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GOVERNMENT GONE WILD

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Congress is spending money we don't have on things we cannot afford. We spent billions on the so-called stimulus that hasn't worked. The government took over the car industry and gave money to the fat cats on Wall Street. Congress gave money, America's money, to the banking industry, and this House passed a national energy tax.

The government is out of control. Nearly 10 percent of the people are unemployed. With these hard economic times, now we are told we have to spend \$1 trillion on a health care bill that is still confusing to most Americans. Where are we supposed to get the money?

We cannot continue to spend money we don't have and borrow it from our "friends" like China. This spending will cause inflation, and eventually somebody is going to get a massive tax increase to pay for a government gone wild.

Some taxacrats wish to tax small businesses into oblivion, the backbone of our country. Even if this were the greatest health care bill in the world, we can't afford to tax more Americans to pay for it. The American people deserve a break from all the spending, borrowing and taxation.

And that's just the way it is.

□ 1245

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(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. Mr. Speaker, a new Gallup poll says that 39 percent of Americans want their Member of Congress to vote against a health care overhaul while 37 percent want their Representative to support it. An Associated Press poll shows 49 percent oppose a health care overhaul. The numbers show a deep division in the Nation, one that was evident in August townhall meetings where the American people had their say. These were people who took the time to read the House bill and decide against it because of cost, complication and controversy.

Yet there are elements in all the proposals before Congress on which people can agree, and it's time to go back to the drawing board and be inclusive. As a former health care provider, I'd very much like to be a part of the solutions that will help the situation without breaking the bank. Tort reform is a

must to reduce the cost of health care. Allowing insurers to compete across State lines will increase competition and thereby lower costs. Addressing workforce issues is crucial as baby boomer doctors, nurses and technicians retire.

Let's look at the approximately 13 million Americans out of 303 million who don't have an option for insurance and find a way to help the population that actually needs our help.

HONORING THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SEPTEMBER 11 TERRORIST ATTACKS

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

Mr. LANCE. Mr. Speaker, as we approach the eighth anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks on our Nation, we honor those innocent people who perished on that terrible day and extend our continued prayers and sympathy to their loved ones. We remember the tremendous heroism and self-sacrifice of so many in New York, the Pentagon, and on a plane over Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Closer to home in New Jersey, communities across the Garden State remember those who perished and pay tribute to the distinguished service of the brave police officers, firefighters and first responders who answered the call and, in some cases, never returned home.

Today I come to the floor of the House to pay my special respect to the 81 New Jersey families in the Seventh Congressional District who lost loved ones as a result of the tragic terrorist attacks. To these families I say, we will never forget the sacrifices you and others have paid and continue to pay. I hope all Americans will pause tomorrow and take a moment to reflect on the tragedy of 9/11, to remember the victims, the heroes, and all the loved ones they left behind, while paying tribute to the men and women who serve and defend us today against the dangers we still face.

May God continue to bless the United States of America.

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.

SEPTEMBER 11 OBSERVANCES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mrs. LOWEY. As we mark the eighth anniversary of the tragic terrorist attacks on our country, we are reminded of the adage that "time heals all wounds." At Ground Zero, bulldozers are laying the foundation for new tow-

ers, while millions carry on their daily routine. Many who lost spouses have remarried, finding comfort in new love. Infants have grown into children and children into adults, with thoughts that dwell on the future, rather than the past.

For this we should be grateful. No one should live in the perpetual shadow of grief. And yet the wounds are still raw. New Yorkers still perceive the skyline of Manhattan as maimed and incomplete. We are still gripped at certain moments by memories of loved ones that are unbearably painful. We are still at war, bearing the unfinished burden of rooting out the perpetrators and instigators of evil. And as a Nation, as a people, we understand that the innocence shattered on that awful morning 8 years ago can never be fully restored.

Our challenge then, as Americans, is to honor the loss and heed the lessons of 9/11, while also affirming at every opportunity the optimism and confidence that always defined this great Nation at its best. In this body, we do this by remaining strong and steadfast in our determination to confront terrorists and their sponsors, using the full spectrum of American power as an instrument of justice. We do this by, together with the firefighters, police officers, emergency workers and intelligence officers, committing to the hard work of securing our land against those who would do violence, ensuring that our transportation networks and energy facilities, our ports and our bridges are defended by more than feckless hope.

We do this by refusing to give up our liberties out of fear, knowing that a retreat from our founding values does more harm to America than any external enemy ever could. And we do this by pursuing the age-old American vision of a world lifted by freedom, knowledge and prosperity in which all men and women have the tools to build just and decent societies that live in peace with their neighbors.

It has been my duty and honor to serve and to serve those goals as a Member of the United States Congress. In tribute to all those who lost their lives 8 years ago, to all those who have lost their lives in Iraq, in Afghanistan in the time since, and to all those whose lives are still shaped every day by memory and loss, let us together commit to upholding these responsibilities until our work is done.

Thank you. May God bless America, and may God bless all people of goodwill.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, last night President Obama told us that his administration would tackle medical malpractice reform as a way to lower health care costs. Defensive medicine

practices do drive up the cost of health care. It's at least 10 percent of overall cost and as much as 40 percent of some procedures, and it should be aggressively tackled.

This is what we have been saying on the Republican side for years. But who is it? Who will take on this difficult task? And just how committed is President Obama in taking on medical malpractice reform and protecting medical providers from trial lawyers? A simple Google search shows that Secretary Sebelius was the executive director and the head lobbyist for the Kansas Trial Lawyers Association for 8 years. That's right, Secretary Sebelius, head of the Health and Human Services, was a deep political professional and has personal ties with trial lawyers and has been tapped by the President to go after these same trial lawyers and figure out just what kind of malpractice reform should be put in place.

