

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.

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(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.

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(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.

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(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.

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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.

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(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.

Do they really think the American people are going to buy this unconstitutional fraud?

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Madam Speaker, look, I'm surprised when I go home. My constituents will tell me unequivocally that they're in favor of health care reform, but they're not in favor of this plan. And yet I come to Washington, and they say, if you're in favor of health care reform, you have to buy into this sham of a health care bill. Well, my constituents know what a sham is and, unfortunately, it's this Senate bill that the House is going to be voting on.

Then I read headlines that the Speaker of the House doesn't actually want a vote on the Senate bill, and I recall the basics of parliamentary procedure that require the House to vote on the exact same bill the Senate does before it can be signed by the President to be enacted into law. So the Democrats are just trying to pull a fast one on the American people.

The American people know that this is a bad deal. According to the Congressional Budget Office, run by a Democrat, they're right to be worried, because premiums will go up between 10 and 13 percent under this plan. That means \$2,100 more for the average family in America in health care expenses. It's a wrong plan, and we should oppose it.

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

Mr. COBLE. Madam Speaker, this past weekend I visited with four of my six counties in North Carolina—Moore, Guilford, Davidson, and Rowan counties—hundreds of people, and without exception, no one spoke in favor of this bill. Increased taxes, they said to me, increased costs. The heavy-handed way in which it's been administered, as if to say, By golly, this is the bill you're going to get whether you like it or not.

Madam Speaker, this proposal is a train wreck waiting to occur. We need no train wrecks.

I will admit that some attention needs to be directed to the delivery of health care in this Nation, but this is not the appropriate vehicle to deliver it. We need to scrap this bill and start anew with a sound proposal.

PASSING THE HEALTH CARE BILL WITHOUT A VOTE

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

Mr. STEARNS. Madam Speaker, to protect Members from voting on the Senate health care bill, Democrats are using a self-enacting rule to deem that bill passed by the House.

As Speaker PELOSI said, "It's more insider and process-oriented than most people want to know. But I like it because people don't have to vote on the Senate bill."

Huh?

This is the same Speaker who stated, "We have to pass the bill so you can see what's in it." So that you can see what's in it.

Huh?

They are distorting the Rules Committee procedures and the reconciliation process to ram through a health care bill. Where is the transparency that Speaker PELOSI talked about?

Huh?

Last year, the House was passing bills without reading them. This year, they are passing bills without voting on them.

The Democrats desire passage of a health care bill in the darkness of a self-enacting rule. It's an affront to the constitutional powers of Congress and every voter in this country.

DEMOCRAT HEALTH PLAN IS THE WRONG PRESCRIPTION FOR AMERICA

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, with millions of phone calls, emails and personal visits, the American people have made it clear to Congress that they want health care reform that lowers costs, not a government takeover of their health care system.

I support reforms that will lower the cost of health care and increase choices for Americans, but the fact is that the bills being pushed through Congress won't achieve these goals. They, instead, lead to higher spending and more government control.

Instead of listening to the American people, Democrats in Congress have made it clear that they will do whatever it takes to have their trillion dollar health care proposal become law. These bills making their way through Congress ignore the clear desire of Americans to scrap the government takeover of health care, and they ignore the clear desire of Americans to start over again.

Congress must, instead, focus on commonsense solutions that reduce costs, increase choices, and help more Americans afford the coverage they deserve.

The bottom line, Madam Speaker, is that Congress needs to start over on a new bill.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, when we picked up the headlines of The Washington Post today, it says, "Pelosi may try to pass health bill without vote." And through nothing more than budgetary gimmicks, like counting half a trillion dollars reserved for Medicare twice, the Speaker claims it's going to pencil out.

I think the American people know better. They understand that you cannot create a massive new entitlement program behind closed doors and expect our dire financial situation, our dire fiscal predicament in this country to do anything except compound.

Instead of addressing the actual drivers of rising health care costs, like escalating legal liability cost, and structural flaws in the way insurance is regulated, this bill compounds the problem and shifts the cost curve up, not down.

Faced with trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see, now is the time to take a step back and look for incremental reforms that can increase affordability for millions of Americans without saddling future generations with this unpayable tab.

The American people know that when so-called health care reform includes tax hikes, less freedom and more government control, it's a government takeover of health care.

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

Mr. FORTENBERRY. Madam Speaker, we are hearing about the problems with this health care bill, from its failure to address the real cost drivers, as well as its subversion of the democratic process. But here's another problem. The Speaker of the House, on Monday, asserted that the bill before us is "about health care, health insurance reform. It's not about abortion."

Now for the reality. The bill before us would permit the Federal Government to provide subsidies to insurance plans that cover abortion, oversee State plans that cover elective abortions, and allow Federal officials to mandate that private plans cover abortions. It is replete with abortion.

The American people have spoken, and they do not want their taxpayer dollars entangled in the provision of abortion. Abortion is not health care, and no American should be forced to pay for it.

We should be supporting those in vulnerable circumstances. Abortion is so often the result of abandonment. Women deserve better. But true health care reform must be life-affirming. I will not support this bill.

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