

Senator from one particular State, the Cornhusker State. And instead of taking it out, when we, the people, complained, what did the Democratic majority do? They extended the Cornhusker kickback to every State in the Union, so all 50 States will now get this expansion of Medicaid and an unfunded mandate that the States cannot possibly survive with.

The Louisiana purchase. Mr. Speaker, I heard the Senator from Louisiana yesterday on television explaining why she asked for and received the Louisiana purchase payoff—of course, Mr. Speaker, she said it wasn't a payoff. I believe it was in an interview with Greta Van Susteren that the Senator said that, Well, Louisiana has to pay 70 percent of the price of the cost of Medicaid in her State, and the Federal Government pays 30 percent. And that wasn't fair. Well, I was astounded, first of all, Mr. Speaker, to hear that, because it's just the opposite. The State of Louisiana pays 30 percent, and the Federal Government pays 70 percent. And in fact, they've been doing that for many, many years and probably the State of Louisiana pays less into the Medicaid program than almost any other State in the country. Mississippi may be a little bit less. And the reason for that, this FMAP-matching is done based on the average income in the State. So a state that is suffering in poverty, they pay less in the Medicaid program, and we, the people, help them with the Federal match.

Louisiana for many years deserved to only pay 30 percent. But after Hurricane Katrina, Mr. Speaker, I don't know how many hundreds of billions of dollars have been given to the State of Louisiana to help them recover, and in particular in the New Orleans area. They needed it. They deserved it. A natural disaster, mostly through no fault of their own.

But the economy in Louisiana has improved drastically in the last 4, 5 years since Hurricane Katrina and income has gone up. People are making a better wage because of all the construction and all the money that has been poured into Louisiana. And the State of Louisiana and its representatives continue to ask for more. It's like my dad said to me one time, Mr. Speaker, How much more money does a rich person need to be happy? Well, the answer, Mr. Speaker, is just a little bit more, just a little bit more. So I suspect that the ask-fors will never end. But I'm glad—I am very thankful that the State of Louisiana is doing well now, and the average income has gone up. And they are supposed to, by the formula, by fairness, they're supposed to pay a little bit more into the Medicaid program than 30 percent. And yet the Senator insists that, no, that's unfair to Louisiana, and that's what is known now as the Louisiana purchase. It's still in there. Gator aid is still in there. Federal funding of abortion is still in there. And \$500 billion worth of Medicare cuts are still in there.

Mr. Speaker, how in the world can we look seniors in the eye and say to them, We're going to cut this program \$500 billion? What could possibly be the justification for doing that? This program, started in 1965, has an unfunded liability of \$35 trillion over the next 50 years, and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, in the previous hour talked about how cutting \$500 billion out of the Medicare program was going to save the program, even suggesting that that \$500 billion was waste, fraud, and abuse. Yet \$120 billion of it is in the Medicare Advantage Program. Cutting Medicare Advantage 18 percent per year for the next 10 years—and really by 2014, there will be no Medicare Advantage Program.

Why is it that one-fourth of our seniors on Medicare sign up for Medicare Advantage? Because it's cheaper for them, and they get a better benefit. It covers wellness. It covers many preventive screening tests that fee-for-service Medicare does not cover. It gives them an opportunity to have a professional or a nurse practitioner call and make sure that they're taking their medications and they're seen on a regular basis, and yet we're going to eliminate that program. How does that make sense? Mr. Speaker, it doesn't. It doesn't make sense.

So as my colleague from Ohio was talking about, some of the things in this bill that they may pass tomorrow, they may pass with some of the tactics that have been used, like the Cornhusker kickback and the Louisiana purchase and ambassadorship here and ambassadorship there, and you name it and whatever promise, they may pass it. But Mr. Speaker, it's going to be a catastrophe, I think, for our seniors.

Let me just tell you why I think so. And I spoke to the—I call them Tea Party patriots, Mr. Speaker. I don't call them tea baggers. And they're not a bunch of angry white men, as I have heard a lot of folks say. Indeed, the two or three couples who asked me to sign their posters and to pose for a picture with them were African American families. And I was so proud to be asked to do that. I mean, again, all ages, men, and women, white, black, Asian. We, the people, were there today, and I think, Mr. Speaker, they'll be there tomorrow.

But here's what's happening to our seniors, and I had a few minutes to speak to the assemblage of maybe 20,000 people, and I reminded them of the stimulus package of over a year and a half ago. I guess it was maybe February of last year when that massive American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, whatever it was called. But we call it the stimulus bill. I think everybody understands. It was about \$820 billion worth, and a significant portion of that package, Mr. Speaker, was—remember, it was for shovel-ready projects. If the project was not shovel-ready in reference to some of these

construction projects in the various States, then the States couldn't draw down that money from the economic stimulus package; it had to be shovel-ready.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Well, Mr. Speaker, when you're having fun, time really flies. And even when you're not having fun, it flies.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor any time to come speak, to have the privilege of speaking on the House floor. It's been a long day. It's been a long week. I fear there will be longer days, weeks, and years in the future if tomorrow this bill passes, because some of us have seen socialized medicine firsthand. As an exchange student in the Soviet Union, I have seen it back in 1973. I know where this all goes. I've seen where this plays out. And I know that my friends on the other side of the aisle believe their motivation is the highest and the best. I understand that. I understand our friends that are pushing for government control of health care honestly believe the country will be better off if they can only get all health care, health insurance under the control of the Federal Government, and everyone is better off.

