

opportunity and the decent standard of living that we have enjoyed as Americans over these last few decades since the great generation of Americans stepped forward and saved the world from Nazism and saved the world from communism and saved the world from fanatics who would murder and terrorize decent people throughout the world.

We have a very special role to play. Americans come from every race, every religion, every ethnic group. We have come here to show the world there is a better way, that we can live together in peace and respect each other. As this conglomerate people, we represent an ideal, not a territory, that we have to reach out to those people throughout the world and provide leadership as an example. That is what this fight is about. The patriots will win because we are doing so for the cause of all freedom and humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS

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

Mr. ELLISON. I will claim the time on behalf of the Progressive Caucus, but I have a few boards to put up, so I'm going to grab those right now.

Mr. Speaker, I am KEITH ELLISON, and I am here to deliver the progressive message. I am looking forward to having some other Progressive Caucus members join me, but in any event, we'll be here tonight for a few minutes to talk to America about the progressive vision of America.

America is a great country because people stood forward and had a higher vision of what could be. Yet we came here as a Nation and the United States said, you know what? We can have a country where all men and women are created equal. We have to make that happen. And so Americans set out on path to what? End slavery then exalt the rights of workers, then eliminate gender discrimination and have the women's right to vote, and then move on forward to spread economic prosperity to all people to make sure that working class men and women during the Great Depression were able to have the kind of economic wherewithal that could see them through a difficult time.

America is a progressive idea. We saw the end of segregation because Americans of all races and colors stood up and said, you know what, this Jim Crow offends the basic principles of our Nation, so we're going to end this thing. It wasn't easy; it wasn't pretty. It was real messy and people gave up everything in order to pursue that ideal, but they did. And so America is really, at the bottom, a progressive idea.

Today, challenges are before Americans again today, none more important than the fight for health care, none more important than the fight for universal health care. As a member of the Progressive Caucus, I come here as a person who really would love to see universal single-payer health care; it's the right way to go. But single payer did not make it into the debate, really, this year, but important ideas like the public option did, and we're fighting for those ideas tooth and nail to the very last.

The progressive message tonight, talking about health care, as I have so many weeks before, is an idea that is coming to the floor. And it is no time to stop talking about health care reform now because Americans, we've been through a lot of changes. You all remember when the President started off his service, the President started off and said we're going to move forward on health care and begin some health care summits. We had a number of conversations as we went through and went forward, and of course, as so often happens, Members from the other side of the aisle, the Republican Caucus, had a lot of complaints, but they didn't have many constructive ideas. We moved forward anyway.

We went through the spring where we had literally tens and tens and tens—dozens of community hearings and hearings here on Capitol Hill about health care reform. We had witnesses come in and talk about how to bend the cost curve down, how to reduce cost, how to expand coverage. We literally had well over 100 hearings on health care reform. And as I said, we went into the communities. I had a number of community meetings myself where we talked health care reform. We had this debate right on up until the beginning of August, and people were telling us the public option is dead; but the public option, as we know, is not dead. We kept fighting for it and kept bringing it up. We kept rallying Americans, Mr. Speaker, and we just wouldn't break and we just wouldn't bend and we kept the conversation alive. We kept the conversation alive even though we had a very tough economy to deal with, even though we had to deal with the failing auto industry, even though we had a financial catastrophe.

We understood that getting health care reform right was key to prosperity for the poor, for working class people, and for middle class people; so we never really gave it up. In fact, even earlier today somebody said, Keith, what are you going to talk about tonight on the Special Order? I said, You know what I'm going to talk about? I'm going to talk about health care. They said, Wow, we're sick of talking about that. You know what? We don't have the luxury to be sick of talking about health care reform because right now, at this very moment, there are people who are facing being rescinded, being cut off health care insurance, people whose

medical expenses have gone so high they have to consider bankruptcy in order to make it and survive economically.

□ 1745

There are people who have their children getting ready to turn 22, just like I recently had a situation where our health care carrier told me, On your son's birthday, which should be a happy occasion, he is going to be terminated from your health care policy. This is my own son. I'm a Member of Congress, and I'm trying to sit and figure out how we're going to get my boy, who is going from 21 to 22, covered because he is going to be looking for health care coverage in only a few days.

