

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

HONORING JAMES "FRIDAY" RICHARDS

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor an outstanding athletic coach from my hometown of Marietta, Georgia, on the occasion of his retirement.

James "Friday" Richards had dedicated more than 30 years of his life to Marietta High School, retiring on January 22 of this year as the head coach of the Marietta Blue Devil football team. Coach Friday is also a teacher at the high school and will retire from full-time teaching at the end of this current school year.

Coach Friday graduated from Marietta High School in 1972 and went on to play football at the University of Florida. He then spent two seasons in the NFL playing for the New York Jets and the Washington Redskins before coming back to where it all started.

Working at Marietta High School is the only job outside of professional football that Coach Friday has ever had. Up until his retirement, he was the longest serving football coach in Cobb County, Georgia. During his 15-year tenure as head coach, Coach Friday compiled a record of 107 victories and 58 defeats. He took the Blue Devils to the playoffs 10 times and won four region titles.

Before he became head coach, Friday was a Marietta assistant, first for Coach Ray Broadway and then for Coach Dexter Wood. Additionally, under Coach Friday, more than 100 players from Marietta have earned college football scholarships.

Coach Friday told the Marietta Daily Journal, when announcing his retirement, that the thing that he will miss most about coaching are the kids. Well, Coach Friday, four of those kids were my kids: Billy, now 38 years old; Gannon, 37; Phyllis, 35; and Laura Neill, 33. Where in the world did the time go? Coach Friday, I can tell you that those four children that you mentored and coached, three of them cheerleaders, one of them a wide receiver for the Blue Devils, they miss you, too. It is your attitude of putting students and players first that made you, Coach Friday, such an outstanding teacher and football coach.

Mr. Speaker, he will indeed be a tough act to follow.

YUCCA MOUNTAIN IS NO LONGER AN OPTION

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

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, during the campaign, President Obama

pledged to Nevadans that he would kill the Yucca Mountain nuclear repository project. He has kept his word.

Yesterday, the Energy Department moved to pull the license for the dump. The President's blue ribbon panel will meet this month to find an alternative to Yucca Mountain. But I think it is important for me to reexplain why the opposition to Yucca Mountain is so strong, not only throughout the State of Nevada, but throughout the United States.

There is a very long history here. As we refer to it in Nevada, the so-called "Screw Nevada" bill that was passed over two decades ago decided there were three sites that were supposed to be considered for the disposition of nuclear waste. All of a sudden, in the "Screw Nevada" bill there was one State, and we had the honor of being selected as the State that got screwed by the United States Congress. So this was always a political decision. It never was based on sound science.

Let me tell you what the proposal of this bill was: 77,000 tons of toxic radioactive nuclear waste being shipped across 43 States to be buried in a hole in the Nevada desert where we have groundwater issues, seismic activity and volcanic activity, and 90 miles from a major population center in the western United States.

This was never based on sound science, and it never was a viable option. However, for the last 20-some odd years, it has been the option that this Congress and the former administration wanted to foist on the American people.

Now, let me explain what some of the things are that are wrong with this. First of all, there is no safe way to transport 77,000 tons of toxic radioactive nuclear waste across 43 States. It would take 300,000 trips either on our highways or on our rails across this country where we would be going past schools and hospitals and residential areas in order to get to Nevada. Now, just statistically, there would have been X number of accidents when you have 300,000 shipments.

Also, after 9/11 we became painfully aware of the potential for a terrorist attack. What would prevent a terrorist from attacking a nuclear train that was bringing this nuclear waste to the State of Nevada? That is number one.

Number two, there is no canister that exists that could safely store the waste. This was the initial proposal. Yucca Mountain was supposed to be a natural depository that would collapse on itself once it was full. Well, what do you know? They found out that it wasn't bone dry. There is moisture in Yucca Mountain. So then they said, well, let's create a canister to store the waste. Of course, no canister exists. But they did say there was the possibility that the cannister would leach into the groundwater.

So then they said, well, what we will do, since the mountain is not a natural repository and the canisters don't

exist, and if they did exist they couldn't protect the groundwater from the leaching of nuclear waste into the groundwater, so we will have titanium shields over the canisters that don't exist in Yucca Mountain that isn't a natural repository.

Then they came up with the brilliant plan in the last administration that there would be an army of robots, because it would be too dangerous for human beings to go down to Yucca Mountain, so an army of robots that would have to be invented would go down to Yucca Mountain to seal the canisters that don't exist with the titanium shields in Yucca Mountain that isn't a natural repository. This is what we have been dealing with for over two decades.

Also, there are EPA standards. They said 10,000 years. Well, the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals overruled that because, do you know what? The shelf life of nuclear waste is 300,000 years. So that made no sense either.

The nuclear industry and its allies continue to talk about putting nuclear waste at Yucca Mountain, Nevada. That plan is so dead, because the State of Nevada supports the President of the United States, who has finally pulled the plug on this ridiculous program.

There is no magic money tree. This is going to cost billions and billions of dollars. Where are we getting that money? Nevada doesn't have a money tree.

Do you know what else Nevada doesn't have, Mr. Speaker? We don't have any water. We are in the middle of a desert, and it takes millions of gallons of water in order to cool the nuclear waste. So I don't know where they are expecting to get the water, but they ought to take a look at the map, because there is no water in the State of Nevada. We are in the middle of a desert.

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So I want to thank the President of the United States for honoring his promises. This blue ribbon panel will finally meet and start the process of finding an alternative to Yucca Mountain. If this country is going to rely on nuclear energy in the future, we'd better finally figure out a way of what to do with the nuclear waste. I support the President and the blue ribbon panel. I wish them well.

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.)