□ 2230

I know they believe that, and I know they believe that they are acting in everyone's best interest in pushing for this, but that is not the basis for the founding of this country. And for anyone that has read "The 5,000 Year Leap," I was a history major, I pride myself on being a bit of a historian, and that book gave me an interesting perspective because for nearly 5,000 years when settlers came to a new area and settled down there, they came with basically the same tools. They tried to grow crops and live off the land; and for 5,000 years, there wasn't a whole lot of change.

And then came this incredible experiment brought by people who, like the Pilgrims, came from Holland to England and then to America, people who came to get away from persecution as Christians. And they came here, and after that first horrible winter when the Pilgrims decided to try a new idea and give everybody private property and I live off what you grow, and you can sell or trade what you have left, and this private property concept began to grow and flourish, and free enterprise took over; and in just a few short years, relatively speaking in history, this country advanced more than the whole human race did in 5,000, just in a couple of hundred years. And it was the entrepreneurial spirit was

given a chance to just grow and flourish.

You see what happens when the government takes over health care. In those countries, they meant well. They thought this will be so much better, we will give government-type control choice, and it will be better for everybody. And then you come back to the statistics and we have been told so often that gee, Canada, Europe and England, their health care is so much better than ours. But you compare cancer rates, if you have cancer, you want to be in the United States because your odds of survival are so much better. Why? Because there is liberty and entrepreneurial spirit. There is more ability to take off and develop new things, more research and development right here in this country because of the basis on which we were founded.

My dad was found to have prostate cancer back in the 1990s, and thank God he is still here. I lost my mother in 1991. But if you are found to have prostate cancer in America, you have a 92 percent chance of survival. If my dad had prostate cancer in England, he has a 50/50 chance of living. I know where I would want my father to live.

Now there have been some horror stories that make all of us mad. The example of the lady who was denied coverage when the insurance company knew they should have had coverage, knew they should have provided it and they even had their own internal doctor say, yes, she is covered and you should provide the coverage or she will lose her baby, and they refused to provide coverage and she lost her baby and it went to the Supreme Court. And they said no because the Federal Government passed something called ERISA, and under that law, which is where her policy is, you can't sue for denial of coverage.

There is a provision in here, and I am wondering if that is part of the deal that talked insurance companies, some of them, into buying into this monstrosity. I wonder. But there are coverages that will be covered under ERISA that may not have been covered under ERISA otherwise. As a former judge, those are cases that they filed in State district court. Immediately, the insurance lawyer comes and files for removal, they go to Federal court, and then they get dismissed. You can't sue them under ERISA for denial of coverage. So maybe that was one of the bargaining points for the insurance companies to sign on.

I have seen some of the things that got the pharmaceutical companies to sign on because they were going to force people to buy prescription drugs that they could otherwise buy over-the-counter generic. I have seen those deals.

It has been an extraordinary day. My friend referred to perhaps 20,000. If you look at the area that was filled with people today, and I have heard the park estimates that area, when it is full, is at least 80,000, and that is what it ap-

peared to me to be. It was an amazing day. People want their liberty. They don't want the government to control their health care records. They don't want the IRS to be the extension of the government of the health care that is going to tell them what they can and can't do.

And of course the big news of the week was when we learned that CBO said it was going to cost around \$10 billion to hire around 17,000 new IRS agents because those are the agents that are going to monitor everyone to make sure you are doing exactly what the government in this monstrous bill is telling them to do.

I don't want this. When you look at the survival rates, whether it is cancer or heart disease, it is better here. You have a heart problem, you go have heart surgery, and they can't turn you down because you don't have insurance.

I had a gentleman in east Texas from Canada tell me his father died because he lived in Canada and under the Canadian system, when he was found to need a bypass, they put him on a list where he stayed for 2 years because the Canadian system they had bureaucrats, under their bill, about like this, that moved people in front of him on the list and he died waiting to get his bypass. You don't wait 2 years to get a bypass in the United States.

But there have been abuses. We need to deal with those. We can fix those. I have a health care bill that I filed, and I have got this amended version. I have been trying to get my health care bill scored since last summer. I think so much of Newt Gingrich. He said, Man, you have got to get that scored. That ought to score well, and it could change the whole debate on health care reform because there are a lot of free market ideas that put insurance companies out from between us and our doctors. It tells seniors, you can have your Medicare and your Medicaid if you want them; or, and it is going to be cheaper for the government, we will give you \$3,500 cash in your own debit card account, HSA account, health savings account, you control it with a debit card, and we will buy you private insurance to cover everything above that. There are all kinds of good ideas.

