

transparency about what really is and is not covered. The reforms will cap out-of-pocket expenses and give Americans sliding-scale affordability credits to help them buy coverage.

Older women on Medicare will benefit from closing the doughnut hole and ensuring important preventive services like mammograms and cancer screenings are free of charge.

And finally, all women will benefit from an end to the discriminatory practices of gender rating and from making prevention and wellness a critical part of health care at last. For themselves, their spouses, their friends, daughters, and mothers, I urge my colleagues to pass this legislation.

WHERE IS THE FLAG?

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, America is the most generous country on the face of the earth. Americans have given more in blood and treasure worldwide to help others than any nation in the history of the world.

But the Navy Times is reporting that the United States does not fly our flag at its main installation at Port-au-Prince in Haiti. The administration says flying the flag may give people in Haiti the wrong idea. Well, what is that supposed to mean? Is our government ashamed of Old Glory?

News reports say that every other nation involved in relief efforts is proudly flying their flag in Haiti. Americans in Haiti are a testament to the good intentions of our country. Why should the administration force the military to hide our flag as if it's ashamed of the red, white, and blue?

The flag represents everything that's good and right about America. American troops should be able to fly the Stars and Stripes wherever they are in this world serving our Nation. After all, isn't that what the flag is about?

But now it sounds like the administration is once again apologizing for Americans being American.

And that's just the way it is.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, as we head to our health care reform decision, I think a story of a fellow I met the other day, a very unique American, bears repeating. His name is Gary Hall. He was in my office yesterday.

Gary Hall won five gold medals, three silver medals, and two bronze medals in swimming, over three separate Olympics, really an incredible achievement. He got his medical insurance through the Olympic Committee for 12 years, but after that he wasn't eligible. And guess what happened? No one would write him insurance because he has diabetes.

The insurance companies said, we don't care if you've won gold medals, silver medals, and bronze medals, we won't give you insurance.

Now, that has got to change. We have to pass a health reform bill. Whether you've won a gold medal in swimming or you're just an average Joe or Jane, you ought to be able to buy insurance, even if you've got diabetes.

We are going to have a bill on the floor shortly that we are going to vote on. The vote's going to be transparent. It's going to be recorded. Everybody knows what it's going to be. It's going to be constitutional. It's going to be just the way we've voted for years. We're going to make sure people get health insurance in this country.

SIMPLE TRUTHS

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

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, it's a simple truth that Republicans in Congress spent too much money. It's a simple truth, though, that in 12 years of Republican deficits, the Democrats in 1 year spent more money, with a deficit of \$1.4 trillion in 1 year.

It's a simple truth you can't insure 30 million more people without costing more to the Federal Government. It's a simple truth that if the government rewrites all the health care laws, you can't keep the health insurance that you now have.

It's a simple truth that with millions of new bureaucracies, or thousands of new bureaucracies and billions more dollars, bureaucrats will come in between you and your doctor.

And it's a simple truth the government that brought you "Cash For Clunkers" is not going to deliver good health care policy.

And it's a simple truth if the bill was so good we wouldn't need the Cornhusker kickback; we wouldn't need the Gatorade payoff; we wouldn't need the Louisiana purchase, and we would not have to promise to all Members of Congress all kinds of things that are in this bill and other bills to come if it was a good bill.

It's a simple truth the American people want us to start all over, and that's what we should be doing.

HEALTH REFORM AND WOMEN

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

Ms. SUTTON. Mr. Speaker, health care reform is critical to ensure that women have access to affordable health care. Currently, women can be charged higher rates simply because of their gender.

The Joint Economic Committee has estimated that 64 million women do not have adequate health insurance coverage today. 1.7 million women have lost their health insurance coverage

since the beginning of the economic downturn, and 39 percent of all low-income women lack health insurance coverage.

Women are also more likely to deplete their savings accounts paying medical bills than men. The health reform legislation being considered by Congress will help address all of these critical issues, and more. It will eliminate insurance coverage discrimination based on gender, provide access to affordable policies to all Americans, it will prevent bankruptcies due to medical costs by capping out-of-pocket payments, and it will prohibit insurance companies from discriminating based on preexisting conditions, including the despicable practice of calling domestic violence victims preexisting conditions.

It's time to pass this.

WHAT THE HECK, AMERICA

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. You know, I just love to listen to my colleagues on the Democrat side. I love them so much. And they just don't mention some of the other things that are going on, like the budget this year is \$3.8 trillion that we don't have. But the taxpayers are going to have to pay for it. They'll have to pay to for it with inflation or higher taxes.

And they don't mention that there's going to be \$569.2 billion in new taxes. What the heck, we can afford that. And Medicare and Medicare Advantage is going to be cut by \$520 billion. But what the heck, the seniors, they don't have to worry about that. They can, you know, ask their grandkids for some of that money.

And of course the total cost is not \$980 billion. It's going to be about \$1.3 or \$1.4 trillion, and I really believe it's going to be more like \$2.5 to \$3 trillion. We don't have that money, and it's a new entitlement, but what the heck, America. You can handle that. This is just money, and we can always print more. Of course it causes inflation and higher taxes, but who cares. You can get it done.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HEALTH CARE REFORM TO WOMEN

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, it bears repeating, few Americans have more at stake in health care reform than women.

Forty States allow private health insurance companies to gender rate their premiums. As a result, a 25-year-old woman may pay between 6 percent and 45 percent more than a 25-year-old man to get the same coverage.

Fifty-two percent of women reported postponing or forgoing medical care because of cost. Only 39 percent of men reported having had those experiences.