I think this is a classical example of what we call a conflict of interest. The President has made several publicly embarrassing gaffes recently, and when it comes to vetting these people, I would hope that he takes more time in vetting Secretary Sebelius.

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 addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, the President said last night, and I mentioned it a few minutes ago, that if anybody in this body told an untruth about his proposals on health care he was going to call them out. Well, as I said before, that's a double-edged sword because I think the President made a number of misstatements last night that need to be corrected. And the American people need to know what they were. As a matter of fact, one of the things he needs to do is he needs to take on the Associated Press because they have a news article out today that says Obama uses iffy math on deficit pledge, and they point out that his arithmetic isn't quite accurate.

But let me go into some of the specifics. He said last night, "Nothing in this plan will require you or your employer to change the coverage or the doctor you have." Let me repeat this: nothing in our plan requires you to change what you have. The majority leader just a few minutes ago said we really need to keep the public option in, and that's what they would like to bring to the floor.

Well, let's say they do that. If you're an employer, and it costs more than 8 percent to take care of your employees and health insurance, you can dump

them on the government plan for 8 percent. So if you're spending 10 percent to pay for your employees' health insurance and you want to cut your costs, all you have to do is put them on the government plan and pay 8 percent.

And so there is an inducement for people to go on the government plan, especially if the employer's transferring them. And as a matter of fact, independent experts all agree that the legislation proposed would result in millions of Americans losing the coverage they have. The Congressional Budget Office, this body right here, this budget office, believes several million will lose their coverage. The Urban Institute says it will be up to 47 million, and the Lewin Group says it will be up to 114 million.

So I would say, Mr. President, that's not quite accurate. He also said, "Under my plan, individuals will be required to carry basic health insurance just as most States require you to carry auto insurance." That is going to be what they call a government mandate. And one of his senior Obama administration officials recently wrote that a mandate is, in many respects, analogous to a tax and, furthermore, has the potential to be a very regressive tax, penalizing uninsured people who genuinely cannot afford to buy coverage.

Thus, this policy stance breaks the signal promise of the Obama campaign when he said, I can make a firm pledge, under my plan no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase, not your income tax, not your payroll tax, not your capital gains tax, not any of your taxes.

Not accurate. The President said, "There are those who claim that our reform effort will insure illegal aliens or immigrants. This too is false. The reforms I'm proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally." Look at H.R. 3200, their bill. It says, nothing in any of the Democrat bills would require individuals to verify their citizenship or identity prior to receiving taxpayer subsidized benefits, making the President's promise one that the legislation itself does not keep. So that wasn't accurate, Mr. President.

And here's another quote and one more misunderstanding I want to clear up: "Under our plan, no Federal dollars will be used to fund abortions and Federal conscience laws remain in place." Fact: The National Right to Life Committee, among another independent pro-life groups, have confirmed that the legislation will result in Federal funds being used to pay for abortions, both through the government-run health plan and through Federal subsidies provided through the exchange, despite various accounting gimmicks created in an Energy and Commerce Committee "compromise plan." Much of the rest would be paid for with revenues from the very same drug and insurance companies that stand to benefit from tens of millions of new customers.

The President said reducing the waste and inefficiency in Medicare and Medicaid will pay for most of this plan. Much of the rest would be paid for with revenues from the very same drug and insurance companies that stand to benefit from tens of millions of new customers. Fact: the Congressional Budget Office, our body, has previously found that the cuts to Medicare Advantage plans included in the Democrat legislation would result in millions of seniors, millions of seniors, losing their current plan, a direct contradiction of the President's assertion that nothing in this plan requires you to change what you have.

□ 1300

So that's not quite true. It's not true at all.

The President last night:

This reform will charge insurance companies a fee for their most expensive policies, which will encourage them to provide greater value for the money, an idea which has the support of Democrat and Republican experts, and according to these same experts, this modest change could help hold down the cost of health care for all of us in the long run.

Fact: While some Republicans support addressing the current employee exclusion for health insurance in the context of overall tax reform, the President's proposal would raise fees in order to finance new Federal spending—a tax increase of hundreds of billions of dollars and one that most of us on the Republican side would never support.

Fact: You can keep your current insurance. However if it costs your employer more than 8 percent for your health coverage he would consider paying 8 percent and put you on a government plan.

Quote: "Nothing in this plan will require you or your employer to change the coverage or the doctor you have. Let me repeat this: nothing in our plan requires you to change what you have."

Fact: Independent experts all agree that the legislation proposed would result in millions of Americans losing the coverage they have—the Congressional Budget Office believes several million, the Urban Institute up to 47 million, and the Lewin Group as many as 114 million.

Quote: "Under my plan, individuals will be required to carry basic health insurance—just as most states require you to carry auto insurance."

Fact: Senior Obama Administration official Sherry Glied has previously written that a mandate "is in many respects analogous to a tax"—and furthermore has the potential to be a "very regressive tax, penalizing uninsured people who genuinely cannot afford to buy coverage." Thus this policy stance breaks the signal promise of the Obama campaign: "I can make a firm pledge. Under my plan, no family making less than \$250,000 a year will see any form of tax increase. Not your income tax, not your payroll tax, not your capital gains taxes, not any of your taxes."

Quote: "There are also those who claim that our reform effort will insure illegal immigrants. This, too, is false—the reforms I'm proposing