I see friends on the floor here that have brought some fantastic ideas. No one has done more in working to reform health care than Dr. MICHAEL BURGESS over here, but those ideas have been shut out.

I would like to recognize my friend from Georgia who was a member of the legislature in Georgia. He has dealt with these issues. He has been in the debate on these issues and heard hearings on these issues.

I would like to yield to him.

Mr. WESTMORELAND. I would like to thank my friend for taking this hour and for calling and asking me to come help with this hour because I, like the gentleman, have been out today talking to some of the people who have come up.

One thing, Mr. Speaker, that the majority have said to me, Please help us. We don't want this.

I had one lady who came to my office today that has a son that has a condition, and they don't have health insurance. It is her and her husband and her son. They get one unemployment check a month. Their son has \$800,000 worth of insurance bills today, and she said, I do not want this bill. My son has never been denied health care, good care.

Now there was some people, and the night is late, I had some people who drove for 12, 14, 16 hours. And I had one lady who said that they didn't decide to come up until about 2 o'clock yesterday from Georgia. They left their home at 4 and got here at 4:30 in the morning. It is for them that I think myself and my other colleagues are here tonight, to argue for them, because we are not going to change anybody's mind on the other side of the aisle because we don't have the power to change their mind.

□ 2240

I think what has been demonstrated is that if you have the control, if you have the gavel you can offer the deals, as my colleague from Georgia pointed out about the Cornhusker kickback, the Gator aid, the Louisiana purchase. But we have some Members here in the House that haven't been that expensive of a buy. I mean, we've had people fly on Air Force One that all of a sudden got this idea that they needed to switch their vote. I think they would have made a better decision driving around in SCOTT BROWN's pickup truck, personally, than riding on Air Force One.

We've got people that are changing from a "no" to a "yes" that may have a job at NASA. I mean, we don't know of all the deals and all the other things. But we do know that evidently that our Members are cheaper than what the Senators were. We do know that. But we don't understand.

And you were talking, my friend from Texas was mentioning why are the insurance companies for this? He mentioned several reasons. Let me give my friend another one. Four hundred thirty-six billion dollars that the Federal Government is going to be paying these insurance companies in subsidies. That's the reason they're for this bill.

I don't know if the gentleman heard our colleagues from the other side of the aisle that had an hour or so tonight talking about all the free things that this bill is going to give, and not realizing I guess that nothing the government ever does is free. And we need to get that straight. I mean, there's not anything free.

I was noticing downstairs they were talking about the tax credit for homes. They said, come in and apply with us and you get a free calculator. I promise you that calculator was costing somebody something. In the free screenings, in the free preventive screenings, in the free medical supplies, those things aren't free.

Those people that we were talking to today out on this lawn and out on the Mall and out on the steps are the ones that's going to be paying for this. The average American and his tax dollars is going to be paying for it. I've got a list here that I've already read once, and am willing to read it again, about all of the costs that's coming with this bill.

Now, if you had listened to our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, you would think that they believe in Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny and the Tooth Fairy. And that if they pass this bill all the world's problems are going to be solved, that every problem in the world is going to be solved, and our whole problem is going to be solved.

But if you talk to the medical professionals in this country, they'll tell you it's not going to be solved. They'll tell you that our problems are just beginning. They're going to tell you that they're going to leave their practice. I've got doctors that have told me if this thing passes and goes into effect, I will quit my practice.

I want to thank my friend from Texas for taking this opportunity. This is the last special order there will be before we have the vote, the historic vote, on the government takeover of health care. So I think it is important that we understand that we're talking on behalf of the American people, we're talking on behalf of those individuals that took their time and their energy and spent their hard-earned money for transportation up here. We're up here fighting for them. Hopefully, hopefully, they will continue to fight with us.

Because there's only 178 Republicans. And the only thing bipartisan about this 2,700-page bill that's going to pass is the opposition to it. That's going to be Republican and Democratic opposition. That's going to be the only thing bipartisan about this bill. Everything else is a ram-through by the majority that is going to be paid for by the American taxpayers not just in additional taxes, but by all the sweeteners that we don't even know what has gone on to buy these votes that is going to come about tomorrow night.

I hope that people will continue not to give up on us, not to give up on their self, because we don't need to quit. The vote hasn't been taken yet. And to my friend from Texas, and I know you believe in this, but we need to make sure that everybody is in prayer tonight about the decisions that this body is going to make tomorrow.

With that, I will yield back.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend from Georgia so much. We have also been joined by another Member of Congress, he just has been doing an amazing job, really so powerful. He knows the President firsthand, having debated him back in Illinois in the legislature there. Has great insight himself.

I would like to yield such time as the gentleman from Illinois may use.

