

think, a job killing so-called health care reform bill that the American people do not want but that the Democratic leadership and the President are determined to cram down our throats.

This bill will not help our situation in terms of health care or health insurance. It does not reduce the cost of health insurance which was one of the goals the President said that he wanted. It does not solve any of the problems that we need to solve in health care. In fact, it makes those problems worse.

Yesterday I had a town hall in Statesville, North Carolina, with about 175 people there. They are very upset about this proposed health care reform bill. They understand that a lot of dirty tricks are being played here, and they don't like it. They don't like several aspects of the proposal that is being brought forth this week.

Number one, they don't like the fact that the Democrats are proposing to pass this bill without voting on the bill. They know that goes from passing bills without reading them to passing bills without voting for them. Another thing that they don't like is they don't like to see two bills that have no relationship to each other put together because one of the bills can't pass on its own and so the folks in charge attach it to a bill that they can get the votes for.

And so what the majority people are doing is they are going to latch onto their reconciliation bill a job-killing government takeover of student loans. They are attaching that to their job-killing government takeover of health care which many people have called a monstrosity.

This is not the way the American people want us to be operating in this Congress. We are the greatest country in the world with the best form of government in the world. But what is about to happen this week, if the American people do not speak out even louder than they have spoken out, is you are going to see Democrats vote for this monstrosity and undermine the rule of law that exists in this country. It is a scary proposition.

Republicans know that we need reform in health insurance and in health care, and we have made proposals to do that. We have legislation that will reduce cost in health insurance. The plan that the Democrats have put forward will not reduce cost. Even one of their Senators, DICK DURBIN, said that last week on the floor of the Senate.

The bill also does not allow people to continue the current health insurance that they have which the President has been saying you could do. In his meeting with Republicans at our retreat, he admitted that he had been saying that incorrectly. He is still saying it even though he said it was incorrect because you will not be allowed to keep your insurance if you like it.

Republicans want for Americans to be able to buy their health care across State lines. We want medical liability

reform. We want to expand health savings accounts. We want to put Americans in charge of their health care and in charge of their health insurance. We don't want a giant government takeover of health insurance and health care. This can be done to help Americans, but what the Democrats are proposing will not be the right thing to do.

I serve on the Rules Committee. They are planning to bring a rule that will say if you vote for the rule, you voted for the bill. That has never happened in the history of this country. Again, it undermines the rule of law and the American people will not stand for it.

COLON CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. BOREN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOREN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to remind Members of this body that the month of March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. During the month of March, colon cancer advocates across the country will organize and participate in a wide range of activities to raise awareness about this horrible disease. This year alone, almost 150,000 Americans will be diagnosed with colon cancer, and approximately 50,000 of them will die from it.

Madam Speaker, it doesn't have to be that way. If detected early, the survival rate for colon cancer is almost 90 percent. Yet less than half of all Americans get the recommended preventive tests by the suggested age of 50.

Colon cancer is an issue that is very personal to me; 12 years ago, I lost my mother Janna to this dreadful disease. And since arriving in Congress, I have made it one of my missions to bring attention to this serious yet preventable cancer. So for the next 3 weeks, I want Members of this body to ask themselves and their constituents two important questions: Have you asked your doctor if you should get a colonoscopy? Do you know that it could save your life?

THE FAIR TAX

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, this past weekend, like many Americans, my wife and I sat at our kitchen table and worked on getting our taxes figured out so we could file our return. Across our country, millions of Americans are working to finalize their annual tax return. It is clear that our system of income taxes is broken. To restore our Nation's economic health, increase personal liberty, reduce cheating and confusion, and restore fairness, Congress must abandon our current tax code and replace it with something much better.

There is no reason that paying taxes should be so complicated and so con-

fusing. The burden in this process that is placed upon individuals and small businesses must be relieved. The IRS itself has estimated that 7.6 billion hours are spent in tax preparation every year. That 7.6 billion hours equates to 3.8 million people working full time for a full year. Congress can simplify this process and reduce the amount of time and energy spent on paying our taxes.

