

Federal Government did create Medicare, Medicare which now serves 40 million Americans, disabled and old, and which does a very, very good job of doing that.

So I look forward to the debate we're going to continue to have with the other side on how best to create health care reform.

INTRODUCING THE RAISE ACT,  
H.R. 2732

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, if the gentleman from Kentucky wants to know why Republicans oppose the government takeover of our health care system, I would invite him to consult the many, many refugees from Canada and Britain who have come here to America to get their health care, because they simply can't survive with bureaucrats telling them what treatments they'll get and when they'll get them.

The Republicans are proposing to bring within the reach of every American family a basic health plan that they will own, that they can change if it fails to suit them and that they will hold wherever they work and under whatever circumstances they work; but Madam Speaker, I'm here on different business this morning.

I'm here to talk about the right of workers. Their right to gather and to bargain collectively with an employer is a fundamental right of labor. It often strengthens the position of individual workers as they negotiate with a powerful employer. Yet survey after survey tells us that union members are less satisfied with their jobs than nonunion workers, and many Americans today simply refuse to work in union shops at all.

So why is it that a bargaining process designed to improve workers' satisfaction should produce such dissatisfaction?

Perhaps the answer rests with the simple human desire in each of us to excel in what we do and to be recognized and rewarded for that excellence. Collective bargaining increases the ability of workers to take a stronger position to negotiate with an employer, and this is good, but they're then left to give up any individual rewards for outstanding work.

Union workers end up trapped with a one-size-fits-all contract that denies them the dignity that comes from individual excellence and achievement. No matter how hard that worker toils or no matter how much he produces, he gets paid exactly the same as the coal worker who puts in minimal effort.

Well, why shouldn't workers get extra pay and performance bonuses beyond the union-negotiated wage base? Why does the wage floor set through union contracts also have to be a wage ceiling for those union members who go the extra mile to get ahead?

Union leaders may see value in wiping out individual initiative to build solidarity among rank-and-file members, but those workers would be far better off if they could enjoy both the advantages of collective bargaining and the additional rewards of individual performance raises and bonuses. Many unionized businesses would gladly pay individual workers more if they could. Some have tried, but over the years, the National Labor Relations Board has repeatedly struck them down.

For that reason, I have introduced the Rewarding Achievement and Incentivizing Successful Employees, or RAISE Act, H.R. 2732. It will allow working union members to escape the false choice between collective bargaining and individual reward that our outdated labor laws have forced upon them. Senator VITTER has introduced a similar bill in the Senate.

Under the RAISE Act, union members would retain all of the collective bargaining rights under current law, and employers would be bound to the wage and benefit schedules negotiated under those laws. In addition to the floor established by the union contract, employers could add bonuses for those workers who go the extra mile, combining the benefits of collective bargaining with the rewards of individual achievement.

Years ago, Admiral Grace Hopper observed that, in all of her years in the United States Navy, she had determined that the greatest impediment to human progress is the phrase "but we've always done it this way." That's the only answer we've heard so far in opposition to this simple reform, and in days like these, that's no answer at all.

CONGRATULATING MRS. KIM  
HENRY, OKLAHOMA'S FIRST LADY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN) for 1 minute.

Mr. BOREN. Today, Madam Speaker, I rise to share a kind word and to send my congratulations to one of Oklahoma's great women, Kim Henry, Oklahoma's first lady and the wife of our outstanding Governor.

Born in Norman and raised in Shawnee, Mrs. Henry would mature into a confident and independent woman who would eventually find her calling as a public schoolteacher. Throughout her tenure as Oklahoma's first lady, she has been a devoted mother to three beautiful daughters, and has been an active member of numerous charities.

One of those prominent Oklahoma organizations is the influential Sarkeys Foundation. Formed in 1962 by S.J. Sarkeys, the Sarkeys Foundation has contributed over \$55 million to various Oklahoma cultural and economic initiatives. Last week, the Sarkeys Foundation asked Mrs. Henry to be its executive director. This is a significant moment in her life and also for the State of Oklahoma.