Mr. ROSKAM. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I just want to reflect back for a minute and think about a couple of football seasons ago. Remember when the New England Patriots were having just an unbelievable season, just unbelievable, winning game after game after game after game. And it looked like there was just no end in sight. In fact, if you were going to be in the t-shirt business or the tchotchke business or the hat business no one would have thought you crazy if you would have said that the New England Patriots were going to be the Super Bowl champions that year. It was a year or 2 or 3 ago. You know where I'm going.

But there was one little thing that had to happen before the Patriots could get the Super Bowl ring that year. That was, they had to play a Super Bowl. And you remember that. There was a team, the New York Giants, that had a little bit different of a plan. The New York Giants came down and they played that game, and lo and behold the Giants won the Super Bowl.

There is a lot going on inside this Capitol tonight. There is a lot going on inside this town tonight. There is a lot of churn and a lot of burn, and a lot of folks don't know which way they are going to go on this vote. We know one thing for sure: There's going to be 178 Republicans that are going to stand up and vote against this bill. There is also going to be some number of clear-thinking Democrats on the other side of the aisle who either understand fundamentally what this will mean to the country or understand fundamentally that they will run roughshod over their constituents, or for whatever reason are going to come over and vote with us. We just don't know what number that is. So this thing is not done by a long shot.

I was so incredibly encouraged to go out today and to see the folks that were coming out, respectful, solid, clear-thinking Americans. As the gentleman from Georgia said, these folks got up, they drove all night. I got a voice mail from a friend from Illinois. He and his wife were driving all night to get out here. Why? Because they knew that this was the place to be. They knew that this was the time to stand up for freedom.

Ultimately, if you think about it, there is an account in the Bible that I want to take us all back to. We all remember Isaac, Abraham's son, who had two sons himself. One son was Esau, the oldest son, and the other was Jacob. Esau, as the older son in that culture and that time, basically when the old man were to die, Esau, the oldest son, was going to get the lion's share of his father's estate, probably a 90 percent ownership share. Something like that. It was called the birthright.

And as the Bible tells the story, Esau is out in the field and he is hungry. I mean he is really, really hungry. He comes back in, his younger brother Jacob is making a pot of stew. And Esau smells the stew and he says to his younger brother, "Give me some stew."

And Jacob, the younger brother, says to the older one, "Give me your birthright." And Esau, like a fool, said "Yes." Esau traded his birthright for what? For a pot of stew. For nothing.

Now, there's a lot of Americans right now that are anxious. There's a lot of Americans that look out over this economy and this season that we are in and they say, wow, I've not seen this season. I've not seen unemployment like this. I've not seen Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac unravel like this. I've not seen the wheels come off the cart like this. I've not seen it where my children come out and graduate from college and can't get a good job because unemployment has peaked beyond 8 percent even though the White House told me if we spent a trillion dollars that was all going to be fine and fantastic. I've not seen a season like this before.

Ultimately, sometimes there are folks that are listening to that and are feeling that, and are anxious, and they're hungry, and they're fearful, and they're worried. And you know what, they have every right to be. But the temptation—and this is where this group that came in today, these folks that drove overnight, they understand the temptation. And what they are saying and what Republicans are saying in the House of Representatives today, what Republicans are saying in the other body, what they are all saying is, don't take the bait.

□ 2250

Don't give away your birthright as an American for what? For stability? From this town? From this place? Are you kidding? This institution can't balance a checkbook. They can't offer you stability. They can't offer you the hope for your children in the future. Don't take the bait.

And what the American public is saying to political leadership is, Look. We've seen it. We understand it. Yeah. We're fearful. We're uncertain about the future, but we know it's not where that majority wants to take us. We know we don't want to go there. That doesn't end well. That ends in lost opportunity. That ends in calamitous debt that is foisted on our children and our grandchildren.

You know, the gentleman mentioned a couple of minutes ago this IRS empowerment, essentially, that comes as a result of this bill. You think about that. Now, it would be fantastic if the bill really did create more slots, more opportunities for physicians like Dr. BURGESS, for physicians like Dr. PRICE, for physicians like Dr. GINGREY and others. We've got more medical doctors in our conference, House Republicans who are physicians, than ever in history. It would be great if this bill created slots. It doesn't.

You know what it does? It creates slots for IRS agents. Why? Because the Internal Revenue Service is going to be the group, going to be the institution that is empowered if this majority has their way. Think about that. What that

ultimately means is health care areas are going to be sending the functionality equivalent of a 1099 to the Internal Revenue Service telling them who's got the official coverage that Speaker PELOSI has said they need to have.

You got the official coverage, okay. You get the 1099 that comes from the health carrier and it goes to the IRS. But if your name is not on that list and you're a taxpayer, you know what's going to happen? You better come up with some excuse, because if you don't come up with an excuse, do you know who's coming after you? 16,500 new IRS employees, a billion dollars a year, the CBO estimates, \$10 billion over 10 years. For what? For what? For a crushing debt. For an organization to expand authority. And that is absolutely not the direction we need to go.