As a longtime supporter of the FAIR Tax, I see H.R. 25 as a step in the direction of liberty and prosperity. The FAIR Tax seeks to eliminate the payroll, estate, and many other taxes to be replaced by a national sales tax levied on purchased goods. Overhauling the U.S. Tax Code is not an easy task to undertake, but reducing the burden of filing taxes should be a priority in this Congress. Anyone who views our tax collection practices can see the flaws. The question is whether Congress has the courage and determination to change it.

The process of tax reform has major consequences for every American, but it is a process that must be started because the consequences of inaction are too costly. The truth remains that Americans want and need some sort of tax filing relief. The need for common-sense reform becomes more obvious during this tax season.

I have called on the newly installed chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. LEVIN) to schedule a hearing on the FAIR Tax. I encourage my colleagues who are serious about starting an open conversation on tax reform to join me in this request. The American people are ready to have that conversation, and their representatives should be also.

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Americans are in need of tax reform and simplification, but instead, all they are getting from this Congress is increased spending and record deficits. By reforming this broken process, Americans will once more be in charge of their lives and their money.

Over the course of the last several years, American taxpayers have become much more attentive to what is and what is not happening in Washington, DC. Tea Party protests and fair tax advocates are making their voices heard. Their message is clear to Congress if Congress will only listen—simplify the tax code. In doing so, we will create an opportunity for economic growth and new prosperity while increasing personal freedom and liberty.

April 15 is now less than 1 month away. No more business as usual. Let's not let another tax year go by without action to replace our convoluted, confusing, and freedom-restricting tax code.

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WALZ. Madam Speaker, this week this House has a historic opportunity. For far too long, millions of Americans have not been able to afford basic health care coverage. For far too long, families with insurance are told when they finally need to use that insurance, that they are not covered. For too long, insurance company executives and bureaucrats have dictated what is covered to the doctors.

For far too long, those who are insured have been paying a hidden tax to cover the millions of uninsured. This week the figure is \$51 million. For far too long, the United States has spent double the amount of any other industrialized nation, and we are no healthier for it. And for far too long, there have been those who have said we can wait a little longer; we will put health care off and do it at another time.

This button was given to me last weekend by a woman in Fountain, Minnesota. It reads, "Healthcare for All—the time is now." She's been carrying it for 25 years.

Last week, the Mayo Clinic—which is in my district in southern Minnesota—along with the Cleveland Clinic and other leading institutions, put out a statement urging reform in this House. The statement read, "Reforming health care in America will not become easier with the passage of time," and we urge you to move forward.

The time is right for America to fix this inequity. The time is right to move America forward, and as the button says, health care for all, the time is now. That is this week.

FLORIDIANS ARE HARD AT WORK

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for 5 minutes.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, yesterday, March 15, was Florida's Day of Action to raise awareness about the sham elections in Sudan which are scheduled for next month. When the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in the year 2005, the dream of a united Sudan, where everyone—regardless of gender, ethnicity, or religion—lived in freedom, it seemed possible. Elections were intended to usher that change.

Unfortunately, the Sudanese Government has since proven that it will do anything to remain in power—including slaughtering civilians and stealing elections. Southern parties have committed abuses, but it is Sudan's tyrant—an indicted war criminal—who remains the greatest obstacle to peace.

The time for wishful thinking is over. These elections are a sham, hijacked to legitimize the rule of a reprehensible, murderous regime. Responsible nations must work to ensure Sudan's butcher answers for his crimes before this process moves forward.

So congratulations to the many Floridians who spearheaded the Day of Action yesterday.

And speaking of Floridians, our State is hurting. Our economy is in serious trouble. Floridians ask what is the best way to put Floridians back to work without increasing our mounting national debt. The latest national unemployment record shows that we're still facing an almost 10-percent unemployment statistic. And totally unacceptable is Florida's numbers. Florida's number, 11.8 percent unemployment rate in my home State of Florida.

