

the insurance premiums should be put into a special medical spending account for those on all government and private insurance programs who would, in turn, be able to use tax-free funds for discretionary health care purchases. This would be the first step in turning patients into savvy health care consumers. As they save money for themselves, they will save it for the health care system at large, thus bending the cost curve downward.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, yesterday I held a town hall in Statesville, North Carolina, to hear from my constituents about health care reform. One thing was abundantly clear: they do not want this bill, and they're sick and tired of the backroom deals and provisions that have characterized this process. They wanted health care reform, but they were vehemently opposed to the Senate bill.

My constituents are asking me, If this is such a wonderful bill, why is the majority resorting to tricks and sleight of hand to get it passed? If this bill is so great, why not have a regular vote? The answer is simple: this is not a bill the American people want. Some Members acknowledge that.

Madam Speaker, we should listen to the American people. We should take an incremental approach to health care reform that the American people can support.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. ROSKAM. Madam Speaker, as we are here today on the House floor, at this very moment the Democratic leadership of the House of Representatives is smiling and dialing. They are calling Members of Congress on the other side of the aisle, cajoling them and coaxing them and urging them to do the equivalent of really political bungee jumping, but they don't know how long the cord is. They are saying, You be the first one to jump off. We're going to vote for this Senate bill, and you are going to trust in the Senate to take it up and fix it. Or alternatively, even worse, we're not going to have a final vote on this bill.

Can you imagine a process that is this manipulated that is at this high stakes, literally the Federal Government taking over one-sixth of the economy really in the twinkling of an eye? And it is as if the Democratic leaders are telling the American public, Oh, look, we have got a wonderful plan for your life. You are just going to love it. We are going to vote on it, and then we'll let you read it.

Madam Speaker, we can do better. The American public demands that we do better, to vote "no" and start over.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GOODLATTE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to not only the Democrats' health care proposal but to the outrageous process by which the majority intends to ram this bill through the House while denying Members of Congress an up-or-down vote on the bill. This morning's Cincinnati Enquirer declared what Americans all over this country are saying: "This disgusting process, which Democrats brazenly wish to bring to conclusion this week, is being done with little regard for the opinions of a clear majority of Americans who, while they may believe health care reform is necessary, think this particular approach will take our Nation down the wrong economic path."

American families want health care reform that will expand access and choices and decrease costs. The Democrats' health care bill includes tax increases, Medicare cuts, job-killing mandates, and higher premiums. This bill is nothing more than the same government-run insurance mandates and taxes the American people have overwhelmingly rejected. This bill must be killed. We must start over.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, when I was driving into work last Friday, I heard the Governor of Arizona on the news saying that her State already faces its biggest deficit ever, over \$3 billion. She said they had calculated that the health care bill would cost an additional \$4 billion that they simply do not have.

Because Tennessee already covers more than most States, our Democratic Governor, nonetheless, said it would cost out State from \$750 million up to \$3 billion more. Most States are in far worse shape than Tennessee or Arizona, yet much of this bill is paid for by forcing millions more onto State and Medicaid rolls. In yesterday's Washington Post, columnist Robert Samuelson said the bill "evades health care's major problems and would worsen the budget outlook." He wrote that "It's a big new spending program when government hasn't paid for the spending programs it already has."

Madam Speaker, even if this program were the greatest thing since sliced bread, the fact is that we simply cannot afford it.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. HARPER. Madam Speaker, late last night, the House Budget Committee approved the reconciliation shell bill with two Democratic Members joining all Republicans in opposing this enormous entitlement expansion, and we still do not know what changes the Speaker will bring forward.

The President has asked Congress to hold an up-or-down vote on the Senate's so-called health care reform proposal. Let's have that vote. The President has argued the Democrats need courage to pass this one-size-fits-all government takeover of health care. But where's the courage in hiding behind procedural chaos like the Slaughter solution? No matter what anyone says, a "yes" vote on the reconciliation bill is a vote for the Senate's flawed trillion-dollar bill containing kickbacks, like the Cornhusker kick-back and the Louisiana purchase, and allows for Federal funding for abortion.

The bottom line is this health care bill is so bad that the Democrats have to resort to trickery. I will not support a bill that will increase families' insurance premiums and force hundreds of millions of dollars in unfunded mandates to my home State of Mississippi. I will not support this abusive use of the reconciliation process, and I will not support the bogus procedures that are being used to hide from the American people. I urge you to oppose this legislation.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Madam Speaker, this year I replaced town hall meetings in my district with listening sessions. I go to hear what my constituents have to teach me and to teach this body. They want us to know that the process matters to them. Some of my colleagues like to say that it doesn't make any difference, but my constituents know that when legislation is negotiated in the backroom, that America loses. They know that in the back rooms, stimulus bills turn into pork bills, bailout bills turn into just more debt, and energy bills turn into taxes.

Today, hundreds of Americans are walking the halls of this building, asking us to stop this outrageous government takeover of health care and take health reform step by step and structure a system that lets them out of this broken system, not locks them into it permanently. I hear them, Madam Speaker, and I certainly hope that this Chamber hears them.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. WITTMAN. Madam Speaker, I'm hearing loud and clear from people of America's First District in Virginia that this health care bill before us will not reduce costs, will not increase access, and is full of sweetheart, backroom deals that they find highly objectionable and that now we are proposing to put this bill through without having to directly vote on the bill. That also makes them mad.