There are so many reasons to say no, no, no, no, no. This is not what we need to do. And I am so encouraged by the folks who showed up today that said, You know what? We're going to speak out. We're going to speak out. The Republican leader, JOHN BOEHNER, put it best—and then I will close and I will yield back. He said this. He said Democrats may run Washington but the Americans run the country, and that is true.

This would have been done months and months and months ago, but what has happened? The American public has risen up every time. Every time. Every time. Google the phrase "end game," "Democrat's end game." Google that phrase and you will see that they were starting to trot this out at the end of July. Remember? This was all game, set, match, done. Go home. This is going to be done by the August recess. And then one group of people said, No. And that was the American people. The American people said, No. No. We listened, but thank you very much. We don't want this bill. We want you guys to go back to the drawing board and start over.

So the fight is on. This is anything but done. This is anything but finished, and the American public knows it. That majority knows it, because if they had the votes, we would be voting tonight. We would be voting tonight if they had the votes. They don't have the votes yet, and there are still some clear thinkers on that side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker, who understand what is at stake.

Mr. GOHMERT. Will the gentleman yield for a question?

You know, the President has been promising Members on the other side, if you will just pass this bill—Speaker PELOSI has been promising people on the other side, if you will just pass this bill, then between now and November, there are going to be things in this bill that kick in that are going to make America love you and want to vote for you in November.

And I was just curious if the gentleman knows what the biggest thing is that kicks in immediately in this bill between now and election time.

Mr. ROSKAM. I have a lot of ideas, but my sense is you've got something on the top of your mind. What is that?

Mr. GOHMERT. The first thing that kicks in are taxes. They kick in immediately. And I know you've dealt with the grass roots. You've been part of the local communities and business community, and the gentleman knows what it is to make a bottom line.

Right now in this economy, can you envision what happens with additional taxes, say an additional 8 percent payroll tax on some of the people you've been hearing from and talking to?

And I would yield to the gentleman.

Mr. ROSKAM. It is a crushing thought, actually. Here is the misfortune of this; that there is, in this time in our country, really an understanding that health care does cost too much, and everybody who needs access doesn't have access, and preexisting conditions do jam people up. Those are the things that I am hearing from my district. They say, You know what? That is what we want you to be talking about. We don't want you to be talking about wild-eyed 2,700-page adventures. We don't want to be talking about trillion dollar boondoggles where States in different places across the country, based on political influence, could be manipulating things and cajoling things that you can hardly stand when you hear about them or talk about them with a straight face.

But my district is saying—and I know the gentleman from Tyler, Texas's district is saying the same thing, and that is: Get about the business of fixing this economy. Get about the business of driving health care costs down and, therefore, by driving it down, making it more affordable, and then ultimately deal with preexisting conditions. We can do that. We have a good Republican plan to do that.

But with all due respect to Speaker PELOSI, what she is asking this majority to do—and some of these Members that haven't made up their minds right now—she is asking them to do what you could only characterize as political bungee jumping. Just go right off the bridge. The Speaker hasn't measured the rope. She hasn't measured the rope, and she's saying, No, you all just lean forward. It will be great. Just lean forward just right off that bridge. Just lean forward.

And yeah, I'm sure it looks really good. It looks like it's going to catch. She hasn't measured that rope, and she's asking her majority, unfortunately, to lean over and just, frankly, squander the trust that the American public has put them in.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend from Illinois so very much.

And, you know, I've been talking to people all over my district, and of course today with tens of thousands of people going through the crowds and hearing from people, talking to people, it has been staggering. But I had a conversation last night before I came to the floor with a gentleman in a small

business. He has under 20 employees, but he was saying, In my 25 years in this business, I have never been so on the bubble as I am right now. I'm hanging on by my fingernails. You put a 2 percent tax on me, much less an 8 percent payroll tax on me, I'm done. I'm out of business, and everybody that works for me is out of business.

And when the number one concern in America is the economy, jobs, and really not just jobs, but careers—we're destroying careers here. They said, Well, people want jobs. No. They need careers. We're destroying them right and left.

Here's an article this week about Caterpillar. They wrote to the President. They said, Please, don't do this. This will cost us a hundred million dollars in the first year. How do you think a company that is in—you know, they're doing okay. They're the world's largest manufacturer of construction equipment, but they have said they're barely hanging on.

The President went to Caterpillar and said they're barely hanging on; we're going to help them. How is helping them putting another hundred million dollar burden on them? That may drive Caterpillar overseas like we have done to so many businesses.

But I'm telling you, my heart breaks for these businesspeople who love their employees that have been with them for a long time, and we're hearing, I don't want to lose my employees. I'm either going to have to close down, have my employees take dramatic pay cuts at a time they sure can't afford it, or I'm out of business. Those are the choices I got.

□ 2300

I appreciate my friend, Dr. BURGESS, a medical doctor, being here with probably more experience in reviewing the alternatives in health care.

I would like to yield him such time as he may use.

