

cannot afford health insurance would be dramatically counterproductive.”

And one final one: “Taxation of health benefits will lead to a reduction in benefits offered by employers and will lead to higher taxes for many individuals and businesses.”

Local chambers of commerce and small businesses understand better than most the problems with government-run health care. The Rosenberg-Richmond Chamber of Commerce gets it. I wish my colleagues on the other side of the aisle did.

I include in the RECORD a copy of the resolution.

RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION OF PROPOSED
HEALTH CARE REFORM

Whereas, The United States has the world's best health care system, but it is being priced out of reach for more and more American citizens and companies. Companies struggle to find health care plans that provide adequate coverage and are still affordable, and worry about what will come next year; and

Whereas, the Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce, under various names, has been working for and with local businesses to create a positive economic environment in Fort Bend County, Texas for over eighty years and is currently the voice of 800 businesses; and

Whereas, the Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce recognizes that most health care coverage is provided by employers; to make it easier for employers and their employees to afford the health care coverage they need, we SUPPORT legislative action to:

Retain viable employer-sponsored health care. Employers provide voluntary health insurance to over 177 million. ERISA allows many of them the flexibility to provide uniform benefits and is the backbone of employer-provided coverage and must be preserved.

Reform the delivery system including payment and reimbursement reform to reduce costs while increasing quality and outcomes including: implementation of comprehensive strategies to boost health information technology, wellness, prevention, disease management and care coordination.

Create a more vibrant private health insurance market for individuals and small businesses.

Control soaring health care costs due to the explosive growth in medical liability awards and insurance costs through specialized health courts.

Encourage more Americans to purchase health insurance by enacting refundable tax credits for that purpose.

Encourage more Americans to save for medical expenses tax-free by expanding Health Savings Accounts and allowing those with Flexible Spending Accounts to roll over unused balances to pay for future medical expenses.

Whereas, the Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce OPPOSES legislative action that will:

Create a Government-run (public) plan: A government-run plan would be an unfair competitor, with the government acting as both a team owner and the referee. Government programs shift costs to the private sector. The Lewin Group estimates 130 million people would move from private sector to public insurance. This could lead to a government-controlled single-payer system.

Create Employer Mandates: Punishing employers who cannot afford to provide health insurance coverage, including requirements

to pay or play, is not the answer. Employer mandates, by their nature limit flexibility and innovation—the cornerstones of American health care.

Create Minimum Required Coverage Level: Proposing a huge Federal Employee Health Benefits Program (FEHBP)—like minimum coverage package will bankrupt employers and workers. High-end coverage like this will not appeal to the young. The minimum level of coverage should be reflective of a high-deductible health plan with coverage of preventative services.

Impose additional tax burdens individuals or businesses: The implementation of new taxes and fees for businesses and/or individuals that cannot afford health insurance would be dramatically counterproductive. Further, the taxation of health benefits will lead to a reduction in benefits offered by employers and will lead to higher taxes for many individuals and businesses: Now therefore be it *Resolved*, that the Board of Directors of the Rosenberg-Richmond Area Chamber of Commerce OPPOSES the passage of legislation that is currently proposed by the President of the United States and Congress which will create a public insurance plan and employer mandates and major tax increases including imposing an additional “surtax” on high income earners.

Adopted this 21st day of July, 2009.

LYNNE HUMPHRIES,
*Chairman of the
Board*
GAIL PARKER,
President/CEO.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT HELPING RESIDENTS OF NEVADA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, Nevada has been a boom State for as long as I can remember. My family has been there for 46 years, and with every passing year, more and more people moved in and more and more people flourished in a very strong economy. But when the bust came, it came with a vengeance, and I am afraid that the State of Nevada, like many other States in this country and many other countries in the world, is suffering and is in the midst of an economic crisis.

We have the highest mortgage foreclosure rate in the country in my congressional district and I have one of the highest unemployment rates. And what makes this so startling is perhaps a year ago there was virtually no un-

employment in my district and in the State of Nevada.