Congratulations to Oklahoma's first lady, Kim Henry. Your hard work and dedication to the State of Oklahoma doesn't go unnoticed.

"THE STATE OF THE UNION'S  
FINANCES, A CITIZEN'S GUIDE"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, Members of Congress in the House and the Senate get literature sent to them every single day. In fact, we probably get four or five books a week. I don't know how many little leaflets and pamphlets we're asked to read, but we don't have time to read them all. We ask our staff to read some of them, but we don't have a chance to really get into the minutiae of some of these brochures.

Our colleagues in both the House and the Senate got this little booklet called "The State of the Union's Finances, a Citizen's Guide." These are going to be given, I guess, to people all across this country. I hope every one of my colleagues and everybody in America gets a chance to read this little booklet. Now, this was sent to us by our colleagues FRANK WOLF, Republican of Virginia, and JIM COOPER, Democrat of Tennessee. I just want to read to you a little bit about the situation that America faces, because Americans right now, I don't think, are really aware of the fiscal problems we're facing.

As of the fall of 2008, we had \$12.2 trillion in explicit liabilities. That's publicly held debt, military and civilian pensions, retiree health benefits, and others things related to that. We had \$1.3 trillion in debt for Federal insurance, loan guaranties, leases, and so forth, and we had a \$42.9 trillion debt from Medicare hospital insurance, Medicare outpatient services, Medicare prescription drugs, and Social Security. That's a total of \$56.4 trillion in debt that we have right now, today. That amounts to \$184,000 of debt for every man, woman, and child in this country; it amounts to \$435,000 of debt for a full-time worker; for each household, it amounts to \$483,000 in debt. That's the national debt today.

George Washington said we should avoid ungenerously throwing upon posterity, our kids, the burden we, ourselves, ought to bear. In 1796, they had a deficit, and George Washington said that we can't allow this to happen because we don't want to leave a burden to our kids and to our grandkids by spending too much money.

I'm telling you right now, colleagues and anybody else who is paying attention, what we're going to leave our kids and our grandkids is something that they will curse us for because they're going to have to pay extremely high taxes, and the inflationary problems that they're going to face are going to be insurmountable.

I can't believe that we're doing this right now. We're talking about a national health care program that's going to add additional trillions of dollars. We're talking about bailouts to the financial institutions and to the auto industry. We're talking about a cap-and-trade program that's going to increase the cost of every family in America between \$3,000 and \$4,000 to turn on their lights or to buy gasoline at a service station or anything else that produces energy. We're adding about \$2 trillion a year to this debt, and it's unsustainable. It is going to affect every man, woman, and child who is living in America today, but what it's going to do to future generations is unbelievable.

We can destroy this Republic if we don't get control of spending. This is a political hyperbole. I'm telling you right now that we can destroy this form of government and this civilization we have, just like Rome did, if we don't get control of spending. It is out of control. It is out of control. We're \$56 trillion in debt today, and we're adding \$2 trillion a year, plus all of these additional programs we're coming up with. In the next 5 years, they say we're going to spend an additional \$5 trillion. We don't have it, so we're putting this burden on our kids and on our grandkids.

It's wrong. We have to do something about it. We have to do it now. We have to start getting our spending in order. My Republican and Democrat colleagues understand that. Mr. WOLF is a Republican who sent this out, and Mr. COOPER is a Democrat. They understand it. We all ought to understand it.

#### ENERGY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is an honor to be here today to talk in this House about energy. This is a moment in time when, I think, most Americans understand this great opportunity we have to really turn things around for our future in this country. It's about three principal elements that aren't just tied to the high cost of gasoline. It's about national security; it's about a better environment; and probably, as one of the most important things for this moment, it's about jobs. It's about a new economy.