Mr. BURGESS. I appreciate the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. ROSKAM from Illinois talked about how the American people want us to fix the economy. And one of the ways we can help that is if we will conclude this discussion we've been having about taking over America's health care system, because I firmly believe that is one of the things that is holding back small businesses across the country that have been having to cut back over the last 18 months. They have been doing what every American family has been doing and say, We will have to make do with a little bit less, maybe we won't hire that extra employee. But they also don't know what we're going to do. Are we going to put an 8 percent payroll tax on them? Are we going to put an \$1,100-a-year energy tax on them? What are we going to do in financial regulation? They are scared to add employees right now in small businesses across the country. And maybe it's only one or two jobs in a location, but extrapolated across the

wider economy, it's thousands and thousands of jobs.

That is the problem with us not dealing with the fundamental problem that is concerning the American people, which is jobs and the economy and being distracted by health care. That is the fundamental problem out there right now with the people. That is the basis for the anger that people are feeling when they see what Congress is doing late tonight and what we are fixin' to do tomorrow, as we like to say in Texas.

Now one of the things that I have heard over and over again, and I have heard the President say it, it is so aggravating to hear, is that Republicans are obstructing this process, Republicans had no ideas to bring to the table, and Republicans could have fixed everything in the last 12 years but chose not to, so now they need to get out of the way.

Let me briefly take each of those points, because it is important for Americans to hear, Mr. Speaker, what has been going on up here this past year. From the standpoint of Republicans obstructing this process, it just isn't so. There are, as the gentleman from Texas said, 178 Republicans. In fact, a few months ago, there were only 177. The arithmetic of the House is if you have 218 votes, you get to do what you say. One hundred seventy-seven Republicans were not enough to stop anything in the House of Representatives unless some Democrats crossed the aisle and voted with us.

And do you know what? That's what started happening. And as a consequence, it's not Republicans who are obstructing this process; it's Democrats. It's a problem they have within their own conference. Why is that? Well, they don't have the popular support of the American people. A poll out just today said 40 percent of the people think we are doing too much and we ought to go back to the drawing board and see if we can't do something more manageable, and 20 percent said we shouldn't be working on health care at all.

Sixty percent, six out of 10 Americans think this is the wrong thing for us to be doing right here right now. So without the popular support of the American people, the Democratic leadership, the Speaker of the House, the President of the United States, the majority leader over in the other body cannot get done what they want to get done. And oh, my God, what is the reason? Those darn Republicans are obstructing us.

Now from the standpoint of Republican ideas, as the gentleman from Texas has said, there have been Republican ideas that have been talked about literally all year long. Now, look, right after the President was sworn in, I was surprised that they didn't come forward with a big health care bill. I was surprised that health care wasn't the number one thing on the agenda because they talked about it. All during

the campaign that's all you heard about was health care, health care, health care. I thought they had a bill ready to go. I thought they had a bill in the works. I thought it would come out of the Senate Finance Committee, the House would simply follow suit, and there we would be, we would have a health care bill.

The fact is if we voted on this health care bill last year, it probably would have passed. The President was extremely popular at that time. Congressional Democrats were popular at that time. There likely would have been nothing that would have been standing in the way. But since they decided to do some other things first, stimulus, cap-and-trade, taking over school loans, whatever else they had on the agenda, because they chose to do other things first, people had a chance to start looking at this bill. And we have heard this story several times tonight. We heard it in the previous hour.

A year ago, I was feeling in my town halls an enormous amount of anxiety, an enormous amount of unease, an enormous amount of energy that was bubbling up to the surface. We want to do something. If you're voting against this stuff, we want to help you. What can we do? What can we do? And people began to figure it out for themselves. They could organize at home and, yes, they can come to Washington, D.C.

So they did over Fourth of July this past year, they did September 12, they sure did in November, and they came back again today. And I couldn't help but think every time I talked to just regular people that were out in the great weather today on the lawn on the west side of the Capitol to hear the speeches and listen to the stuff, they were just regular people from back home who had come up because they were concerned about what they saw happening in Washington. But if it had not been for them, Mr. ROSKAM is right, this bill would have passed in July.

I don't know if people recall that. We had a cap-and-trade bill right at the end of June. After that was queued up and put over the finish line, we were then supposed to take up health care. The bill was dumped into our committee about the middle of July. We were supposed to mark it up over 1 day, 1 day, and then turn it back to the House floor, and we would vote on it and then we would go home for the August recess.

Just take a step back for a minute. You have heard people talk about this all day long. We've been talking about this for a year. We don't need to talk about health care any more. We've been talking about it for a full year. In 1990 and 1991, when my committee, the Committee on Energy and Commerce, marked up a bill that dealt with clear air, the Clean Air Act, they held that markup for I think it was 8 months. My lands, the people in that committee hated each other at the end of that 8 months. But do you know what? It was

the right thing to do, because in the end, it had bipartisan support. In the end, it did get passed. And in the end, it functioned as advertised. But not because they slammed it through, because they did have big majorities back in 1990 and 1991.

