

coverage is meaningful and really leads to access to a doctor for every American.

Republicans have ideas on how to do this. It incorporates three basic principles: Information for you to make decisions for your family or for your small business, to make cost comparisons, to create transparency, information among physicians so that we don't duplicate tests and run up the costs. These are all important things. Information is very important throughout the system and we believe that we can incorporate this in a very cost-effective way.

Secondly, choice. Americans want choices. They like to shop. Let's give Americans a wide range of choices to meet their family needs or their small business needs in health care. If we do that, that will create competition and that will start to drive the costs down of health insurance premiums which we're all struggling with. It will make it more affordable and we'll get more people on it. We can address the uninsured by targeting our response as one of the previous speakers said.

Finally, we need to put families back in control of their health care destiny. There should be nothing between the doctor and the patient in this. That's the essence of good, high quality health care, and that's the only way we're going to control the cost ultimately, by fostering and strengthening that doctor-patient relationship and making it something that every American has. That's how we'll fix health care. Republicans have those ideas and many more and we'll be glad to share them as this debate goes further with the American public.

INTRODUCING THE ADULT EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH ACT

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you as a member of the Education and Labor Committee. It is a pleasure to stand before you today to speak about the Adult Education and Economic Growth Act of 2009, known as H.R. 3238, legislation that my friend and colleague Representative PATRICK KENNEDY of Rhode Island and I introduced on Thursday, July 16, 2009.

As we all know, our Nation is facing one of the most difficult economic times in history. Technology and globalization, coupled with the economic recession, are causing low-wage and low-skilled workers to become particularly vulnerable. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, unemployment among individuals with less than a high school diploma has risen from 7½ percent in December of 2007 to almost 15 percent in April 2009. The unemployment rate for high school graduates with no college degree has increased from 4.6 percent to 9.3 percent. Currently, the U.S. ranks 11th among

OECD countries in the percent of young adults with a high school diploma. We should be especially concerned that we are the only country in which younger adults are less educated than the previous generation. More than 40 million adults across our country have basic skills needs or limited proficiency in English that keep them from participating fully in work, in family and community activities.

In 2007, more than 25 million adults ages 18 to 64 had no high school credential. In 2006, 18,400,000 adults spoke English less than "very well" according to the U.S. Census Bureau. In my congressional district alone, there are 154,000 adults without a high school diploma. In addition, another 444,000 adults speak a language other than English or do not speak English "very well." In Texas, we have 3.8 million adults who do not have a high school diploma. This is unacceptable. We must do much more to educate our adult learners and assist them in acquiring the 21st century skills they need to succeed in the workplace.

In my conversations with business leaders in my congressional district and across the country, they have shared their desire for a highly educated and trained workforce. Employers need highly skilled workers to compete globally, particularly in high-growth industries and occupations such as health care.

Despite these alarming statistics and realities, we have not made adequate investments in our adult education delivery system. Our adult education and workforce training delivery systems are in great need of reform. In many States, thousands of adult learners are experiencing long waiting lists for adult literacy services to increase their basic literacy skills or improve their English skills. More than 77 percent of community-based literacy programs currently report waiting lists. Current funding reaches only 2.8 million of these adults each year and thousands more are on those waiting lists that I mentioned for adult literacy services.

A report issued this month by the President's Council on Economic Advisers, *Preparing the Workers of Today for the Jobs of Tomorrow*, underscores that our modern economy requires workers with higher skills and the need to employ workers with education and training beyond the high school level.

In closing, I want to say that the report identifies key limitations to our education and training system, including low completion rates, limited accountability, poor coordination among different programs and excessive bureaucratic restrictions on the use of training funds.

If we are to remain competitive in the global economy, we must invest in high quality adult education and workforce training programs that lead to family-sustaining jobs in careers with the promise of advancement and post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, I invite Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle to

sign on as cosponsors to this legislation.

The "Adult Education and Economic Growth Act," H.R. 3238, strengthens our adult education and workforce training systems, increases economic growth in local communities and supports President Obama's call to once again lead the world college degrees by 2020.

This legislation provides adult learners with greater access to obtain basic literacy or workplace skills, including English as a Second Language. This bill assists adults in gaining admission to job training programs and post-secondary education.

This legislation provides adequate resources for innovative educational and workforce programs, so that states can bridge the gap between adult education and occupational skills training. Our adult learners will be better served by having access to integrated approaches to education and workforce training.

This legislation expands access by ensuring that federal funding formulas accurately take into account the adult education and workforce skills needs of individual states, including the number of adults who are limited English proficient.

This legislation increases access to adult education, literacy, and workplace skills through the use of technology.

This legislation increases access to correctional educational programs and provides added accountability in the system.

This legislation invests in lower skilled workers by providing employers with a tax credit.

We must reform our adult education and workforce delivery systems if we are to provide adults with the educational opportunities and 21st century skills needed to acquire family-sustaining wages and remain globally competitive.

JOB CREATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. LEWIS) for 2½ minutes.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I rise today to express the deepest concern for the fact that unemployment rates have risen to 13.7 percent in the Inland Empire. There are those who believe that the solution to almost every problem facing America involves more government spending here in Washington. I am committed to the fact that just the opposite is the case. We must do everything that we possibly can to create a taxing system that encourages private sector growth.

