

the floodgates for abuse. Suddenly, by simply threatening to filibuster, a single Senator could obstruct any bill that lacked 60 votes. Today, the filibuster is the last stand of special interests and is a platform for grandstanding by obstructionist Senators.

In 2009, the Party of No, the Senate Republicans, paralyzed the country, filibustering our political process—80 percent of major legislation filibustered.

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the Founders of our Nation intended for the Senate to be a moderating influence on the process of legislating. So they gave Senators 6-year terms of office. At the same time, they gave House Members 2-year terms of office so that they could be closest to the will of the people. The Senate was to be the deliberative body.

George Washington is said to have argued that the Senate would cool legislation as a saucer cools hot tea. In that same spirit, James Madison explained that the Senate would be a necessary fence against the fickleness and passion of American politics. Yet the Senate no longer cools the tea of legislation. It freezes it cold—solid. It is no longer a fence against fickle passions; it is an impenetrable wall which is obstructing progress.

The prerogative of a single Senator to single-handedly block any bill is an affront to democracy. It is clear that the minority party, utterly incapable of governing effectively while in power, has decided to obstruct those of us who are here to solve problems. The filibuster is their weapon of choice. This week, we are witnessing what must surely have been one of the most shameless exploitations of the filibuster in American history.

Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening after witnessing this shameless exploitation with sadness in my heart, with sadness at the absurd posturing of my friend, the retiring Senator from Kentucky, who has single-handedly blocked passage of highway jobs investment, unemployment insurance, and health coverage for Americans who have lost their jobs.

□ 1945

When this Senator and when the previous administration were running this country, they threw wild pitch after wild pitch—an unnecessary \$3 trillion war; runaway spending that turned a healthy surplus into a massive deficit; massive tax cuts for the rich that were not paid for; utter mismanagement of the economy; financial crisis and devastation to Main Street America—one wild pitch after another.

So the American people went to the bullpen. They put a pitcher with better stuff on the mound. He was a lefty, but he is throwing strikes straight down the middle with speed and accuracy.

But now the Senator is looking to get back into the game, and he has thrown a beanball straight down the

throats of the American people. This week, in the midst of a deep recession, thousands of jobs have been furloughed, millions of unemployed Americans have feared the loss of their lifelines, their unemployment benefits, and construction projects ground to a halt.

All because a single, lame-duck Senator—ostracized even within his own party—wants some attention.

Well tonight I have an urgent message for the American people.

Call him. Call Senator BUNNING. Tell him Americans are suffering. Tell him Americans have no patience for his shameless games. Tell him America will not be held hostage. Tell him to be part of the solution or to get out of the way.

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

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

INDIANA HELPS ACHIEVE STATEHOOD FOR TEXAS BY ONE VOTE

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, one of the Members that I admire the most is my good friend from Texas, Mr. POE. He is a real patriotic guy, and tonight he made a great speech on the independence of Texas. One of the things I would like to talk about real briefly is how Indiana had a hand in Texas becoming a free State, a free country.

Back when Texas was debating whether or not they should become an independent country and ultimately a State of the Union, we had a real contested election in Scott County, Indiana. The guy that was running for State representative of Scott County went around door-to-door, and he knocked on this one door and a man was in bed, he was very ill and about to die.

When he asked for this man's vote, the man said, "How do you feel about Texas being admitted to the Union?" The fellow running for State representative said, "I am for Texas being admitted to the Union." And the guy said, "I am going to vote for you."

On election day, the man was on his deathbed, and he was literally carried to the polls and he voted for the gentleman who said he was going to vote for admission of Texas to the Union, and he was elected by one vote.

He went to the State legislature and there was a great debate over who was going to be the State senator from Indiana. In those days, the State legislature decided who was going to be the Senator. The debate raged on for a long time, and it was decided that the man who was running for senator who want-

ed to admit Texas to the Union was elected by the State legislature by one vote.

He went to the United States Senate and they debated the issue of Texas being admitted to the Union for a long time, and, as my colleague just said, Texas was admitted to the Union by one vote.

So when people tell you one vote doesn't matter, I hope they will remember that Texas was admitted to the Union by one vote, as Mr. POE just talked about a few minutes ago, and the man from Indiana who was the United States senator who was for Texas being admitted to the Union, he was elected to the U.S. Senate by the Indiana legislature by one vote, and the man who was a State representative who cast the vote that put him in the United States Senate was elected in Scott County, Indiana, by one vote.

Although I wouldn't want to take credit for Texas being a part of the Union because of Indiana, I did want to say to my good colleague from Texas tonight that Indiana did have a role in electing Texas to the United States of America. So I am very happy that tonight we celebrate the admission of Texas into the Union. And I must say to my colleague, don't ever forget that the United States of America got the great State of Texas because Indiana put a Senator there who voted for Texas by one vote.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

COMMEMORATING LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

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

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, as a proud graduate of Louisiana State University and LSU Medical School, I am honored to stand before the House today to thank my colleagues for commemorating LSU's 150th anniversary.

Since its first session in 1860, LSU has become the flagship university for our State, with over 650 endowed chairs and professorships held by distinguished faculty in disciplines that support the culture, government, and economy of Louisiana.

With more than 300 student organizations on campus, LSU plays a major

role in our community. The Ag Center, for example, has conducted research which has resulted in greater yields and incomes for farmers across the world.

It operates the Safety Net Hospital System for the State of Louisiana, caring for the uninsured and under-insured in our State and sometimes surrounding States.

After Hurricane Katrina, LSU operated the Nation's largest field hospital and enrolled student evacuees from other universities who couldn't return to devastated areas in our State.