We'll just talk about national security. I think all of us understand very clearly, every American, no matter where one is from, the fact that importing oil is the basis for a lot of the dependency that we have. Sixty percent or so of the oil that we take in the United States comes from outside the United States. We depend, unfortunately, on many countries that are, at best, not our friends and that are, at worst, our mortal enemies, who fund terrorism and threats against the United States and against our allies around the world. The sooner that we

can take oil out of the centerpiece of our natural resource dependency, the better. That's not to say we don't have oil in the United States and that, yes, we're going to drill more and all that kind of thing. What I'm talking about is the fact that much of our oil comes from places around the world, from the Middle East, from Venezuela and from other places that are not stable places for us to depend on this.

Number 2 is our economy. We know that we have a great opportunity in terms of this next generation of jobs to be created relating to alternative energy and to the various kinds of alternative energies that are out there right now that are being developed by our scientists, by our engineers, and by our businesspeople.

There is one thing that, I think, is just incredible and that I'll just give by way of an example because we know about solar and wind and a lot of other things. I'm from Florida, and I was speaking to one of our utility companies the other day, and they're talking about building the largest solar plant in the world in Florida. Over the years, we've heard, Oh, well, there isn't enough sun or maybe other things. Well, now there is a general recognition that anywhere in the United States there are great opportunities for solar. The technology is moving along, and we need to continue to incent that continued higher level of development of battery storage for solar and things like that.

One of the things he said to me is, in building this plant, they have to import the mirrors—these are the pieces of equipment to hold the solar and to capture the power—from Germany. Hundreds of millions of dollars of this product have to come in from Germany because we don't produce it here in the United States.

Why? Why don't we produce it? Why isn't that a job opportunity that is based right here?

I think that one of the things that's going on right now in the investment recovery act that we've put together and other things that, I think, all of us share, Democrats and Republicans and as Americans, is the idea that, if we're going to talk about energy, we have to incentivize business and industry and the engineers in our universities to develop the science, to develop the entrepreneurship, to give the tax incentives for investment for that type of energy in the United States, and to build the equipment here in the United States.

There is no reason. It costs a lot of money to ship fragile mirrors over from Germany. We can build it here. We can build it better. We can probably export it and can compete with the rest of the world.

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I think that's a pretty exciting opportunity, and there are so many other areas. In my district off the coast of Florida, most of you have heard of the gulf stream. That's that perpetual cur-

rent, 24/7, 365 days a year, that runs up and down up to north along the east coast. Well, right now, one of our local universities, Florida Atlantic University, is developing technology where they can put turbines in the Atlantic Ocean and capture that energy.

I don't know if this is going to work long-term, but that's the kind of American ingenuity that we're looking for, and we as a government and private sector, our scientists, our entrepreneurs, we need to work together to capture that and build on that.

And of course, there's the environment. We all understand that, and there is something going on in the world on climate. People can have different opinions. I think most scientists agree there's something going on, and whatever we can do in the United States and around the world to provide leadership to reduce the impact of CO<sub>2</sub> and other things, it's good for all of us.

I live in a coastal area, 75 miles on the Atlantic Ocean, some of the most beautiful areas in the world. We obviously are very sensitive to the hurricane activity, to the rise of the Atlantic Ocean, things like that, but I think we all understand there's an environmental issue at the same time.

So what are we doing here in Washington? We're working very collectively, and there are a lot of business and industry actively supporting some of the various ideas that are coming forward to work on this in a very productive way to make sure that the United States is leading the world in these areas of alternative energy.

And we're debating a bill right now and I know our colleagues are asking for comments from back home. We obviously want to do it in a way that allows for appropriate levels of transition for our industries who are dependent on old fuel sources to move to new fuel sources. We need to work together to make sure that the system eases in a way that is economically competitive. That's what we need to do. At the same time, we ought to be encouraging as much as we can getting these products into play.

So I'm very excited about the fact that we can build a new energy future, and I look forward to working with all of our Members to do that.

#### WE NEED A NATIONAL ENERGY THAT DOESN'T PICK WINNERS AND LOSERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I'm here today to talk about the same issue that my colleague from Florida just talked about, and that's energy. He alluded to the energy bill that's been moving through Congress over the last several months, but he neglected to say that in that bill are some real costs for real people. And I think these are the important issues in front of our Nation today.