

today, hospitals and schools, private-sector buildings, mass assets of the Federal Government, and, yes, the NASA centers and the NASA shuttle and all of the equipment that goes into providing for human spaceflight.

Lending that space technology to commercial exploration and private-sector businesses on the basis of profit is not appropriate now. It will put us in a noncompetitive position with China, India, and Russia.

So this resolution is simple. It declares the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as a national security interest and asset. It indicates that the United States has invested in the human space program since May 5, 1961. We all can remember the words of our President, John F. Kennedy, that challenged this Nation when he asked the question, Not why, but why not? Although those words came from his brother, he captured it in the early 1960s when he asked and demanded what we could do not for ourselves, but what we could do for our country.

At that time, we established the United States as a leader in the role of space exploration, and as well in the advancement of scientific research, and therefore that equals a national security interest. It does so because science provides security, and the penetration of the scientific knowledge that we have lowers the security of this Nation.

My Committee on Homeland Security deals with protecting the infrastructure. Infrastructure is security. Infrastructure involves the science labs. Infrastructure involves the many space centers we have around the Nation. The States that are involved are Florida; Huntsville, Alabama; Texas; and the various sites in California as well.

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And so I would ask that this legislation be moved quickly in the United States Congress and in this House because the 2010 NASA budget funded a program of space-based research that supports the administration's commitment to deploy a global climate change research and monitoring system. That research can be done better on the international space station. That international space station needs to be supported. It needs to be able to carry astronauts and scientists there to continue the research to make the quality of life for Americans and the world better. In the early stages of the international space station, research was done involving HIV/AIDS, stroke, heart disease, and cancer. That research has created opportunities for a better quality of life, and it saved lives.

Let us not miss the opportunity, the treasure of being able to explore in space; the genius of America to allow us to be at the cutting edge of science; and, yes, to protect a natural security interest, which is the National Aeronautics Space Administration and all of its assets.

And so I look forward to working with General Bolden, an astronaut and

a very able appointee of the President of United States, to see how we can save NASA and the Constellation program that will allow us to be at the cutting edge of science, not in America, but around the world.

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.)

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.)

BUYING INTO MEDICARE

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

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I have just introduced a simple 4-page bill that allows any American to buy into Medicare at cost. Let me explain why I have done that. I have five children. When one of my children was born, I found out from the insurance company that the insurance company would not pay for the birth of my child. I had what I thought was excellent health care coverage from this insurance company, but it turned out otherwise. As a result of that, I had to pay \$10,000 for the birth of my child.

You know, it could have been worse. Maybe I wouldn't have that \$10,000. A lot of Americans face that situation when they have health care bills that their health insurance company won't cover. It could have been worse. I had twins who were born afterwards, who were born a month premature, spent weeks in the hospital. God only knows what those bills would have looked like. I probably would have been broke.

But the fact is that I felt, like many Americans feel, that I had an adversarial relationship with my insurance company and that every penny they spent on my care was a penny less for their profits. And that is a fundamentally unfair situation that causes untold health care needs around this country that go unmet and, frankly, untold death.

That's why we need another option. We need a public option. We're going to be seeing a Senate bill that doesn't have a public option. We're going to be seeing reconciliation that doesn't have a public option. But America needs a public option. That's why I've introduced this bill.

There are other reasons as well. Another reason is that all across this country there are areas, including areas in Florida, where one or two private insurance companies dominate

the market to the extent that they have 80 percent of all the insured in the area. There is no competition. It's a monopoly in the case of one. It's an oligopoly in the case of two. Either way, these insurance companies pretty much do whatever they want. They can offer you care or they deny you care. They can cut you off when you already have care. And they can charge you pretty much anything they want.

Well, a public option would change that. In an area where one company had 80 percent of the market, suddenly there would be an alternative. Where two companies have 80 percent of the market, suddenly there would be an alternative. That alternative is an alternative that is already used by one-eighth of our population. That alternative is Medicare.

This simple bill would allow anybody—any American, any permanent resident—to buy into Medicare at cost. And what it does is it takes this enormously valuable public resource called the Medicare Provider Network and makes it available to all Americans. We've spent billions putting together a Medicare Provider Network that stretches from Nome, Alaska, all the way to Key West, Florida. We've spent billions doing that, and yet only one-eighth of the population can use it.

The most expensive part of preparing a health care plan for any American in any location is to set up the provider network, hundreds and hundreds of contracts with hospitals, with specialists, with nurses, with testing companies. All these things have to be done before you actually serve the first patient.

Well, we have a system like that called Medicare, and yet it's open to only one-eighth of the population. It's as if we're saying that only one-eighth of the population, senior citizens, can drive on Federal highways. That's how important the Medicare provider network is, and that's why we have to open it to everybody.

This is not a plan for subsidies. Everyone would have to pay their own cost. This is not a plan that's meant to help anybody, except for the people who cannot otherwise get insurance, or people like me, who simply don't trust the insurance companies anymore because of the raw treatment that we've received.

Let's face it, it's never going to be any different. The insurance companies are always going to look for ways to chintz you. They're always going to look for ways to charge you more and give you less, and the difference is what they call profit. And that's a system that a lot of people just can't accept anymore. They just don't want it anymore.

And for those people who have it in their mind that there will be some kind of government death panels, what about the real death panels that exist in this company—the insurance company death panels; the ones that look for rescission when you get sick, the

ones that top you out at some small amount of benefits when you have some terminally ill condition. These are the real death panels in this country. And that's why we need a public option.