In addition to its excellent academic programs, LSU is renowned for its athletic achievements.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I would like the RECORD to reflect the proper spelling of our motto, which reflects not only our affection for LSU, but our French culture. When I say *Geaux Tigers*, it is *G-E-A-U-X Tigers*.

With that Mr. Speaker, *Geaux Tigers*, and I yield back.

A SECOND OPINION ON HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GINGREY) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I thank the minority leader for giving me the opportunity to spend some time with my colleagues tonight on the House floor talking about, yes, one of the most important issues not just of the day, but of the year, and in fact the past year-and-a-half, and that is, of course, the issue of health care in this country.

Colleagues, I know that we all watched very closely, as did men and women across the country last Thursday, when there was a health care summit at the Blair House. Leadership from both the majority Democratic Party and the minority Republican Party, my party, were invited to the White House, about 20 on each side of the aisle, moderated by none other than the President himself.

I think, Mr. Speaker, that that was a good thing. I commend the President for calling that summit. I think that each side, leadership and Members, particularly I think my colleagues from the Senate and our colleagues from the House, the medical doctors, did a great job of explaining their view and position on health care reform, alternative ideas which I think the President listened very carefully to.

It is hard to know what actually came out of that particular session, seven hours of dialogue, the whole thing televised. But, again, Mr. Speaker, I think it was good that we showed that there can be some comity and bipartisanship in this body and in the Congress. Indeed, it was a good opportunity.

Well, here we are almost a week later and we get an announcement from the

Associated Press just moments ago, Mr. Speaker. I was reading my *BlackBerry*, and apparently the President is going to come forward tomorrow yet again with some change to the health care plan even different from the 11-page change to the Senate bill that was posted on the Internet last Monday in anticipation of the health care summit on Thursday. I don't know what that is going to say, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what the President has in mind. Maybe we will spend a little bit of time this evening talking about that.

I am pleased that my good friend and fellow physician co-member of the House GOP Doctors Caucus and fellow OB-GYN specialist from the great State of Tennessee, Dr. PHIL ROE, has joined me, and we will engage in a colloquy.

But I just wanted to kind of set the stage tonight for our colleagues and say to both sides of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, and also to the administration, especially to the administration and to the President, again, I am not sure what we will see tomorrow, Mr. President. I look forward to very carefully looking at any proposals, especially if they are adopting some Republican ideas so that we can do these things, these important things for the American people, in a bipartisan way. We were elected to do that.

But I would very much liked to have been at the Blair House last Thursday. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the President knows that, or at least some of his staff knows. I don't know if he ever got to read my letter when I requested to come and speak on behalf of the Doctors Caucus in the House on the Republican side. I didn't get to go, but Dr. CHARLES BOUSTANY, our colleague from Louisiana, a cardiothoracic surgeon, was there, and did a great job. I am awfully proud of Dr. BOUSTANY.

But had I been there, had I had that opportunity to get my 5 minutes of fame or whatever, I would have said to the President, You know, one thing that you have done that I think is probably one of the most important things in regard to health care reform, that is money that was allocated, \$19 billion in fact, to try to get electronic medical records in the hands of every practicing physician in this country, all 750,000 of them, and every hospital in this country, so that we could clearly reduce medical errors, we could ultimately save lives, and, in the long run, save money.

This is an idea that I think, at least from this Republican viewpoint, Mr. Speaker, is bipartisan, and I commend the President. President Bush had the same idea, and again it was a plan to get fully integrated medical records by the year 2014-2015. So we can do things in a bipartisan way.

There are a number of other things that Dr. ROE and I would like to talk about, Mr. Speaker, tonight. We don't need to spend \$1 trillion. That expenditure on electronic medical records is something like \$20 billion. Now, \$20 bil-

lion is a lot of money, but it is a long way from a thousand billion, and that is a conservative estimate by the CBO: \$1 trillion for this 2,700-page reform. We don't need that, Mr. Speaker.

Again, I am not sure what the President is going to say tomorrow, but I hope that finally he will be listening to the American people and realize that there are some targeted things that were mentioned, yes, by Democrats and Republicans, but the President I think wants to adopt some Republican ideas, and we are talking about things especially like medical liability reform.

The CBO gave a very conservative estimate of saving \$54 billion over 10 years. But if it is the kind of medical liability reform that is comprehensive, fair, absolutely fair and balanced, so that patients who are injured by practitioners of medicine and by facilities that are practicing below the standards of care, that they absolutely have a redress of their grievances and a decent recovery.

But the President, Mr. Speaker, in the bills that we are currently looking at, the House and Senate bills, there is just a pittance, like \$25 million worth of grants to States to look at it, to study. We keep creating these study commissions, but not even allowing States who have already capped non-economic damages, so-called pain and suffering—in many instances these are these frivolous lawsuits—those States wouldn't even be eligible for any of this \$23 million in grants.

So I hope his comments tomorrow include adoption in a new bill or a modification, and hopefully a vast shrinkage of the existing bill, and that it is true medical liability reform.

□ 2000

Because that's the only way we save lives and save money and bend that cost curve down in the right direction.

So with those opening remarks, Mr. Speaker, I want to yield time to my colleague from Tennessee, Representative PHIL ROE.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Thank you, Dr. GINGREY, for yielding. As I was sitting here, I think what we should do is go back a year. Obviously, last year when we first began this session we knew that health care reform was going to be on the front burner. The arguments that I heard for the need of it being on the front burner were the same as I heard over 20 years ago, which were rising costs of care, decreased access to care. And we have viewed those things, I think, over a period of time and understand that we have the best quality health care in the world in the United States, but it is expensive. So the cost is a huge issue. And that's one of the things that I think in this current bill is not being addressed adequately, or has not been.

One of the great disappointments I had during the debate on this health care bill was the fact that in our Doctors Caucus on the Republican side we have 14 Members, now 10 physicians.