Americans are going through this all the time. Some Americans are thinking, Wow, I just hope I can get to 65 so I can get Medicare because then I won't have all of these problems. I'll be able to afford health care like I haven't been able to afford it in so many years. Americans are in dire straits. So it doesn't make any sense for anyone in this Congress to say they're sick of talking about health care, because Americans aren't through fighting these health care nightmares that we have to deal with every single day, day in and day out.

So we are here with the congressional Progressive Caucus. This is our email. If you want to contact us and let us know what your ideas are, the Progressive Caucus is open to ideas. We believe that progress is made through new ideas, and we want to hear about them.

We are going to be talking about health care tonight, and I'm hoping to be joined by some of our colleagues. I just want to start the conversation out talking about health care and about the economy and how these two ideas are linked together. It's shocking, shocking, shocking news. How do you like this one, folks?

Health insurers break profit records as 2.7 million Americans lose coverage.

Wait a minute. I must be reading this wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Health care insurers break profit records as 2.7 million Americans lose coverage.

Do you mean they're breaking records and getting more money than they ever got before as they're throwing people off coverage?

Well, that doesn't seem right. You would think that, during this time, Mr. Speaker, of reviewing health care policy that somebody somewhere would have at least the good sense to say, Well, maybe we shouldn't throw all of these people off at the very time we're making all this money. Maybe it would look bad.

Well, these avaricious folks don't have any shame when it comes to trying to grab more money. Just like some of these people in the financial services industry are giving themselves record bonuses as America's banks

have enough reserves but aren't lending it out so that small businesses can help grow our economy. As we're in the middle of a financial crisis, they're giving each other bonuses. Then they feel put upon and personally attacked because they can't go get a gazillion more dollars of American taxpayer money. It's really something.

Health care insurers break profit records as 2.7 million Americans lose coverage.

Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to show, to whomever is looking, the report where I get this information, this report of "Health Care Insurers Break Profit Records As 2.7 Million Americans Lose Coverage"—the February 2010 Health Care for America Now! This is something very important. It's a great report that I would recommend people get. You can get it on the HealthCareforAmericaNow.org website. People need to check it out, Mr. Speaker, because it is the kind of information that can really help to get you engaged, to get you involved and to get you moving toward real health care reform. Let me just read a little bit from this report so the Americans who might be watching might just get a taste of this important report.

The five largest U.S. health insurance companies, Mr. Speaker, sailed through the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression to set new industry profit records in 2009, a feat accomplished by leaving behind 2.7 million Americans who had been in private health plans. For consumers who kept their benefits, the insurers raised rates and cost-sharing, and cut the share of premiums spent on medical care. Executives and shareholders of the five biggest for-profit health insurers—United Health Group, Inc., WellPoint, Inc., Aetna, Inc., Humana, Inc., and Cigna Corp.—enjoyed a combined profit of \$12.2 billion—that's \$12 billion with a "b"—in 2009, up 56 percent from the previous year. It was the best year for big insurance.

Wow. Wow. That's amazing to me. These folks are coming down here, saying that they've got to have the private insurance go their way so they can survive while they are reaping mega-profits. Mr. Speaker, it's wrong. We've got to do something about it. It's downright unpatriotic. I will continue.

The outside earnings are a vivid reminder that, without comprehensive national health care reform, the gate-keepers of our health care system will put the short-term interests of Wall Street before the needs of millions of patients and a national economy plagued by joblessness.

I'm not going to read the whole report, Mr. Speaker, but it's worth it to go on a little further.

The 2009 financial reports from the Nation's five largest insurance companies reveal that, one, the firms made \$12.2 billion—an increase of \$4.4 billion, or 56 percent, from 2008. Four out of five of the companies saw earnings in-

crease, with Cigna's profits jumping 346 percent.

Cigna's profits jumped 346 percent. That's pretty good. Now, this is as Americans are losing their health care benefits, as unemployment is spiking. As people are in real pain, they're getting more money.

The companies provided private insurance coverage to 2.7 million fewer people than the year before. Four out of five of the companies insured fewer people through private coverage. United Health alone insured 1.7 million fewer people through employer-based and individual coverage.