So I'm asking the Speaker and the leadership, if we have to vote on this Senate bill that doesn't have a public option in it, if we have to vote on this reconciliation amendment that doesn't have a public option, isn't it time that we finally did something good for America? Isn't it time that we gave all Americans the right to buy into a public plan like this? Isn't it in fact past time that we did something like that? And what's the harm?

I say to those people on the other side of the aisle, if you don't want to buy into the public option, that's fine. But don't prevent me and my family and the ones who I love from doing the same. Let us have our alternative. And remember what you said so many times before: you say the government can't do anything right. Well, let's see. Let's see right now. Let's let people buy into the public option through this bill, H.R. 4789, and we'll give it a shot.

HEALTH CARE ALTERNATIVE

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. You know, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't going to come down here and speak tonight, but I saw my learned colleague who's a trial lawyer coming down here to talk. The trial lawyers have been doing very well over the years suing doctors and driving up the cost of medical care because of the suits that have to be paid, and the insurance that the doctors have to buy to protect themselves against malpractice claims is astronomical in some States. In some States, doctors are actually leaving the State or retiring from their practices because they can't afford to pay those premiums and/or they're worried to death that they're going to lose everything they have worked a whole lifetime to attain through a lawsuit.

And so it's not a surprise to me that my colleague that was just here, who is a trial lawyer, would be down here talking about the changes that he thinks ought to be made in health care.

We have an alternative. Our alternative is to allow small businesses to bind together to buy insurance for their employees at the same rates as a major corporation; to allow small businesses and individuals to buy insurance across State lines so there's more competition in the system; to come up with tort reform, which will limit these astounding settlements that these trial lawyers get.

There's a whole host of things that we have talked about putting into legislation that will help solve the problems of health care, but they don't want to talk about it. In fact, what

they talk about is that we're the Party of "No," we're being obstructionists, and we don't want to solve the health care problems. We do want to solve the health care problems. And we can solve the health care problems without destroying the free enterprise system.

They are for government takeover of medicine. That is socialized medicine. And they want to see the government telling all of us what kind of care we get, who we get it from, when we get it, and what rationing might take place. And there will be rationing of health care if their plan passes. And that's something I don't think the American people want.

And then you start talking to the senior citizens. They want to take \$500 billion out of Medicare and Medicare Advantage. What's that going to do to the seniors and the health care they're getting right now? That's going to add to the problem that they say they're going to solve. Just putting the government in complete control of health care is not going to be the answer.

We have problems that need to be solved. They can be solved. They can be solved within the free enterprise system. We don't want to destroy free enterprise in America. There are those on that side and I believe at the White House that believe government should run everything. They should run health care; they should run energy, like the cap-and-trade bill; they should run the automobile industry. We now have Government Motors that took over General Motors. They want to run the finance industry. And the crown jewel is health care, because health care is one-sixth of our economy. They get that. They're on their way to the government controlling every part of our lives, at least in large part.

This is something that we don't believe in in America. We believe in the free enterprise system and the people that have the ability to succeed to have that opportunity, the people who come from nowhere can make money because the system works. And we don't want the government telling us what we can and we can't do. We believe in freedom in this country and not more and more government control.

If their health care bill passes, there will be rationing of health care. There will be bureaucrats coming between people and their doctors. And government here in Washington will be making decisions for people's health care. Are they taking care of the other problems we're facing in this country? Are they solving the problems without the costs going through the roof? Their program is going to cost at least \$1.5 trillion to \$3 trillion that we do not have. And our kids and our grandkids are going to have to pay for that. That's unbelievable that we pass to the next generation all the problems that we face today.

We could come to grips with this, and we could solve the problem if they'll sit down and work with us. They keep say-

ing, Well, we're not working with them. They've got about an 80-vote majority in this House. In the other body, they've got 59-41. They can pass anything they want. They've got the guy in the White House. The reason they can't get it done is because you, the American people, don't want it. You don't want government control over our lives, and you don't want socialized medicine.

We can solve these problems. And we can do it within the free enterprise system if we just sit down and get the job done. Let there be competition in the free enterprise system and medicine, and we'll solve these problems.

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.)

RULE OF LAW

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

Mr. CARTER. I'm honored to be here. I think some might remember in this body that for the last about year, year and a half, I've been getting up here and talking about the rule of law and how the basic foundation of American society is based upon a set of rules, a set of laws. Without that foundation, that surrender of sovereignty of the American people to pieces of paper that describe how we will behave in this world, we would be an uncivilized Nation and we would not be the great Nation of liberty and freedom that we are today. I've talked about the fact that when we talk about the rule of law, we're not just talking about abiding by the laws of this country. We're talking about abiding by the rules that we set to operate whatever we operate in this country.

I'm reminded to tell a story. When my oldest son was, I believe, in the seventh or the eighth grade; he played football. He was the best punter. He was also the center. So the one time he didn't snap the ball was when he was the punter. He punted the ball. He did a pretty good job of it. We played a team—I won't mention where it is, but if he's listening, he'll know what I'm talking about—where the first time he kicked the ball, a guy came through and knocked him flat, and they didn't throw a flag. It's young kids playing and not, I guess, the most professional referees. So he took it and I took it and there was no problem.

The second time he punted the ball, somebody came in and knocked him flat again. At this point in time, I was really concerned about it. The third time he punted the ball, somebody