

Patients are denied physician-prescribed treatment, doctors are denied reimbursement for necessary care, and increasingly restrictive networks of coverage mean restrictive choice for patients.

A survey of the leading proposals for reform shows that no one is talking about limiting patient choice. In fact, a publicly sponsored plan, with a potential network of millions of Americans, would likely have one of the most robust networks of providers in the system, since doctors and hospitals would want and need to have access to this large pool of patients.

A public plan itself increases patient choice by allowing families to decide whether they want to continue with their private insurance plan or move to a publicly sponsored plan that might provide better coverage due to lower administrative and profit costs.

Health care reform limiting patient choice? It's just another myth about our health care system.

STOP JOB-KILLING TAX INCREASES

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, we will not recover from this recession unless small business leads the way by growing jobs. A small business owner from my district, Paul Robinson of Sterling Critical Products in Bloomington, was just in Washington last week. The message he has for Congress is that we need to provide incentives and access to capital for small business—and we need to make sure that no job-killing tax increases are added to their burden.

The \$1.4 trillion tax increase that is on the table in the current budget proposal would drive a stake into the heart of our Nation's job creators. The proposal to raise taxes on asset creation by 33 percent would dry up badly needed capital and keep them from creating jobs.

My constituents are living within their means and they're cutting expenses. They expect Washington to do the same. But this budget spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much.

In these difficult times, we demand solutions that put people back to work. Let's reject these job-killing tax increases and start growing jobs now by supporting small business owners like Paul.

UNINSURED WEEK

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

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call upon the Congress to reform our health care system. It's important. Forty-six million Americans currently have no health care insurance, yet health care costs have risen dramatically in years.

Insurance premiums in California have risen at a rate more than twice the rate of inflation, eating up a larger and larger percentage of household incomes. With the recent economic downturn, far too many families are losing their employer-based coverage and unable to afford the cost of health care on their own.

Like it or not, we taxpayers are paying for the health care in some of the most expensive ways possible, through the emergency room, for those who are uninsured. Last year, hospitals in my district provided nearly \$200 million in uncompensated care. Clinics in our Central Valley alone have provided care for over 600,000 who have little insurance or none at all.

This system cannot and should not continue. The bottom line is we are paying for the uninsured today—the 46 million Americans who do not have insurance. We ought to do it in a better way.

Our citizens' health and our Nation's fiscal health depend on meaningful reform. Let's begin that effort.

IALOGUE WITH THE PRESIDENT

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

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Yesterday, Father Jenkins, the President of my alma mater, Notre Dame, explained his decision to give President Obama an honorary degree, in spite of his opposition to the culture of life expressed by that university and the Catholic Church. He explained it as an invitation to dialogue with the President. Let us hope so.

Let us hope there is a dialogue on the President's support for partial-birth abortion; on his opposition to the born-alive baby legislation; on his reversal of the Mexico City policy; on his support of Federal funding for embryonic stem cells where, denouncing it, he gave the back of the hand to Catholic moral teaching; and, in vitiating the Federal regulations guaranteeing the conscience clause, which is aimed at Catholic hospitals, doctors, and nurses.

Will this be an invitation to dialogue? Will the commencement address be an opportunity for the President to question his prior decisions? God only knows.

COVER THE UNINSURED WEEK WITH A CALL FOR COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, this is Cover the Uninsured Week, March 22–29, and I call for enactment of comprehensive health care reform this year.

Reforming the Nation's health care to lower costs, improve quality, increase coverage, and preserve choice is

a top priority for Congress and the President. Our Nation's health care system, which costs more every year and leaves more than 45 million citizens uninsured, and millions more underinsured, is in bad need of reform. We simply can't afford to wait any longer to make the changes necessary to ensure greater access to quality health care.

The problem of the uninsured and its impact on the entire health care system continues to grow. The Federal Government estimates that over 45 million individuals lacked health insurance coverage of any kind during the last year, 2008. Approximately \$56 billion is in uncompensated care.

We need to change that.

PROTECT PROSPERITY

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. My constituents are tired of Congress spending money they haven't made yet for programs they don't want. According to the CBO, total spending in 2009 is going to be over \$4 trillion. The price tag on the President's budget is over \$3.6 trillion. Our country can't afford this budget because it spends too much, it taxes too much, and it borrows too much money on our future.

The CBO predicts that this budget will push our deficit to 9.6 percent of GDP in 2010. That's historical. CBO predicts that this country will run historically high deficits for the next decade. The global demand for American debt will only continue if our economic policies are sound.

Although we don't know the limits of the debt market, this budget is going to push us into uncharted territory. As lawmakers, it is our duty to preserve and protect prosperity. If we pass this budget, we will be abusing the economic opportunity for our children and our grandchildren. What kind of protection is that?

BREAST CANCER PATIENT PROTECT ACT OF 2009

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

Ms. DELAURO. An estimated 184,000 cases of invasive breast cancer were diagnosed last year. I rise today in support of every breast cancer patient who has ever undergone a mastectomy and then been told by her insurance company that she has to leave the hospital in 24 hours or less before she has had time to recover.

I'm reintroducing the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act today. It's a bipartisan bill that overwhelmingly passed this House last year by a vote of 421–2. Simply, it ensures that after breast cancer surgery, a woman will have 48 hours to recuperate in the hospital, no matter which State she lives

in or what insurance coverage she has. It does not mandate that the patient has to stay in the hospital for 48 hours, but the decision should be made by patient and doctor and not by an insurance company.