There has been a lot of criticism about the stimulus package. It is called the Recovery Act, more commonly known as the stimulus package. People say it is not big enough. People say it is not fast enough and that it is not working. But I have to tell you, the people of Nevada have received extraordinary benefits from this stimulus package.

There was a reason that I voted for it. It provided education funding, unemployment benefits, health care benefits, tax breaks, Social Security money for my seniors, and my disabled veterans received substantial funds as well.

According to the Nevada State Treasurer, \$426 million in stimulus funds have already been paid out to people in Nevada. That doesn't include the tax cuts, the Social Security payments or the payments to our disabled veterans. Money is flowing into Nevada and is keeping many families afloat during this economic crisis, and it is an economic crisis the likes of which none of us have ever seen and none of us ever thought would happen.

But let me tell you in real terms how this stimulus package is benefiting the folks back home.

Tax cuts: The Making Work Pay tax credit. I know you recall, Madam Speaker, there was \$400 for individuals, \$800 for families. Ninety-five percent of American families and individuals are already seeing a decrease in their withholding and their paychecks. One million families in Nevada are seeing more money in their monthly paycheck because of this stimulus package at a time when this money is so desperately needed.

118,000 Nevada families are going to benefit from the Child Tax Credit expansion.

American Opportunity Tax Credit. There is a new \$2,500 tax credit that is going to help 32,000 Nevadans go to college. I know what it is like when you don't have money to go to college and you have to take out loans and grants. This is going to help kids, like me, that went to school and depended on these loans and grants.

Alternative minimum tax. 31,000 people in my district would have been slammed by the alternative minimum tax if the stimulus package had not been passed.

There is tax relief for business as well. Whether you are a large casino or a small business in the State of Nevada, we provided relief for you: cancellation of indebtedness, bonus depreciation, small business expensing. For most of us, we don't understand what that is, but for small business people and businesses in general, this is their very lifeblood, and we have saved thousands of Nevada's small businesses from going under.

Unemployment insurance. With an unemployment rate of over 12.5 percent and going higher—we haven't bottomed

out yet—the very fact that we were able to provide unemployment benefits, extension of unemployment benefits and expansion, so that Nevada families that find themselves unemployed for the first time ever are going to be able to use this as a bridge to get from where they are now to where we need to be.

Health care. So many of my constituents, the very poorest of us, depend on Medicaid money. The State of Nevada had no Medicaid money. The Federal Government came in and helped the State of Nevada so that we can continue to provide health care for the poorest among us.

Education. We all talk about the importance of education and how it is the most important thing that we can provide children for their future and for the future of this country. Well, Nevada was broke. The State legislature couldn't figure out where we were going to get the money, and the Federal Government came to our rescue; \$400 million in fiscal stabilization funds.

What is that? That means that we are going to prevent teacher layoffs and other education cuts. We were restoring the money that was slashed by the Nevada Legislature, \$70 million in special education, \$70 million in disadvantaged student funding. These were so important for the people of Nevada, so important for our school-children.

And when things get tough and people are laid off, the first thing they are going to need is food stamps in order to feed their families.

I know that my time is almost up, but there are three things that are so important. A \$250 one-time payment to all Social Security beneficiaries. That is 100,000 people in Nevada that will benefit from that. Veterans, a \$250 one-time payment to disabled veterans. 18,000 veterans in Nevada will benefit from that. And infrastructure funding as well. \$200 million will be spent in Nevada on infrastructure. \$33 million are for flood control projects, and the rest is going to go to the Regional Transportation Commission to continue to improve our infrastructure, all very important.

The people of the State of Nevada need to know this, and I appreciate the fact that this body passed that legislation.

AFGHANISTAN AND THE LESSONS OF VIETNAM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, last week on the House floor I mentioned a column that appeared July 19th, 2009, in the Raleigh News and Observer entitled, "From Vietnam 1959 to Afghanistan 2009." The column was written by Joseph Galloway, a military journalist and coauthor of a book on Vietnam

called "We Were Soldiers Once . . . and Young."