That's why I'm an advocate of universal, single-payer health care. As long as the private insurance market is a player in this thing, they're going to offer the worst at the highest price.

All but one of the five companies increased the number of people they covered through public insurance programs—Medicaid, SCHIP, Medicare. United Health added 680,000 people to public plans. That's me and you. That's the public.

The proportion of premium dollars spent on health care expenses went down for three of the five firms, with the higher proportion going to administrative expenses and to—guess what?—profits.

I know you're shocked.

One last paragraph, Mr. Speaker, so that people can really get a flavor of this thing. I'm hoping that people will really get a handle on this and will look into it so that they can see what's really going on. You can't figure out what's going on by some of these talk show hosts. Depending on what stations you like to watch, they're not going to tell you the truth. They're going to be busy telling you all about death panels and school-based sex clinics, and they're going to say government is taking over health care. Well, I'd rather have government take over my health care than have United Health take over my health care. I would. I think a lot of Americans would probably agree. Some may not, but I think most Americans expect the government to make sure that the private corporations in the health care business play fair with the American people. Let's go back to the report.

The shedding of 2.7 million members from private health care plans is part of the industry's long-term shifting of responsibility of the care of millions of the sick, older, and lower-income customers to taxpayer-supported government health programs, such as Medicaid and State Children's Health Insurance plans. State and Federal programs have increasingly been hiring big insurers to manage their care.

Well, I think we need to not do that. We need to get a plan that really provides some real competition for these people, like a public option or, better yet, have single-payer health care and just get the private market out of the health care business and allow private doctors to take care of patients as op-

posed to private insurance companies, which, Mr. Speaker, I will say don't really add value to the health care equation.

What do these people do? They move paper around. They don't see patients. They don't diagnose. They don't treat. What do they do? What do they add? Do they go get one aspirin? Do they put gauze on or dress wounds? They don't do anything like that. I think that they are, more or less, parasites on the system. They're taking massive amounts of money out and are leaving 2.7 million people behind in the year they've made the most money of all. So here is a little bit more from the inside of the report.

Faced with such onerous costs, many customers are winding up uninsured. Health insurance premiums have risen so high that experts have forecasted that 52 million Americans will be without coverage this year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know and you know that the number we always toss around is 47 million, that 47 million Americans don't have health care. Well, if that's what you say, you're wrong. We're approaching 52 million. There are 52 million Americans who are without health care, and this is at a time when we're in the very middle of a debate around reforming health care.

Left alone to purchase a health care plan directly from private insurers, many will have no choice but to remain uninsured or to buy cheap policies with inadequate benefits that leave them underinsured and at financial risk should they have a serious accident or illness.

Now, one little fact that Americans should know is that 60 percent—think about 6 and 10—of all bankruptcy filings are directly related to medical debt. Think about that. Our broken health care system is driving Americans to bankruptcy and to poverty. As that happens, our industry doesn't seem to care much at all because they're getting theirs, which seems to be their only obsession.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I may return to this topic in a little while, but I want you to know and I want the American people to know that this is a problem that must be addressed. This is not a time for cynicism, Mr. Speaker; this is a time for action. This is not a time to say what can happen; this is a time to make something happen. This is not a time to quit; this is a time to act. If Americans act now, Mr. Speaker, we can get that public insurance option. We can get that public option.

You know, last week, when I was talking, we had only about 24 Senators signed onto a letter saying they were going to support the public option. The last I checked, we were up to 35. The question is: Is your Senator on the letter? We need every Senator on there. We've got to get 50 on there because, if we get 50 Senators on there, on a letter, to say they support the public option through reconciliation rules, then we will have that. Despite people saying that the public option is dead, it

will be jumping back to life just like the phoenix, and I will be so proud of Americans who just never accepted “no” for an answer, because it is these insurance companies that are doing this that are the main opponents of the public option.

Let me just say this: People who are for the public option, like me, and people who are against the public option, like them, have the same reason for the positions that we take. They oppose the public option, and I support it for the same reason. It’s going to cut into corporate profits and give more people health care. That’s why we don’t agree. They want to take more from the American people. I want to give more to the American people, so we don’t agree. This public option can succeed if we just don’t stop. It passed through the House, and 70 percent of Americans support it. We’ve got a climbing number of Senators getting on every day.