It worked because they did it the right way, and even though it was a terribly painful process, and although, again, people on the committee hated each other at the end of those 8 months, still, it was a better way to go about doing major legislation that is going to affect the lives of every American not just today but for generations to come, much better way to do that.

We chose not to do that this year. We chose to ram it through as fast as we could. My committee, which was supposed to do this in 1 or 2 days' time, ended up stretching it out over 8 days. And the reason it stretched out over 8 days is because seven Democrats on my committee heard from people back home during the month of July and they said, Wait a minute, wait a minute. We're getting nervous here. We're hearing all kinds of stuff from back home that people don't like what we're doing. They don't like what we did with cap-and-trade. Now they are looking at what we are doing with health care, and they are saying, put the brakes on. This is going too fast.

Now we didn't end up stopping it in committee. It ended up passing on July 31. But the story is, it passed on July 31. It did not come to the House floor before we went home for the August recess. And then what happened in the August recess? That energy that had been almost palpable in April really, really did bubble to the surface. And we had people in town halls like we have never had before. The little sleepy town of Denton, Texas, early on a hot August Saturday morning I had 2,000 people show up. Later in the day, I went up the road to Gainesville, Texas, up on the Red River, 600 people showed up. I have never had that kind of turnout in town halls. Not everyone agreed with me. Not everyone thought I was doing the right thing. But there was a broad consensus that they did not like what they were seeing with what Congress was doing with their health care.

And you saw it play out over and over and over again across the country. It wasn't just north Texas. It was Michigan. It wasn't just north Texas, it was that way out West, it was that way on the east coast, over in Wisconsin, over and over and over again you saw the scenario replay itself. But do you know what? When I would have those town halls, people would say, we don't trust you with a 1,000-page bill. If the gentleman from Texas would indulge me, remember the good old days when it was only a 1,000-page bill, and he has a 2,700-page bill up there with him tonight? We don't trust a 1,000-page bill. We know you didn't read it. You said you wouldn't take this insurance yourself. Why should we be for that?

But what we are for is some sensible reform. And I heard that over and over

and over again. Yes we would like help with preexisting conditions. In committee, we never had a hearing about is there any way to deal with the problem of existing conditions without resorting to an unconstitutional mandate? I believe that there is. But we never had a hearing on it. We never heard any testimony on that. It was simply, we have to have the mandate because everyone has to have insurance because that is just simply the way it's got to go.

But that's not necessarily so. So what we heard: Help us with preexisting conditions, provide us a little flexibility, and maybe we would like to buy across State lines if it brought the cost down. We would like some liability reform if you don't mind. How about some fairness in the Tax Code so we don't punish the person who is in business for himself as opposed to someone who gets their insurance tax free from an employer. And do you know what? COBRA is awfully complicated and awfully expensive. Could you make that a little simpler for us because people are losing jobs right now, and as they lose jobs, they lose employer-sponsored health insurance. Yeah, you have COBRA where we can make that big payment and keep your insurance, but I just lost my job. I can't afford to make the big payment. And they let their insurance expire.

□ 2310

And then, unfortunately, some major medical crisis may hit, and then they have got a preexisting condition and the cycle repeats itself and repeats itself and repeats itself. These are the things that people told us they want to see.

Now, I do have a Web site, healthcaucus.org. These things that I heard over the summer I have put into legislation, or I have taken legislation that other people have introduced and affixed that to those things that people told me they wanted to see. So at healthcaucus.org, under the issues tab, "Dr. BURGESS' prescriptions for health care reform," you can print that out yourself at home on your own computer, and there are nine things there.

It is not like there is not already legislative language on most of those things, because there is. In fact, if there is a bill number there, I put the bill number beside it. If there is another Member of Congress who has a bill that has been introduced that will cover that issue, I have got their name there and the bill number beside it.

The fact is that there are ideas out there. Some of them are even bipartisan. What a novel concept. But those ideas are out there on paper. We could take them up in an incremental fashion over the next 3 weeks, and we could really be down the road on solving the problems the American people want us to solve.

Instead—instead, it says one-size-fits-all. Washington knows best. Forget governing with the consent of the gov-

erned; we are going to give you this bill. And when we pass it and you find out what is in it, you are really going to like us after all.

I thank the gentleman from Texas for taking this hour. The hours are growing close where this bill will come to the floor for a vote. We are probably getting down to almost the single digit number of hours that remain for America to remain a free country.

This has been such an important debate. I hope people will continue to watch. I hope they will continue to interact with their Member of Congress. Remember, your Member of Congress runs for office every other year. We are people's closest contact with the Federal Government. That is what the Founders wanted. So I encourage people, even though it is late and even though it is on Sunday, this interaction that takes place between a Member of Congress and their constituents is a sacred bond, and that needs to be upheld over this next 24 hours. People do need to let their Member of Congress know how they feel about this. I think that is one of the most critical things that we have been missing in this debate.

I thank the gentleman for his indulgence, and I will yield back to the gentleman from Tyler, Texas.