In his column, Galloway uses the history lessons of Vietnam as a cautionary tale to President Obama as he oversees America's military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Galloway describes a time during the war in Vietnam in 1965 when Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara presented Lyndon Baines Johnson, President, with a top secret memo. It indicated that the United States had reached a decision point, with two available options. The first option was to arrange diplomatic cover and pull out of South Vietnam. The second option was to increase the number of American troops by 200,000, bringing the total to more than 500,000 Americans on the ground.

Regarding this second option, McNamara stated, "All we can possibly achieve is a military stalemate at a much higher level of violence." A couple of weeks later, Johnson assembled what he called the "wise men" for a brainstorming session on Vietnam; yet those who participated said there was no real decision of McNamara's option one.

From that time, when Johnson chose to escalate and continue the war until its conclusion 10 years later, Americans suffered 56,000 more casualties.

Madam Speaker, President Obama's administration has reached a similar decision point concerning Afghanistan. With regard to the Obama administration's escalation of troops in Afghanistan, Galloway states, "Some smart veterans of both Iraq and Afghanistan, on the ground now or just back, say that at this rate we will inevitably lose the war in Afghanistan; that the situation on the ground now is far worse than Iraq was at its lowest point in 2006 and early 2007. They talk of a costly effort both in lives and national treasure that will stretch out past the Obama administration and maybe the two administrations after that."

In his column, Galloway advises: "Obama needs to call in the 'wise men and women' for a fish-or-cut-bait meeting. Let's hope that this time around, there's an absence of the arrogance and certainty of previous generations of advisers. Let's hope, too, that they will weigh very carefully all the costs of another decade or two of the war in Afghanistan."

Madam Speaker, after nearly 8 years of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan, the President needs to outline a clear strategy for victory. I have spoken to many in the Army and Marine Corps who say our Nation needs an end point to its war strategy.

While America's military personnel faithfully conduct their missions abroad, elected officials here in Washington should take seriously their responsibility to develop a viable long-term strategy for these operations.

Many of these servicemembers have gone to Iraq and Afghanistan more than once, and their desire to serve this Nation is greater than ever. But

the stress placed on our all-volunteer force and their families cannot continue forever.

While the United States continues to devote its blood and treasure in Afghanistan, the Afghan Government has yet to purge itself of many who funnel support for the Taliban.

Our men and women in uniform deserve to have the President work with his military commanders and the Congress to develop the best strategy for achieving our goals and wrapping up our military commitment in Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, as I do every night that I have the opportunity and privilege to speak on the floor of the House, my heart aches. I have signed over 8,000 letters to families who have lost loved ones in Afghanistan and Iraq because I regret that I voted to give the President the authority to go into Iraq.

Madam Speaker, because of that, I want to close this way. I ask God to please bless our men and women in uniform. I ask God to please bless the families of our men and women in uniform. I ask God in His loving arms to hold the families who have given a child dying for freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq.

And three times, Madam Speaker, because America needs the love of God, I close this way: God please, God please, God please continue to bless America.

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BORDER PROTECTORS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, America lost a great lawman last Thursday near Campo, California. United States Border Patrol Agent Robert Rosas was brutally murdered on July 23 by thugs illegally crossing into the United States. Agent Rosas was shot and killed at approximately 9:15 p.m. while following a group of people who had crossed the border illegally. Agent Rosas was by himself, like a lot of our agents nowadays. He radioed for backup. The group Agent Rosas was following split up before backup agents arrived to help him.

Agent Rosas was following one of the groups; but when fellow officers arrived, they found Agent Rosas outside his Border Patrol vehicle. He had been shot several times in the head and other places in the body. Agent Rosas had served with the Border Patrol for 3 years. He was only 30 years of age. He was married and had a 2-year-old son and an 11-month-old daughter. A suspect, Ernesto Parra-Valenzuela, is in Federal custody in Baja, California. He had a standard Border Patrol-issued 9 millimeter pistol tucked in his clothes when he was arrested. Four other Mexican nationals were also arrested. They were part of a violent smuggling ring, and one of the other men arrested is