I want to thank Senator SHERROD BROWN. You know, I think “President SHERROD BROWN” sounds pretty good. I’d like to see him think about that. We’ve got Senator KIRSTEN GILLIBRAND, another great American. We’ve got other Senators joining every day who are just saying, you know, We’re going to break free of this stranglehold that has been around the U.S. Senate, and we’re going to really do something good for the American people. So I just want to say hats off to them and say I appreciate the hard work that they’re doing.

□ 1800

Mr. Speaker, I have another chart that I want to show to the people here, and this one is quite sobering, quite sobering. It is another big number, Mr. Speaker. It is the kind of number that really, really, really we almost don’t want to mention it, but if you don’t mention it, you dishonor the memory of the people that are hurt.

Mr. Speaker, this chart here, I want to bring it real close to me so it is in the camera shot, says 45,000—45,000—Americans die every year because they are uninsured.

Now, think about this number, and think about this number: 2.7 million Americans lose coverage. Because of no coverage, 45,000 Americans die every year. So people are literally dying because they don’t have health care coverage. And not one, not two, not somebody here or there, but 45,000 people.

This is a national disgrace, Mr. Speaker. It must be changed. We have got to do something about it. It has to be something that is a national priority. We have got to extend coverage to people, and we have to do it in a way that is cost-effective and so that we can extend as much coverage as we possibly can to as many people as we possibly can.

This is the reality of the situation. We have to fight for this, and we have to understand that this fight for health care reform is a life-and-death fight,

Mr. Speaker. It is not just something that one side would prefer and the other side kind of would not prefer. That is just not what we are talking about. We are talking about a life-and-death situation, where unless we are able to move forward on real health care reform, Americans die.

Now, this number, 45,000, it looks like a big number. Here in Washington we throw big numbers around all the time, 2.7 billion, 45,000, all these numbers, and they jumble the mind. One of these 45,000 is a mother of someone. One of these 45,000 is a child of someone. One of these 45,000 is a young man in his prime of life whose family is dependent upon his income. One of these 45,000 is a small business owner. One of these 45,000 is someone who somebody loves.

This is a national emergency, Mr. Speaker, and I don’t need to tell you, if we were talking about losing this many people a year in conflict or war, there is no doubt we would have a national debate and outrage over what we were going to do about it. It is not less important because it happens silently in hospital rooms and bedrooms and houses. It is just as important, and we have to do something about it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk more about health care, but I just want to just lay out a few other impacts, since we laid that one out. Let me put it back up, because it is relevant to what I am about to say.

Not only do 45,000 Americans die every year because they are uninsured, but this year alone an estimated 1.5 million Americans will declare bankruptcy because of a lack of health care or because of health care expenses. Studies in recent years suggest that more than 60 percent of people who go bankrupt are actually capsized by medical bills.

Bankruptcies due to medical bills increased nearly 50 percent in a 6-year period, from 44 percent in 2001 to 62 percent in 2007. Sixty percent. We wish it was only 60 percent. It is probably 65 percent by now, Mr. Speaker, because this is a 2007 number.

Most of those who filed bankruptcy were middle-class, well-educated homeowners, according to a report published in August 2009 by the American Journal of Medicine. Unless you are Warren Buffett or Bill Gates, you are one illness away from financial ruin in this country. That is what the author of this report said, Dr. Stephanie Woolhandler. If an illness is long enough and expensive enough, private insurance offers very little protection against medical bankruptcy. That is the major finding of the study.

Overall, three-quarters of the people with medically related bankruptcy had health insurance. Let me tell you that again. As we know, this is the most generous, giving country. There are a lot of people who have the best of intentions. But as all Americans know, not everybody is like that.

There are some people who think, Well, I don’t really care about those

people. I only care about myself and my family, and if those people don’t have insurance, well, that is just their problem. There is probably something they did to deserve that. Shocking as it is, there are a lot of people who think like that. The fact is, this statistic of all these people going into bankruptcy because of medical debt is talking about folks who are middle class and who have jobs.