HEALTH CARE SUMMIT

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

Mr. McCOTTER. We are now a week removed from the President's celebrated health care summit, and we're a day removed from the President's press conference regarding moving ahead on the health care bill despite the wishes of the American people. Prior to the summit, which I referred to as the Shamwow Summit, I was one of the voices urging the Republicans not attend unless the President decided to start from scratch and find a principled basis for compromise amongst both sides. That principled basis was not found, and the principled divide remains.

The House and Senate Republicans went into the summit and they engaged admirably and honestly in the cause of putting forward Republican solutions to health care. Yet, what we found was that afterwards the President has decided to arbitrarily negotiate with himself what he purports to be a bipartisan compromise bill, one which magically has been obtained without the consent of the minority party.

As succinctly summarized by Mr. Charles Krauthammer yesterday, the summit was a Shamwow Summit, and the good faith of those Republicans in the room is now currently being used in a political charade upon the people to prepare them for the proposition that a bipartisan health care bill is before them. I quote Mr. Krauthammer: "But they," the administration, "wanted to present it to the American citizenry as having tried to reach out. That's why you had the charade of the summit last week, 7 hours of discussion, when it was already pre-cooked that that wouldn't change anything. But that's part of the deal. He," the President, "wants to appear to be offering to incorporate Republican proposals. And now the pivot, which we had today."

It is important as the health care debate continues that we not lose sight of the principled divide between the two sides. On the one hand, the Democratic majority wants to have government-run, bureaucrat-dictated health care. On the other, the Republican Party wants to have free-market, patient-centered wellness. No amount of taking Republican proposals and sprinkling them onto the faulty premise of a government-run bill will make it bipartisan or will make the Republican proposals effectual, as, contrarily, we will be taking the Democrat proposals and putting them on to a free-market, patient-centered wellness bill. It is a principled divide, one which Abraham Lincoln reminds us: important principles must remain flexible. In this instance, the bridge between the two parties has not been established and the divide remains.

Also within this debate I think it is important to point out a second important aspect. This is not merely about the money. It is about the liberty. We can all talk about costs. We can all talk about coverage. In my view, the

current health bill would have a catastrophic impact upon the fiscal condition of the United States, which is already tenuous at best. It is about the American people wanting to make sure they retain these decisions in their hands and that the forces that we see around us throughout the communication and innovation revolutions that empower them to make their own decisions every day at a greater extent than at any time in human history remain in their own hands rather than those of a government bureaucrat.

This is not mere supposition on my part. I cite two recent poll numbers. Referring to the Rasmussen report, only 21 percent of United States citizens believe that this government has their consent. I cite a second sobering statistic: according to CNN, 56 percent of Americans believe the Federal Government is a threat to the freedom of ordinary citizens.

As this health care debate proceeds forward despite the wishes of the American people, we are not only endangering their health care, we are endangering and jeopardizing their faith in their representative institutions, in their belief that this is a government of the sovereign people.

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I again point out that there is a principled divide between the two parties: one wants government-run, bureaucrat-dictated health care; one wants free-market, patient-centered wellness. As we move toward the former, the American people's faith in their representative institutions will be continually eroded as they watch in obstinate insistence by this majority and by this administration to pass a health care bill that the American people have said they do not want.

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

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

THE SYSTEM MUST CHANGE

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

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there are those who contend that we are moving too quickly, we're moving too swiftly, and that we must slow down. In fact, this translates into we really should not go forward at all. And to these who would contend that we should stop at this point, that we should simply let it go, my response is: we cannot let health care go, because it won't let us go.

The system is not sustainable. It is unsustainable as currently implemented. Currently, we're spending about \$2.5 trillion per year on health care; \$2.5 trillion is a big number. It's

difficult to get your mind around \$2.5 trillion; \$79,000 a second, however, is a number that we can comprehend. And that is what we are spending—\$79,000 per second. By 2018, depending on who's counting and how you count the numbers, we will be spending \$139,000 per second. That would be more than 20 percent of GDP.

We cannot sustain the current system. It must be revamped. This system has to change: 46 million people uninsured, depending on who's counting, when you count, and how you count. In my State of Texas, 6 million people uninsured and 1.4 million children in the State of Texas are uninsured. In Harris County, where I reside, 1.1 million people are uninsured. The system cannot continue as it is constructed.

We spend \$100 billion per year in emergency rooms; \$100 billion per year to cover those who are uninsured. That's money that could be well spent in a physician's office and would also help us to deal with preventive measures as opposed to responding to illnesses when they become almost dire.

The system must change. We currently have a system wherein there are many people who are too young for Medicare. They make too much to receive Medicaid. And they don't make enough to buy their insurance. The system has to change. We cannot allow preexisting conditions to continue to prevent pregnant women from getting proper treatment. Pregnancy is a preexisting condition under the current system. The system has to change.

We must find a way to muster up the courage to take on this challenge. If we could pass and did pass Social Security when the polls were against it, if we passed other crucial measures when the polls were against them, we can pass health care reform. And for those who contend that in this country how you got here will depend upon whether you will get treatment, my response is this: if you commit a crime in this country and you harm someone, and we should harm you as the culprit, when we capture you, we will give you aid and comfort. In this country, if you are an enemy combatant and you hurt our warriors in battle and we should capture you and you have been wounded, we will give you aid and comfort. In this country, if you're on death row and you're going to meet your Maker next week, we will give you aid and comfort if you're suffering this week, and send you to your Maker next week.

If we can give the enemy combatant, the person on death row, and the person who is a criminal aid and comfort, surely we're going to give it to people who find themselves hurt and in the streets of life. The system must change.

Dr. King said it best. He said, On some questions, cowardice will ask, Is it safe? Expediency will ask, Is it politic? Vanity will ask, Is it popular? But conscience asks the ultimate question and that is, Is it right?