The sooner we get back to the point of creating job opportunities in the private sector and recognizing that growth of government for the sake of government is not the answer, the sooner we will solve this problem. The jobs for San Bernardino and Riverside County lie in the private sector. So let's create an environment of opportunity and hope for those who are looking for jobs for the future.

COMBATING ADULT ILLITERACY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. KENNEDY) for 3 minutes.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my good friend and colleague, Chairman RUBÉN HINOJOSA, for his work on this issue of adult illiteracy which he just spoke about.

Just like RUBÉN HINOJOSA and his district in Texas, in my State of Rhode Island where unemployment rates continue to rise, 23 percent of the adult population in my district alone lacks a high school diploma. Last June when the National Commission on Adult Literacy released its report, it served as a wake-up call for all those concerned with the quality of our adult workforce. The commission found that 80 to 90 million adults in this country have deficiencies in basic education and that our investments in adult education and training were reaching less than 3 percent of those who need it. That's why we need to ensure that our adult education and workforce training programs have the tools and resources they need to prepare our workers for the next generation of jobs in energy, in health care and in technology. We need to improve the way we deliver adult education and workforce training programs and the way we provide career paths to higher growth fields through greater involvement with business leaders, State agencies and adult education community and workforce leaders. We need to better leverage employers to provide educational programs to their employees. We need to enhance the use of technology to improve quality learning access and delivery of adult education, literacy and workplace skills services.

The Adult Education and Economic Growth Act which RUBÉN HINOJOSA and I are introducing will do all of these things in order to provide those employed and unemployed with the ability to attain the skills they need to compete in an ever-changing workplace.

I urge my colleagues to support this important legislation.

THE ADULT EDUCATION AND ECONOMIC GROWTH (AEEG) ACT OF 2009

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

1. Will refocus the adult education and workforce skills system to make postsecondary and job training readiness a primary goal.

85 percent of GED graduates have to take at least one remedial course before they can enroll in postsecondary education. We need to do a better job preparing them for success in school and in work, rather than getting them to an arbitrary finish line that actually leaves them short of where they need to be.

2. Will give incumbent workers greater access to the workforce skills training and adult education systems.

It is too hard for people already on the job to receive workforce skills training and adult education. It's not enough to get someone into a job, we need to get them into a career. That means continued training, even after a worker is on the job.

Only 3 to 4 percent of the workers with the most limited literacy proficiencies receive basic skills training from their employers. Our bill will create greater incentives for employer involvement in the education of their employees.

3. Will ensure that federal funding formulas accurately take into account the adult education and workforce skills needs of individual states.

Federal funding formulas are outdated, and especially penalize states with a high proportion of non-native English speakers. Our legislation will ensure a fairer distribution of federal funds.

4. Will increase the use of technology in workforce skills training and adult education.

Technology has greatly increased our ability to reach workers at times and places convenient to them. By 2006, 73 percent of American adults were online, including those at the lowest literacy levels. We cannot reach all of those needing services without deploying technology to provide services outside the classroom walls.

5. Will increase access to correction education programs and provide for added accountability in the system.

Offenders with education and training are statistically less likely to commit crimes after release. There is a direct correlation between education level and recidivism: the higher the education level, the lower the recidivism rate. A decrease in recidivism reduces costs to taxpayers and keeps our communities safer.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 33 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

God of mercy and goodness, may this midday moment of prayer and dedication be received as a welcome gift by all, refreshing Your people and clarifying our purpose in serving this Nation.

Bless the work that Congress has begun this day. Rectify any defects and strengthen its integrity. Let us finish the tasks You set before us in a way that pleases You and gives glory to this Nation and Your Holy Name, both now and forever.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

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

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr.

PAULSEN) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PAULSEN 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 and a concurrent resolution of the following titles in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 951. An act to authorize the President, in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the historic and first lunar landing by humans in 1969, to award gold medals on behalf of the United States Congress to Neil A. Armstrong, the first human to walk on the moon; Edwin E. "Buzz" Aldrin, Jr., the pilot of the lunar module and second person to walk on the moon; Michael Collins, the pilot of their Apollo 11 mission's command module; and, the first American to orbit the Earth, John Herschel Glenn, Jr.

S. Con. Res. 11. Concurrent resolution condemning all forms of anti-Semitism and reaffirming the support of Congress for the mandate of the special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

IN SUPPORT OF STATUTORY PAYGO

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

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. I rise today in strong support of statutory pay-as-you-go legislation, which will be taken up this week by the House. This bill demonstrates our commitment to fiscal responsibility and will restore the policy that led us from deficit spending to debt to surpluses.

We have to reduce our deficit spending. If we don't, we will not be able to invest in vitally important priorities like health care, education, and clean energy.

PAYGO is very simple: All the policies that cut taxes or reduce revenues must be paid for or offset over 5 and 10 years. All policies that expand entitlement spending must be paid for over 5 and 10 years. Discretionary spending is not subject to PAYGO, and exceptions could be made for emergencies.

This makes common sense and families live by it every day. If you spend more in one area of the family budget, you have got to cut back in other areas. It's about time that our government start living by the same rule.

DON'T TAX EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYMENT

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, before I came to Congress, I ran a small business. And in that small business I offered a health insurance benefit to my