How can we fix this problem? Part of it deals with what U.S. Trade Representative Ron Kirk, said, and it was an important and very timely message. He said, Trade supports millions of U.S. jobs and expanding trade must be part of the U.S. economy. Congress needs to support long-delayed trade pacts with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea, which will greatly expand access to overseas markets for Florida businesses.

While these agreements are stalling here in Washington, our competitors are cutting their own deals to open more markets for their exporters. The European Union, for example, has concluded an agreement with South Korea—similar to the one that has been languishing here in Washington, DC.

Hundreds of thousands of people are employed in the trade industry. In my home State of Florida, we exported more than \$47 billion in goods last year. South Florida is the gateway to Latin America, and it's a huge hub for trade with Colombia, which has already produced thousands of jobs in key industries, such as the flower-importing industry. Trade is a crucial part of our economic recovery and an ideal opportunity for Democrats and Republicans to work together on an important issue.

It's so important to my home State of Florida, which brings me to another national issue that is crucial to my State of Florida, and that is a complete and accurate census count. We must mobilize everyone to participate in the 2010 census and help increase funding for education, health care, transportation, and other key programs while ensuring that our area will get the programs it deserves.

Having represented a diverse area such as South Florida here in Congress, I know that we need to reach out to residents of low-income and minority neighborhoods, which are especially at risk of being undercounted in the 2010 census. Along with many other metropolitan areas, Miami-Dade County will have a bilingual, English and Spanish, census form, as well as a special census outreach effort to the Colombian, to the Haitian, to the Cuban communities, among many different ethnic groups in our community and in our Nation.

Accurate data reflecting changes in our diverse and ever-changing communities will decide how over \$400 billion per year is spent in Federal grants and how it's allocated for programs like new hospitals and schools.

So your assistance, South Florida, with a complete census count will help ensure that essential social service programs like job training, after-school programs, school lunch programs, senior citizen centers, they will receive the funding they deserve. So please help us kick off our efforts to get the most complete census count in history. Floridians, get on board.

And I am so proud of the many Floridians who do amazing things every day.

In my congressional district of South Florida, Madam Speaker, extraordinary groups such as Teens Against Domestic Abuse, otherwise known as T-A-D-A—TADA—are working to raise awareness about domestic abuse. And TADA is a local student activist group run by a caring and passionate young woman, Emily Martinez-Lanza.

So I thank the exemplary work of Floridians. From the Call of Action on Sudan, to the economy, to the census, to combating domestic abuse, Floridians are hard at work.

"PASSED" NOT "DEEMED"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. PENCE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. PENCE. Madam Speaker, the American people don't want a government takeover of health care. I heard it at town hall meetings, across eastern Indiana this weekend, and at a rally at the Statehouse in Indianapolis yesterday where over a thousand gathered on short notice.

Now, I know many in the Democratic leadership and the administration don't like us to call it a "government takeover of health care," but when you mandate that every American purchase health insurance—whether they want it or need it or not—you mandate what's in that insurance. If you set up a government-run insurance exchange to control what kind of insurance people can buy and set up a massive bureaucracy, even a new health care czar to govern all of it, that sure looks like to me a government takeover of health care. And the American people know it.

Now, clear majorities of this country have rejected this approach. But nevertheless, as we read in the papers, Congress is intent this week on bringing this legislation—seemingly by any means—to the floor of the House of Representatives. And I want to speak about those means today.

The choice that the leadership of the Congress has before them is whether or not to bring the wildly discredited Senate bill to the floor of the House of Representatives. But the truth is, the bill, with its Cornhusker Kickback, with the public funding of abortion, simply couldn't pass the House floor. There's just not the votes for it.

But it seems at this moment what we hear is that the Democratic leadership here in Congress is so desperate to pass this government takeover of health care that they are willing to twist the