

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.

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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

their will. The American people do not want this health care bill to become law. In my district, they strongly and vocally oppose this plan, and I hear this every day in phone calls and emails, people coming into my office. But I also hear it when I go to the grocery store or to a restaurant in my district. People come up and tell me, BILL, oppose this bill. Stop this bill. And I fully intend on voting against it.

I have also talked to the small businesses and large businesses across this country. They oppose it also because it's creating great uncertainty for them, and this great uncertainty is causing harm to our economy. They're not hiring new employees because of the uncertainty of the cost this bill will have on them. They're not investing in their businesses because of the uncertainty these mandates will have, will push down onto their businesses. This is exactly the kind of uncertainty that's keeping our unemployment rate at 10 percent, and job creation is stagnant. The Democrats' health care plan is reckless, and I believe it will put America on a path to financial ruin.

THE THIRD CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT OF NEVADA

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

Ms. TITUS. Madam Speaker, last week I hosted a telephone town hall with more than 3,500 people tuned in from District Three. This was an excellent opportunity to hear directly from my constituents about the issues that are important to their lives. This was the sixth telephone town hall that I participated in. In addition, we've answered some 95,000 letters, held 10 Congress on the Corners, and hosted five housing workshops.

These means of communication have helped me to be a powerful voice for the people of District Three and to provide as much transparency as possible about the proceedings here in Washington. In fact, thanks to these efforts, I've put \$1.6 million directly into the pockets of southern Nevadans by fighting for veterans to get their benefits, seniors to get their Social Security benefits, and homeowners to receive loan modifications that keep them in their homes. I've made it a top priority to stay closely connected to my constituents, fighting for them in Washington while serving them in southern Nevada. I encourage them to call on me any time.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GRIFFITH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to encourage the rejection of this health care bill. The American people have spoken out time after time, and I'm puzzled why Congress is

still considering it. Done in secrecy, this bill will cost jobs, raise taxes, and slash Medicare benefits. And as a physician, I know this bill will be bad for patients. It's terrible for our economy, and it's damaging to the very people we are trying to help.

Although the past is no guarantee of the future, it is, however, instructive. This administration has a failed stimulus package, a failed banking system, a failed cap-and-trade, and numerous questionable interventions into General Motors, AIG, Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and others. This kind of track record gives the American public no reason to trust this administration with its health care. I urge my colleagues to listen to the will of the American people and vote "no."

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, the process which the Democratic majority will reportedly use to ram their costly government health care program through this House is truly deplorable and likely unconstitutional. Article I, section 7 of the Constitution clearly states that both Chambers must pass their bills by a vote. Then the bill is sent to the President for his signature before we can reconcile a bill here in Congress.

It's unconscionable to disregard these principles after the American people have clearly said "no" to this plan. They've told Congress to go back to the drawing board and find a solution. It's wrong to flaunt the Constitution and the will of the American people by forcing this proposal down their throats.

Madam Speaker, it will be a sad day for this institution and our great Nation if a proposal of this nature comes to the floor of the House under these circumstances.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, we have been debating health care reform for over 1 year. Today I am urging my colleagues to step up to the plate with courage and vote for passage of this critical legislation. If we don't move forward, the American people will be faced with grave consequences due to our inaction. Rising health costs are crushing American families, forcing small businesses to choose between health care and jobs.

Madam Speaker, \$1 out of every \$6 in the U.S. economy is spent on health care today. If we do nothing, in 30 years \$1 out of every \$3 in our economy will be tied up in health care. If we fail to pass health care reform, families

could see their spending on premiums and out-of-pocket insurance costs rise 34 percent in 5 years and 79 percent in 10 years. Without reform, every 4 years 3.5 million American jobs will be lost. More importantly, if we fail to pass reform, insurance companies will be allowed to continue to deny coverage for preexisting conditions. Insurance companies will be allowed to drop coverage when you get sick.

I urge you to pass this bill now.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I am deeply concerned by reports that the majority party may try to move the health care reform bill through the House without a vote. To move such sweeping legislation, especially considering the price tag, using a parliamentary gimmick is unconscionable. The majority of the American people do not support the health care reform bill presently before Congress. It spends money we don't have, cuts the Medicare program when we should be coming up with ways to get our financial house in order and make sure the Medicare program is protected. The American people want a bipartisan bill that fixes what is broken and keeps what is working.

Where is the accountability? Where is the transparency? America expects more and deserves more. This morning The Washington Post said that what the Democrats are threatening to do is "unseemly." There needs to be an up-or-down vote on health care reform, not on a procedural sleight of hand.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GARAMENDI. I often wonder what part of the world our colleagues are living in on the other side of the aisle. I arrived here on November 5. On November 6 there was an up-or-down vote on a major health reform bill in this House. The Senate did it just before Christmas. I think it was Christmas Eve. There has been an up-or-down vote, and now this week we will have an opportunity to take up this bill, pass it on to the President, get it signed, and simultaneously make corrections in the Senate. It sounds to me like that's an open process, and we've been at this now for more than a year here and this Nation for more than a century, trying to provide health care for all.

And let's keep in mind that our economy absolutely demands that we take action now. Seventeen percent of our economy is being used. The more we spend, the more uninsured we have. We solve those problems with this bill. It's