This is a shocking statistic. Three-quarters of the people with medically related bankruptcy had health insurance. They had health insurance, and they still went down. Why? Because of lifetime caps, because they got dropped, because of copays and escalating premiums, all these things going on. Those were actually the predominant problems in patients studied. Seventy-eight percent of them had health insurance, but many of them were bankrupted anyway because there were gaps in their coverage, like copayments, deductibles, and uncovered services.

Other people had private insurance but got so sick they had lost their job and lost their insurance. We will return to that in a moment.

Health care cost, as a percentage of gross domestic product, has significantly increased. From March 2008, the number has grown since then. I have a chart here which I will explain to you, which I don’t actually have a blowup of, which illustrates that we pay more than any other country for health care, and the other countries cover the entire population.

So, for example, in the United States, in 1970, health care was 7 percent of gross domestic product. Today it is 15.3. In Canada, 1970, it was 7 percent of gross domestic product. Now it is 9.9, more than 5 percentage points lower than ours. In Germany, health care was 6.2 percent in 1970 and grew to 10.6, about 5 percent lower than us. In the U.K., in 1970, health care was about 4.5 in 1970, and now it is 8.1.

We have expanded this because it makes somebody a whole lot of dough. We have got to think about this, and we have got to do something about it.

From 2000 to 2008, workers’ health insurance premiums shot up more than five times faster than their wages. The average cost of family coverage in the workplace went from \$6,672 in the year 2000 to \$12,000 in 2007. That is a 78 percent increase. So it has eaten up family income. At the same time, average wages rose only about 15 percent, which means that the cost of health care significantly outstripped American pay.

I just wanted to speak a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about the important financial choices that Americans are having to make, bankruptcy or not bankruptcy, get the coverage or not. What are you going to do? Now that you are out of work, what are you going to do? Difficult choices.

But I wanted to spend a few minutes, Mr. Speaker, talking about the important issue of the public option, because

I think that a lot of people are thinking, well, you know, now that the public option seems to be back in play, more Senators are supporting it, and it already passed through the House, the American people like it, the President said he was in favor of it, and people are thinking, well, maybe it will happen now.

Well, you know what? This is no time to quit the fight for the public option. In fact, it is time to accelerate your energy around the public option. It wouldn't be a bad thing if people had rallies and community forums and petitions for the public option.

The public option is a great choice. I am an advocate of universal single payer health care, but the public option is a good choice if we can't get that far.

Currently, in 34 States, 75 percent of the insurance market is controlled by five or fewer companies, Mr. Speaker. Many areas of the country are dominated by just one or two private organizations. What that means is Americans don't have much choice. We are dealing with highly concentrated markets, and the public option would give people in these highly concentrated markets more choice.

Competition. Again, in 34 States, 75 percent of the insurance market is controlled by five or fewer companies. In Alabama, almost 90 percent is controlled by only one company. Now, is that a monopoly or what? In addition, a public option would provide competition for private insurance companies to keep them honest.

So the public option offers choice and competition. It also lowers cost. That is the funny thing about it. You would think you would have a lot of Republican support, because it reduces costs. But we know that existing public options, like Medicare and Medicaid, consistently have lower administrative costs than their private insurance counterparts because they don't have competition. Why should they worry about lowering costs?

According to the Commonwealth Fund, the net administrative costs for Medicaid and Medicare were 5 percent and then 8 percent; 5 percent for Medicare, 8 percent for Medicaid. If you look at the top five health insurance companies, their administrative costs were over 17 percent. Triple. It is crazy.

With the insurance market controlled by fewer and fewer companies and more and more States, there is little incentive to lower costs. Also, as one former insurance executive testified before Congress, insurance companies are not only encouraged to find reasons to drop seriously ill people, they are rewarded for it. Bureaucratic overhead costs coupled with multi-million dollar CEO salaries and bonuses make high costs for American families and a lack of competition, and it provides no incentive to change their practices.

The public option, Mr. Speaker, would provide higher quality for Amer-

icans' health care. Competition always improves—well, it doesn't always, but it often improves quality, and therefore the public option will help consumers get a better coverage for the same amount of money as their private insurance.

There are some things, Mr. Speaker, people have been saying about the public option that are not true. One of those things is the idea of the public option being a government takeover or even a government-run program. Well, you know what? The fact is that the public option would be administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, but it would be with private doctors and providers out there, so it would still be people dealing with their own private doctor.

