

pass their government takeover without a single up-or-down vote.

As a mom, I would never allow my kids to deem their rooms clean; so it is disgraceful that the majority plans to deem their \$2.5 trillion government takeover of health care as passed without a vote as provided for in the Constitution.

I urge my colleagues to do the truly courageous thing and demand a clean vote.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. LEWIS of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, the time is always right to do what is right, and that time is now. The spirit of history is upon us. We must pass health care.

There are those who have told us to wait. They have told us to be patient. We cannot wait. We cannot be patient. The American people need health care, and they need it now.

Will we stand with the American people or will we stand with the big insurance companies? We have a moral obligation to make health care a right and not a privilege.

We cannot wait a moment longer. We must pass health care, and we must pass it now.

□ 1230

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. LANCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LANCE. Madam Speaker, today, The Washington Post bore a headline that should be of grave concern to all Americans: "House may try to pass Senate health care bill without voting on it." The Post article said, "After laying the groundwork for a decisive vote this week on the Senate's health care bill, House Speaker NANCY PELOSI suggested Monday that she might attempt to pass the measure without having Members vote on it."

Despite deep reservations of a majority of Americans, congressional leaders plan to ram through their 2,700-page, nearly \$1 trillion proposal, by using a parliamentary maneuver that is both politically treacherous and likely unconstitutional. Article I, section 7 of the Constitution clearly states that a bill must pass both the House and Senate to become law.

I call on leaders of Congress to adhere to our Constitution's requirement of democratic accountability and allow a straight up-or-down vote on the majority party's health care proposal that is opposed by the American people.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. McDERMOTT asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, the great philosopher George Santayana said, Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. Now the Republicans say we should scrap the bill and start all over again. In 1994, Newt Gingrich very proudly killed Mrs. Clinton's health care effort. We have waited 16 years. Twelve years we had Republicans in control of this House. We had 6 years with the Republican Senate, a Republican House, and a Republican President—and nothing was offered.

What you're saying today is, Let's kill the Democratic bill, and we'll wait another 16 years to 2026 until we try again. The Americans are going into bankruptcy—two-thirds of them because of health care. We cannot wait any longer. The time has come for a vote, folks. Let's stand up and tell the American people you want to wait until 2026 to try again. That doesn't make sense.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, the health care debate has roused the American public like few other issues ever have. For months, the American people have stood up and said they don't want the government in charge of health care and they don't want the bill that's currently moving through Congress. Now I've received thousands of emails and phone calls and letters from my constituents, and the vast majority of them are opposed to this bill. But how long will it take for Washington to listen to the American public?

Congress should heed the will of the American people and start over on bipartisan reform that will lower health care costs for everyone. But instead, the Speaker and the House leadership are now suggesting they may pass this controversial bill without Members even actually having to vote on it. Using a legislative sleight-of-hand to pass an unpopular bill represents an arrogance in Washington that Americans find so frustrating about politics and business as usual in Congress.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. NORTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. NORTON. Madam Speaker, the American people are fed up with the most costly health care system in the world with too little good health to show for it. We are 38th of 195 countries in life expectancy. Pity those who think they can run on the theme: "Repeal health care reform." Democrats opposed Bush's version of prescription drugs for seniors because, unlike our

health care bill that's coming to the floor, the Bush plan added billions to the deficit, didn't pay for the bill, and cut seniors off with the doughnut hole. But we never ran on the outrageous theme "repeal prescription drugs for seniors." Instead, we vowed to fix the prescription drug law if Americans would give us control of the Congress. They did—and we are. We are closing the doughnut hole, and we are paying for it. You're entitled to criticize, indeed to change the health care reform Americans have been waiting for for almost a hundred years. But it is simply a fool's errand to oppose it, and madness to try to repeal it.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, from The Cincinnati Enquirer to The Washington Post, the editorials today tell the Democrats to stop this health care reform and start again. I agree because I've always based my work on health care on increasing access. This bill fails at increasing overall access. The Senate bill expands Medicaid to cover families earning up to 133 percent of poverty level. The Medicaid rolls will explode under this proposal. But what does that mean? Some 40 percent of family practice physicians currently do not accept Medicaid patients. This is expected to increase to 60 percent. Some 60 percent of specialists currently do not accept Medicaid patients. This is expected to skyrocket to 80 percent.

This bill expands Medicaid beyond its capacity to absorb patients, it cuts Medicare for seniors, and leaves malpractice tort reform untouched and skyrocketing costs in place. This bill has the potential to bankrupt rural hospitals that have a disproportionate share of the problems inherent in the bill. This adds up to less access and lower quality. That is not reform.

REAFFIRM BONDS WITH ISRAEL

(Mr. QUIGLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, the United States and Israel have long shared an important friendship. That friendship is rooted in close moral and strategic bonds built on common values, common interests, and common concerns. Today, that friendship is being tested, but we must not allow ourselves to be distracted from the concerns and goals that bring us together. The threat of a nuclear Iran is too great and the peace process is too important for us to spend more time engaging in critical rhetoric of our most important ally. It is time to put aside the rhetoric and reaffirm our bonds with Israel.

