnesses, and conditions for which this research may one day hold the promise of new treatments and cures. It is about responsible investment into sciences and technologies that will ensure our Nation's continued economic competitiveness into the 21st century.

There is still much work to be done, and I look forward to working with my congressional colleagues on this issue to ensure that responsible policies based on sound science are enacted.

This is truly an historic event.

AMERICANS NEED OBJECTIVE REPORTING

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