A Lifetime TV petition has been signed more than 23 million times, with people directing their stories to their Web site. We have information from 50 States.

The last thing any woman should do at this time is to fight with her insurance company. This should not be negotiable. Ultimately, that decision should be up to the patient and her doctor.

Before this session of Congress is over, we must take Federal action and pass the Breast Cancer Patient Protection Act into law, and take away this barrier to quality breast cancer care.

REWRITING HISTORY

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

Ms. FOXX. I am absolutely amazed at the ability of my colleagues to bring to life the novel 1984 by Orwell. They stand up every day and rewrite history right here on the floor of the House.

We had 55 straight months of job growth, which ended in January 2007. Why? The Democrats took over the Congress that month. The Democrats then began spending too much, taxing too much, and borrowing too much—and they continue to do that. Their plans are going to finish off this country as we know it. Their budget will grow the Nation's debt to 82 percent of the overall economy by 2019—from 41 percent in 2008.

The Democrat budget doubles the share of the debt on every family in America. The current debt per capita is roughly \$35,000. Under the Democrat budget, this will rise to \$70,000 in only 8 years.

Despite the Democrats' claim, their budget plans for deficits through 2019 are actually higher than any year before President Obama took office.

ONE ROAD TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

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

Mr. COHEN. The American public wants to see bipartisanship and they want to see Democrats and Republicans work together. This is my second Congress I have served in, and it's disappointing to me to see a new President—who was elected with overwhelming numbers and overwhelming support—not get bipartisan support and help on his efforts.

I don't agree with President Obama on everything that he is trying to do to get us out of the economic morass that the Republican Congress and the previous President and Vice President left us in. But I support our President be-

cause I know we have one executive authority and one Treasury Department that needs to have a direction to get us on the road to prosperity.

It is disappointing that people just criticize, criticize, criticize. The fact is we need to spend to stimulate this economy and we need a recovery package as well as a reinvestment package to get this economy moving, and that's what is being offered. It's being geared toward the middle class that's being forgotten.

On the other side, they talk about preserving prosperity for our children and our grandchildren. Most people in this country—95 percent—don't have prosperity, and they need help. The Democratic budget will help them with health care, jobs, and education.

HONORING PRIVATE JASON WATSON

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

Mr. FLEMING. I would like to take this privileged opportunity to honor and celebrate the life of Private Jason Watson. Private Watson is from Many, Louisiana, and recently died in Afghanistan.

Private Watson gave that last full measure of devotion to defend our freedom, and his death is a reminder of the cost of our liberty. Remember that it's not the Congressman and it's not the reporter who guarantee freedom of speech, it's the uniformed servicemembers working every day.

He proudly defended America so that we may never experience the horror of another terrorist attack on our home soil. While little will comfort the pain his family feels at this time, I want to thank them on behalf of our country, a grateful country, and let them know that their family will be in our prayers.

Private Jason Watson died a hero. I challenge my colleagues to remember our role here in Congress to make responsible decisions to protect the lives of Americans and to uphold the values and the pillars of freedom this brave young man died for.

HONORING THE LONG BEACH MUNICIPAL BAND

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

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as the daughter of a musician to honor the Long Beach Municipal Band on their 100-year anniversary. On March 14, 1909, under the direction of E. Harry Willey, the Long Beach Municipal Band gave its first performance at the Bath House Band Shell on the Pine Avenue Pier.

In particular, what I want to say about the band is, following a 6.25 magnitude earthquake in March of 1933 that almost destroyed an entire city, it was the band that remained and played

to encourage the families who were left in shelters and in nearby parks.

Since that time, the Long Beach Municipal Band has gone on to perform 57,000 concerts, over 1 million pieces of music. Also, it's known as the longest running, municipally supported band in our country.

Please applaud our great city that has made an investment—the second-largest city in the largest county in this Nation—to remember that art is a part of music, and it's a part of this country.

□ 1230

NOT LOOKING FOR A BAILOUT, JUST A FAIR SHAKE

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. It has been 68 days, Mr. Speaker, since the United States Forest Service approved a notice to proceed with oil and gas production on the Allegheny National Forest.

Why is this cause for concern? Well, we are talking about a relationship between the Forest Service and private landowners that has existed for 86 years without a disruption of this magnitude. We are talking about jobs. Without permits to proceed, companies continue to lay off employees, and the local economy suffers.

Take Michael Hale's company, for example, a constituent of mine from Bradford, Pennsylvania, who recently wrote:

"As an owner of an excavating company during tough difficult times, I am discouraged by the recent actions by the Forest Service in delaying processing of notices to proceed for oil and gas extraction in the Allegheny National Forest.

"For the first time in our 26-year history, we have had to make adjustments to our workforce due to an inability to work. Currently, 35 percent of our field workers have been laid off and the remaining workers have had their hours reduced by 25 percent.

"We are not asking for a handout or a bailout of any kind, we just want to be able to work."

It's companies like Michael Hale's that are the fabric which holds this economy and many of our rural communities together. They're not looking for a bailout, just a fair shake.

THE DEMOCRAT BUDGET SPENDS TOO MUCH, BORROWS TOO MUCH, AND TAXES TOO MUCH

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, the Democrat budget spends too much, borrows too much, and taxes too much. But spending and taxes has never been