We must make it clear that we are united in our opposition to a nuclear

Iran. While no one gains by an escalation of tensions, we must make it clear that we value and support our relationship with the State and the people of Israel.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. CALVERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CALVERT. Madam Speaker, right now, behind closed doors, negotiations are taking place on the \$1 trillion bill to provide for the government takeover of health care. I find it baffling that instead of talking about jobs, my friends on the other side of the aisle continue a path toward radically changing 20 percent of our economy. Small businesses continue to struggle, but rather than creating an environment that eases financial burdens on business, the administration and this Congress are creating uncertainty through health care takeovers, cap-and-tax, deficit spending, looming tax increases. A recent analysis of the current health care bill shows that it could cost America 1 million jobs by the end of this decade. That is unacceptable.

I recently polled my constituents. Two-thirds are absolutely opposed to the health care bill. They want Congress to start over and focus on items we agree on. Let's return to the question of how we can make health care more accessible, more efficient, and less expensive. Let's kill this bill and save American freedom and our economy.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. SCHWARTZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. SCHWARTZ. Families across our Nation understand deeply and personally that the status quo in health care is not working. They're calling upon us through millions of supportive calls, emails, and messages to Congress to pass a uniquely American solution to ensure that all Americans have access to meaningful, affordable health coverage. And that is what this Congress is committed to do.

Health care reform means commonsense consumer protections like prohibiting insurers from denying coverage based on preexisting conditions, a provision that was supported by bipartisan, unanimous vote last night in the Budget Committee. It means affordable, private health care options. Choices for individuals and small businesses. It means strengthening Medicare for seniors, which means closing that doughnut hole—the gap in prescription coverage for too many seniors; improving quality and efficiency in health care services; and containing the rising cost of health care, a challenge that faces all of us as taxpayers and as purchasers of health care and health coverage.

Our plan builds on America's public-private system. It is not only paid for, but it reduces the Federal deficit by \$100 billion. Passing health care reform benefits all of us. The status quo is unacceptable. Now is the time to act.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mrs. SCHMIDT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Yesterday, Bloomberg reported what Moody's has been saying all year. Moody's once again reminded the United States that we are moving "substantially" closer to losing our AAA credit rating due to the rising cost of our debt service. The U.S. will spend 7 percent of our revenue this year just on servicing our debt. By 2013, Moody's estimates, we will spend 11 percent of our revenue just to pay the interest on our national debt. This would be a higher percentage than every other top-rated country.

Fortunately, we can protect our credit rating by reining in runaway spending and reducing our debt. But what does this President and this Democrat-controlled Congress do? They want to ram down a new huge entitlement program called the health care bill, riddled with awful policy and budget gimmicks that mask its true impact, through the House, maybe even without an official vote. The truth is, this health care bill is going to choke our economy and saddle our children with \$500 billion in new taxes and deficits far worse than they are now.

PASS THE HIRE ACT

(Mr. CARDOZA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CARDOZA. Few regions in the Nation are suffering more from the recession than the San Joaquin Valley of California. The three biggest cities in my district—Merced, Stockton, and Modesto—have some of the highest foreclosure and unemployment rates in the country. As I've said before, my district has been economically ravaged at the level equal to the devastation that we have seen oftentimes in the aftermath of hurricanes.

Twelve days ago, the Democratic Congress passed the HIRE Act to help create jobs, strengthen our economy, and to bring help to the communities like mine that need it. It provides tax incentives and credits for businesses to hire unemployed workers and to help small businesses invest and expand. This commonsense legislation will help countless unemployed Americans back onto company payrolls. It's high time for the Senate to finally pass this bill and send it to President Obama. Nowhere is this bill more necessary than in the San Joaquin Valley. We needed help last week, and we needed it a year ago. Economic relief for my constituents remain long overdue. It's time to

stop playing political games and start providing it.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. COFFMAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COFFMAN. Madam Speaker, my Democratic colleagues continue to tout claims that this health care bill is "completely paid for" and "will bring down the deficit." But those claims are patently false. The accounting assumptions Democrats have given the Congressional Budget Office to score this bill are nothing short of an Enron-style gimmick. Just look at the most glaring example. The bill counts 10 years of tax increases, amounting to nearly half a trillion dollars, and 10 years of Medicare cuts, also a half a trillion dollars, but it only counts for 6 years of spending.

So what is the real cost of this bill? What does it cost when you compare 10 years of spending with 10 years of taxes and Medicare cuts? \$2.3 trillion. That's nowhere near budget neutral and will drive the deficit up much higher than it already is. Let us defeat this bill.

□ 1245

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Ms. SPEIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SPEIER. Madam Speaker, it's time for us to stop talking in generalities and gibberish. It's time to start talking about real people and their real experiences. One thing all of us can agree on is that we trust our doctors. I just received a letter from a doctor in my district, Michael Bresler, who is an ER doc. Four years ago, his insurance premium to Anthem Blue Cross for his family of four was \$539 a month. This year that same policy will cost him \$2,008 a month, a 373 percent increase since 2006. What makes this especially hard to take is that in 2005, Dr. Bresler and his practice were forced by Blue Cross to accept a contract with a 60 percent reduction in payments. Dr. Bresler calls Anthem Blue Cross "robber barons." I assume he uses harsher language when he is not corresponding with Congress.

Madam Speaker, this is not a fight among Democrats and Republicans. This is a fight between robber barons, the insurance industry, and American doctors, families and working people.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. SHUSTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SHUSTER. The next few days will tell the American people whether Congress represents their interests and