Let me tell you what they're saying. Jimmy from Yorktown says, "We are very concerned with the direction congressional leadership is taking health care reform. It is apparent Congress is not listening to the American public. We understand the need to address health care reform. However, Congress must include fiscal responsibility in any reform legislation. Congress needs to listen to the American voter and taxpayer instead of holding our views in contempt."

There are many other people from the First District that have very similar views. I urge my colleagues to vote "no." Let's listen to the American people, listen to their concerns, and do the right thing.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, one day after the health care summit at the Blair House, Peggy Noonan wrote in The Wall Street Journal, and I quote: What the meeting made clear is what the Democrats are going to do, not step back and save the moderates of their party, but attempt to bully a bill through the Congress. This is boorish of them, and they will suffer for it."

Indeed, Madam Speaker, I think the Democrats will get slaughtered for it. But, unfortunately, the collateral damage is to the health of the American people. I ask all my colleagues, join with me and my constituents in the 11th Congressional District of Georgia and vote "no" on this rule and this so-called deeming legislation.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. TIERNEY. Madam Speaker, if my previous colleague thought that the Democrats were going to get slaughtered for passing this bill, a few of them would cut out of the herd and help pass it. But that's absolutely not the case. This year-long debate and the bipartisan health care meeting show that Democrats and Republicans do agree in some areas. Both agree that

the status quo isn't working for Americans; both agree that waste, fraud and abuse should be removed from the system; both agree that we should invest in prevention and wellness.

The bill has incorporated several Republican ideas into its proposal, but Democrats and Republicans have a profound disagreement on the proper oversight on insurance companies. We believe that insurance companies need to be held accountable with minimum commensurate standards to help keep premiums and industry abuses down. Republicans believe that insurance companies should have a freer hand and should be free to raise rates and reduce, and even eliminate, coverage. We believe that the most effective way to reduce premiums for all Americans and businesses, large and small, and the only way to cover all people with pre-existing conditions is to make sure that everyone is in the insurance system. Republicans disagree, and their plan will not outlaw discrimination against people with preexisting conditions. Those are profound differences, Madam Speaker, and that's why we need health care reform.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my utter disbelief and disappointment at the path the Democrat leadership has chosen for health care reform. Never, ever in my 14 years of legislating have I ever been asked to vote for a bill that will "be fixed later." We don't even know what this bill costs—well, in excess of \$1 trillion—or what backroom deals will wind up being in this bill after the vote. It is an absolute affront to the integrity of this Congress that we are being asked to put a signature on the bottom of a blank page.

Now, we've all seen team building exercises where one person stands blindfolded on the edge of a table and is asked to fall back into the arms of their colleagues. Well, that's what the Speaker is asking this Congress to do, to fall backwards from this precipice with the promise that all will be well. My constituents deserve more than a mere promise of trust. We should not be asked to be voting on a bill that will affect one-sixth of our economy and touch every single American's life without knowing what is in the bill.

Well, the Speaker knows what's in the bill, and she doesn't want anybody to vote on it. Americans deserve health reform, but they deserve it the right way.

THE DEFINITION OF COURAGE

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

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Madam Speaker, yesterday the President of the United States was in beautiful Strongsville, Ohio, and the biggest applause line he got was when he said, We need courage. We need courage to have an up-or-down vote on the health care bill.

Now, I'm not a big fan of the health care bill, but I thought, My, that's pretty brave. And I looked up "courage": mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, withstand danger, fear, or difficulty. So good for the President; he's standing up for his principles.

Well, imagine my surprise when I padded out in my jammies this morning and got The Washington Post, and the headline on the top of the fold is "Pelosi may try to pass health bill without vote." And I said, No, she didn't. But, I thought, perhaps sometimes newspapers are misleading and the headline might not describe the story. But no, sadly, this is the story.

So it's not courage that we're going to have here. So I went a little further in the dictionary. "Cowardly," that fits. "Craven," that fits. You go a little into the Ds; "deceptive," that's appropriate. Go a little bit further, "gutless," into the Gs. Right. "Spineless," under the Ss. And you can go all the way to the Ys, "yellow-bellied."

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. RICHARDSON). The Chair will remind all persons in the gallery, that they are here as guests of the House, and that any manifestation of approval or disapproval of proceedings or other audible conversation is in violation of the rules of the House.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. SOUDER. Back when Thomas Jefferson did the first Louisiana Purchase, he got all parts of 13 States for, what's in inflation-adjusted dollars, \$150 million today. When the Senate health care bill passed, it cost \$300 million to just get and buy one vote. Who knows what this week is going to cost the American taxpayers.

We've also seen the outrage of how they propose to pass this bill. Over in the Senate, rather than the deliberative body going through in what's a takeover of 17 percent of the American economy, they're going to go through and try to jam it with a majority plus the Vice President, or one, whatever they need.

Now we have the Slaughter rule in the House, where they're going to try not to even have an up-or-down vote. They're not even going to try to get 51 percent or 50 percent plus the Speaker. They're going to deem it passed.