The idea that the mandated health insurance is a new tax is also false, is not true. What a public option really means is that the government would help to cover the high cost of insurance for Americans, while bringing those costs down through competition, access, and choice. Without health care insurance reform, however, we can expect the problems that exist today only to get worse.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to now just talk about the fact that we have been hearing a lot about this idea of reconciliation. There might be some Americans out there saying reconciliation, what is that about? Is that about how my neighbor and me who have been feuding are finally going to try to get along? Not really in this situation, although it would be a good thing.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, in this case, reconciliation is just some special budgetary rules that are passed through Congress that allow Congress to pass laws by getting around the filibuster rules that are in the Senate. That is what it is. There are reconciliation rules in the House and the Senate, but in the Senate they have these rules that you have to have 60 people to end debate so you can then vote on something. Reconciliation allows us to get around those rules, and so it is a good thing.

A simple up or down vote by more than half the House and Senate should be enough to send the President the final improvements to the health care reform measure that we have been talking about for a year. A simple majority vote would not be used to reform the health care system, just to clear limited improvements to the comprehensive health reform bill which has already passed the Senate and in a similar form in the House, but not exactly the same.

Reconciliation is part of the normal legislative process, Mr. Speaker. It has been used 22 times over the last 30 years, 16 times by a Republican-led Senate, and nearly two-thirds of the time Republican Presidents have signed the reconciliation bills. Not all the time. Democrats have used it, too.

Certain times the reconciliation was used, for example, to enact a health re-

form bill called COBRA. Everybody knows what COBRA is. COBRA is what allows you to maintain your health insurance after you lose your job. This is a law that lets employees just keep their employer's health insurance after they have left their job. This bill was passed through reconciliation in 1985 and passed into law under Ronald Reagan. In fact, the R in COBRA actually stands for "reconciliation." Isn't that something?

SCHIP, the bipartisan State Children's Health Insurance Program, passed through reconciliation in 1997. Medicare changes done through reconciliation include a hospice benefit, HMO preventative care, like cancer screenings, added protection also for patients in nursing homes, and the way Medicare pays doctors and health care professionals.

□ 1815

Also, the law requiring emergency rooms to screen Medicare and Medicaid patients, regardless of their ability to pay, was part of the 1985 reconciliation measure. So don't think that reconciliation is something new. There are people on the radio and television saying, Oh, my God, the Democrats are using reconciliation. Well, of course we are. It's a normal legislative tool used many times before and there's nothing unusual about it. Of course, reconciliation has been used for things that were not good for the American people as well. But this is not one of those occasions. This is an occasion where it's being used for something good.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to wrap up now. So if any of my Republican colleagues are thinking they want to get ready to get started, it would be a good idea to start thinking about that.

I just want to talk a little bit, as I begin to wrap up, about our economic situation. Because so much of the pain people are suffering through lack of health care and lack of health care reform is related to the fact that they're not working now. You lose your job; you lose your health care. I mentioned COBRA. Yeah, you can pay out of your own pocket COBRA if you lose your job, but you've still got to have some money to pay that.

So I just want to say that last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, the House unanimously passed the emergency legislation to extend a range of programs that expire this weekend. And some of these things were including unemployment benefits, help with health insurance for unemployed, a highway bill, satellite TV, delay in cut in Medicare physician payments, flood insurance, and things like that. Mr. Speaker, it just concerns me that we have had one Republican Senator who, up until a few days ago, was single-handedly blocking the passage of an emergency measure despite serious consequences for families.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, I actually went to my own district and asked people to raise their voices about the action that Senator BUNNING was taking

because it was inflicting a lot of pain around the country. According to the Department of Labor, the expiration of unemployment benefits caused 100,000 people to lose their benefits immediately, and about 400,000 people will lose unemployment benefits, including 4,300 people in Kentucky, and the next few weeks, if Senator BUNNING does not drop his opposition.

An estimated half a million jobless Americans will lose access to COBRA subsidies to them to help them buy health care insurance. Letting the highway and transit programs lapse would temporarily shut down a total of \$925 million worth of projects this week in highway reimbursements and transit grants to States and urban areas, endangering more than 32,000 jobs, national anti-drunk driver efforts, and multimillion dollar construction jobs. With the Bunning obstruction, 41 highway projects have been forced to shut down.