MARCH 16, 2010.

Nine States allow private plans to refuse coverage for domestic violence survivors.

Eighty-eight percent of private insurance plans do not cover comprehensive maternity care. In many policies, a previous C-section and being pregnant are considered preexisting conditions.

Less than half of all women in America have employer-sponsored insurance. This is partly due to the fact that more women tend to work for small businesses or have part-time jobs where health insurance is not offered, certainly the case in Hawaii.

It's time for reform.

PASS THIS HEALTH CARE REFORM LEGISLATION NOW

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

Mr. CLAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise this evening as we prepare for this historic vote, and I'm here to tell you that the people of Missouri's First District want us to act and pass this health care reform legislation now. And here's why:

It will improve coverage for 331,000 residents who already have health insurance. And it will give tax credits to 168,000 families and 15,000 small businesses to help them afford coverage. It will improve Medicare for 96,000 seniors, including closing the doughnut hole. It will extend coverage to 45,500 uninsured residents. It will guarantee coverage for 10,000 residents with preexisting conditions. And it will protect 1,400 families from medical bankruptcy.

This plan ends gender-based discrimination by stopping insurance companies from charging women more than men for the very same coverage.

It is time to act, Mr. Speaker.

HEALTH CARE REFORM IS CRITICAL FOR WOMEN IN AMERICA

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

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, the need for health care reform is critical for so many in America, but for women, the need is even greater. With health care costs weighing heavily on our small businesses, and with women more likely to own or work for small businesses, it's critical that real reform help those businesses compete by lowering health care costs.

In Nevada, insurers are allowed to consider gender when setting premium rates in the individual health insurance market. And as a result of this gender rating, women are often charged more than men for the exact same coverage.

Insurers can also exclude coverage for certain preexisting conditions, such as having had a C-section and even being pregnant. And it can be difficult, sometimes impossible in certain markets for women to find coverage for

maternity care in the individual health market.

I say it's time to tell insurance companies that being a woman is not a preexisting condition.

HEALTH CARE FOR WOMEN

(Mrs. NAPOLITANO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. NAPOLITANO. Mr. Speaker, the facts are that, according to the National Institutes of Health, suicide is the leading cause of death for women. That is unacceptable.

Actually, adequate health care coverage is critical to the future of women who suffer in silence from mental illness, whether it is postpartum depression, or some of the military women whose families are not covered by VA who suffer loneliness, stress, depression, and everything that goes with it, especially if they're tending to a spouse who's got TBI or PTSD.

They're rejected by the insurance, denied coverage for preexisting conditions. There's articles by The L.A. Times, The Memphis Editorial, Minneapolis Star Tribune, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, Dayton Daily News, Detroit Free Press, and The Missouri Herald, supporting health care reform.

We must vote for it. Let's get it done.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BURGESS. I received a letter yesterday from a State senator in my State, Tommy Williams, who's from the Beaumont area, not my immediate area but he serves on their Senate finance committee in the State. He worked on the State budget last year and will work on it again next year.

He says: "I am writing respectfully to ask you to oppose President Obama's proposed health care reform plan as outlined in the President's summary reform." He said: "In a word, it will be devastating."

The analysis provided to Senator Williams from their Health and Human Services Commission is roughly \$4 billion to \$5 billion for the 2-year budget if we implemented this plan in a State that is arguably in better shape than other States but still facing a significant budget shortfall for the next budget year, \$11 billion to \$17 billion.

He concludes with: "I hope you understand as a member of the Senate Finance Committee who has wrestled with these very difficult issues I respectfully ask you to oppose President Obama's plan because of the fiscal havoc it would cause for the State we both love so dearly."

"Respectfully, Tommy Williams, State Senator."

I will put Tommy Williams' letter into the RECORD.

Hon. MICHAEL BURGESS,
Canon Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE BURGESS: During the last session of the Texas Legislature it was my privilege to negotiate the Article II (Health and Human Services) provisions of the conference committee report on our state budget. In doing so I have become intimately familiar with the effects that state and federal mandates can have on health care-related costs in Texas and to Texans.

I am writing to respectfully ask you to oppose President Obama's proposed health care reform plan as outlined in the President's summary reform document released February 22, 2010.

Recently, the Texas Health and Human Service Commission (HHSC) provided me with an analysis of the impact of President Obama's proposal on our state budget. In a word, it will be "devastating."

As I am sure you are aware, our state is in much better fiscal shape than many of the others; however, we are facing a gap between projected revenues and expenditures of approximately \$11–\$17 billion for the next biennium. Health and Human Services expenditures already make up roughly 1/3 of General Revenue (GR) expenditures and are a significant cost driver in the state's budget.

HHSC's analysis estimates that the President's proposal would cost the State of Texas as much as \$24.3 billion dollars over the next 10 years. This includes a \$6.0 billion reduction in available DSH funding. Our state can simply not afford an additional average cost of \$4.0–\$5.0 billion per biennium over the 10 years it would take to implement this plan.

I appreciate your hard work toward health care reform we can all support. I hope you understand as a member of the Senate Finance Committee who has wrestled with these very difficult issues I respectfully ask you to oppose President Obama's plan because of the fiscal havoc it would cause for the state we both love so dearly.

Respectfully,

TOMMY WILLIAMS,
Texas State Senator, District 4.

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SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HOYER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Women comprise over 50 percent of the population. In the 2008 Presidential election, 53 percent of the people who voted were women. And indirectly, when women are involved in anything, any major decision, it impacts all family households