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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker.

PRAYER

Rev. Elizabeth Hanley, Abiding Savior Lutheran Church, Cameron, Texas, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray. God of Grace, we give You thanks for this new day. You bless the whole human family with Your sustaining love.

Open the hearts of the ones who gather here as they make decisions for our Nation. Stir in them wisdom, understanding, and compassion in discernment. Bind them together in the common pursuit of justice and peace for Your people. Give them courage to be a voice for those who have no voice; that their work might bring relief to the burden and hope to those in need.

Renew the hearts of Your people, O God, and move us to trust in You. Bless, O Lord, all those who offer their lives in service to others, and grant us grace to live in Your never failing love. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SIREs) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SIREs led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 509. An act to authorize a major medical facility project at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Walla Walla, Washington, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 111-21, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader of the Senate and the Speaker of the House, announces the joint appointment of Phil Angelides of California to serve as Chairman of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 111-21, the Chair, on behalf of the Majority Leader, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission:

The Senator from Florida, Mr. GRAHAM.

Heather Murren of Nevada.

Byron Georgiou of Nevada.

The message also announced that pursuant to Public Law 111-12, the Chair, on behalf of the Republican Leader, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission:

Keith Hennessey of Virginia.

Douglas Holtz-Eakin of Virginia.

WELCOMING REVEREND

ELIZABETH HANLEY

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, above your chair are inscribed the words "In God We Trust." There is nothing more important that we in Congress do each day than seek His wisdom, guidance, and blessing upon our deliberations.

I am both grateful and proud that today my friend, Pastor Elizabeth Hanley, sought those gifts on our behalf.

Pastor Hanley, known to her flock as Pastor Liz, has led the Abiding Savior Lutheran Church in Cameron, Texas, since 2002. She's a lifelong Lutheran, a fifth generation Texan, and like my wife, she's a Baylor Bear.

I have had the opportunity to worship at Abiding Savior on a number of occasions. I know for a fact that through the love of her savior, Jesus Christ, Pastor Liz nurtures the youth of her congregation. She gives hope to the downhearted, she cares for the elderly, and she inspires all through her words of grace through faith.

Hope and unity are in abundance at Abiding Savior. And its parishioners will tell you Pastor Liz is truly deserving of the words, "Well done, good and faithful servant."

I thank Pastor Liz for being here today and leading our invocation.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

The SPEAKER. The Chair will entertain up to 10 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

PARITY IN MENTAL HEALTH COVERAGE

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

Mr. KENNEDY. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank you, Speaker PELOSI, for bringing to the floor of this House a piece of sweeping health care legislation, the likes of which we haven't seen in over 60 years since the Congress passed the Medicare legislation.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you because it's about time the American people had an opportunity to have

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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health care for all, irrespective of pre-existing conditions.

Madam Speaker, I want to thank you on behalf of the millions of Americans who suffer from mental illness because health insurance companies do not acknowledge that the brain is part of the body, that there is such a thing as alcoholism and addiction in this country.

Madam Speaker, thanks to your leadership, we passed the Paul Wellstone-Pete Domenici Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act last session, and thanks to your leadership with this legislation, there is no discrimination against those with mental illness. And in each and every one of the health care plans, there is absolute parity in health care coverage for those with mental illness.

Thank you, Madam Speaker, for this historic legislation.

JUSTICE GINSBURG

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, last week's New York Times Magazine featured an interview with Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Some of her comments were absolutely astonishing coming from a sitting Supreme Court Justice, but the most disturbing comment came in reference to abortion.

In reference to *Roe v. Wade*, the infamous Supreme Court case, she said this: "Frankly, I had thought at the time *Roe* was decided, there was concern about population growth, and particularly growth in populations that we don't want to have too many of."

I cannot imagine any acceptable context where a serious person could refer to "populations that we don't want too many of." This eugenic way of thinking debases the value of all human life. All people are created equal and deserve the most fundamental right to life no matter what race, religion, or socioeconomic background.

I am shocked that a member of the Supreme Court believes that a compelling reason for the legality of abortion is because our society wants to reduce the growth of specific populations. Justice Ginsburg's comments are an assault and insult to the values of the American people.

ENACT HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Mr. Speaker, last November the American voters demanded change, and one of the many changes that they demanded was health care reform.

Now Democrats are responding with comprehensive health care reform, and we are hoping that our Republican friends will join us as we overhaul the broken health care delivery system. Health care reform will control spi-

raling costs. Without reform, the cost of health care for the average family of four is projected to rise \$1,800 each year, and insurance companies will continue to control health care decisions.

Under our legislation, families with health insurance will see lower costs; rate increases for preexisting conditions and gender or occupation would be eliminated; out-of-pocket expenses would be capped; children will be guaranteed affordable dental, hearing, and vision care; preexisting condition denials and insurance companies' lifetime payments limits would be eliminated.

We must answer the call of the American people by enacting health care reform. Let's do it for the American people, and let's do it for the American economy.

WHERE HAVE ALL THE DOCTORS GONE?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, half of the primary care physicians say they would like to leave the practice of medicine in 3 years. There is just too much cost and time involved from red tape by insurance companies and the government agencies. And that's before government bureaucrats nationalize the whole system. Also, their costs for malpractice insurance has skyrocketed.

The American Medical Association said more doctors are leaving the profession than being replaced by new doctors. Doctors are just hanging up their stethoscopes and choosing a different line of work. It's just not worth it.

It costs about \$200,000 to get through medical school. The government keeps bailing out its special interest buddies, but not one cent goes to help pay off these college loans. And the administration wants doctors to shoulder even more of the costs of practicing medicine. It's no wonder they're choosing other professions and moving off to Jackson Hole, Wyoming.

To make matters worse, many doctors are no longer accepting Medicare or Medicaid patients because government reimbursement doesn't even cover the cost of the treatment. Now, isn't that lovely? No doctors and more patients.

Mr. Speaker, when we run out of doctors, what will we do? Turn our health care system over to government snake oil salesmen?

And that's just the way it is.

GROUNDBREAKING HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because we're on the verge of groundbreaking health

care reform legislation that will benefit generations to come and signal to the world and all of America that we are no longer a Nation that tolerates 46 million uninsured and many millions of workers, people who work every day, uninsured and facing huge out-of-pocket costs.

Now, today, I want to emphasize the importance of including a robust public health insurance option, with an established Medicare provider network, in the final health care reform bill. An established network will allow the public plan to give Americans a real choice among insurance plans and doctors from the start, from the beginning. A public provider network will place the public plan on a level playing field with private plans establishing real competition, real reform, and lowering costs for Americans.

Look, we have one chance to do health care reform, and it's today. And we have to ensure that we establish the strongest infrastructure to give success for the American people and to give them coverage and care and lower costs.

Further, the Congressional Budget Office says that a robust plan will save \$91 billion for our country. We know the system is broken, and now we have a chance for a truly American solution to health care reform.

CONGRESS' NEVER-ENDING SPENDING SPREE

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

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss my strong concerns over this never-ending spending by this Congress. In tough economic times when folks across Alabama and our Nation are tightening their belts, Congress is doing the exact opposite.

Just this week, House Democrats unveiled their new health reform plan which rings up a mind-boggling \$1 trillion in spending over 10 years. While I agree that health insurance reform is important and Congress should pay close attention to affordable, accessible health care, spending another trillion dollars of taxpayer dollars on a possible government takeover is not the answer.

Folks in my home State of Alabama tell me Congress is spending like drunken sailors, and I agree. It's time for Congress to sober up and stop borrowing and spending money we don't have.

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AMERICA NEEDS HEALTH CARE REFORM TODAY

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, thank you for your leadership.