Now, history knows that he came to an accommodation—and that's good. But the fact that the Senator held it up, to me is an example of how important it is to really, really understand who is not working for the American people and who is. Democrats are here trying to extend unemployment, extend COBRA, help Americans make it through tough times; and other people are obstructing and holding things up. I think it's important for the American people to know that because the American people deserve to know who's fighting for their economic livelihood and who's not.

The fact is, Senator BUNNING actually said, It could be argued unemployment insurance is a disincentive for work because people are being paid even though they're not working. It could be argued that unemployment insurance is a disincentive for work because people are being paid even though they're not working. That's pretty sad. The fact is that is Senator JIM BUNNING, Republican, Kentucky. I just want people to keep it in mind, what they're dealing with and what they're up against and who they're up against.

So the Senate ended up passing the bill; voted 78-19 Tuesday night to pass legislation extending unemployment benefits, highway funding, and other programs for 1 month, bringing an end to the one-man crusade to filibuster the bill. The fact is, the filibuster resulted in thousands of Federal workers

being furloughed and an interruption in unemployment benefits. It happened. People were hurt. People were without money because of this. And that was incredibly unfortunate. But I think Americans in this great democracy of ours can express yourselves through the ballot box, and you should let people know that. And I think people should know what happened and how it happened and who did it.

So I also just want to mention, Mr. Speaker, that over 200,000 jobless workers were scheduled to lose unemployment benefits last week; and it didn't happen because we narrowly avoided it, but it certainly could have happened. And there was a break; there was a lapse. Federal employees were furloughed. I just want to keep that in mind and have people remember that.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I begin to wind down, I just want to say that there is a group of Members of Congress who have a progressive vision for America. The progressive vision for America is an America where the government actually takes responsibility for making sure the economy works for everybody; the progressive vision for America is where we have civil rights and human rights for women, people of color, working people, people who live in rural areas; where the country literally works for everyone and not just a few; where we really believe that all men are created equal and created with certain inalienable rights; where we really want to see our country reach its highest potential by offering educational opportunity, by saying that the military budget has expanded way out of control, that we need to put more energy into diplomacy and development around the world; a progressive vision in which we say that America should use its awesome blessings and strength to help confer those blessings for other people and people within.

With that, I yield back.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. TIAHRT (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today after noon on account of attending a funeral.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. SCHWARTZ) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. SCHWARTZ, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. BERKLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. TITUS, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFAZIO, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. POE of Texas) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. POE of Texas, for 5 minutes, March 11.

Mr. JONES, for 5 minutes, March 11.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas, for 5 minutes, March 11.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McCOTTER, for 5 minutes, today.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 21 minutes p.m.), the House adjourned until tomorrow, Friday, March 5, 2010, at 9 a.m.

BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF PAYGO LEGISLATION

Pursuant to Public Law 111-139, Mr. SPRATT, on behalf of and after consultation with Senator CONRAD, hereby submits, prior to the vote on passage, the attached estimate of the costs of H.R. 2847, the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET,
Washington, DC, March 4, 2010.

JOINT ESTIMATE OF BUDGETARY EFFECTS OF PAYGO LEGISLATION

MADAM SPEAKER, Pursuant to Public Law 111-139, and on behalf of and after consultation with the Chairman of the Senate Budget Committee and myself, I hereby submit, prior to the vote on passage, the attached estimate of the costs of the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the House amendment to the Senate amendment to the bill H.R. 2847, the Hiring Incentives to Restore Employment Act, for printing in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

JOHN M. SPRATT.

CBO ESTIMATE OF THE STATUTORY PAY-AS-YOU-GO EFFECTS FOR AN AMENDMENT TO THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO THE HOUSE AMENDMENT TO THE SENATE AMENDMENT TO H.R. 2847

	By fiscal year, in millions of dollars—												
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2010–2015	2010–2020
Net Increase or Decrease (–) in the Deficit													
Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Impact	4,521	6,247	2,328	382	–13,629	58	12,673	–820	–2,715	–9,168	–532	–95	–657

Note: Components may not sum to totals because of rounding.

Sources: Congressional Budget Office and Joint Committee on Taxation.