Mr. GOHMERT. I thank my friend, Dr. BURGESS. And I can assure my friend that it was not indulgence. It is a pleasure and honor to hear someone so knowledgeable about this very issue that is supposedly being brought to a vote tomorrow.

This is big. And if people had heard the President talk back in 2007 and going into this campaign for President in 2008, he made very clear, he has made it very clear that he would sign a bill like this that would be the first step towards socialized medicine. He said this will be the first step.

Canada didn't get there in just one step. You need this step, and then you can transition into full—what is really socialized medicine.

And in his speech today, to encourage Democrats to get on board, he said these words: "This is the single most important step that we have taken on health care since Medicare." Absolutely. Absolutely it is. And that is the step he was talking about 2 years ago, that this is the first step, and then we move into full socialized medicine where the Federal Government controls everything about your health care. It is a huge step. It is a devastating step.

And so you have to think that if there are those Democrats that are still trying to decide between "yes" and "no," you really should think, what is—the President is saying all this good stuff will happen between now and November. Well, there may be a credit here or there, but when my friends that have talked to me about being so close between closing their business, being out of business, and hiring another employee and moving for-

ward, when they get hit with an 8 percent payroll tax and have to go out of business and lay off everybody, or stay in business at a dramatically reduced level and lay off individuals, cut salaries, and those people can't pay their bills and then we lose more mortgages, I don't think people are going to be in a good mood come November.

Now, I know Art Laffer has said—and he is such a brilliant economist—that it is possible that the economy could start improving for one reason, and that is that next January the biggest tax increase in American history will hit, and it will absolutely devastate the economy. So it could be that toward the end of the year, as people start moving to get ready for the massive increase in capital gains and all of the income tax rates that go up, that it may look right before the election like we are starting to have a recovery. Maybe so. But, on the other hand, when you start adding all these taxes now, that changes the equation.

And how our Democratic friends and CBO can tell people with a straight face this pays for itself, when you have got 10 years of income to pay for 6 or 7 years of health care. And then we are told, Yeah, but in the second 10 years it really starts to pay for itself. That has never happened. Do you think Congress is going to sit back and do nothing for the next 20 years and just wait and see for 20 years if things fix themselves?

The Soviet Union didn't get that chance. When they started spending money like this first on the Afghan war and then on the missile defense system, they ran out of money. Nobody would loan them money. They couldn't print it fast enough. They went out of business.

When the President said in his comments these words: "For example, instead of having five tests when you go to the doctor, you just get one." He was being very truthful. Thank God, my mother had many tests over a period of 6 days before they found her brain tumor and she didn't just have one.

I do appreciate the President saying in his speech today the words that, ultimately, the truth will come out. I believe he is right, and it will be devastating for those who were pushing through this government control. And toward the end of his—well, actually there was a lot more speech, but I will just finish with one other mention regarding the President's speech.

He says, "Now, I cannot guarantee that this is good politics." That is very true. You vote for this. I know some people may have districts where they are used to having everything given to them, entitlement districts, and they will need to vote for it because they are used to entitlements. But elsewhere, it is not going to be good politics, and you are looking at the end of some political careers here, unless the President has agreed to give them jobs when they lose their seat.

But you know, this deal with Caterpillar, they are saying they are going

to lose \$100 million in the first year. I have heard about States, like one Goodyear plant in Alabama where the State and local came together and offered \$51 million just to keep the people there and keep the plant open. This bill is going to cost them \$100 million, cost Caterpillar \$100 million. We are going to charge them \$100 million. Do you think companies are going to be able to stay long like that?

And I just want to finish up in my time tonight going back in history, just to remind people before this terrible vote tomorrow. Hopefully, the American people will prevail, people will lose their nerve to force this economy and the health care off a cliff, and then we can come back and we can work together. We can provide real solutions. We have got lots of good ideas. Just let us work together with you to do that, instead of having the President say, as he did at our retreat, I have read all your bills. You know, there is a thing or two. But I have read them. He had not read our bills. He has not read all our bills. We have got lots of things that could be considered.

But you go back to the founding of this country. In 1783, the Articles of Confederation didn't work. They were too loosely woven, no common currency, a lot of problems, so it was falling apart.

In 1787, we had the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. They talked George Washington into coming back and presiding. He had done what no man had ever done in the history of the world before or since: he led a revolutionary military, won the Revolution, resigned, and went home. He said: I did what you asked.

Well, in 1787 they are telling him: if you don't come back and preside, the 13 States are not going to come back. We are done. The country is over. But all 13 States have agreed to come back if you will promise to preside over the Constitutional Convention.

□ 2320

I mean, what a testimonial for a man—a man of integrity—that he was so beloved. If he would come back, they would come back. They won't come back for anybody else. They knew he was a man who could walk away with power and never look back, because he had done it.

The Convention goes on in Philadelphia. They put blankets over the windows to keep people from looking in and people being distracted looking out, and there was bickering and arguing. It went on and on for nearly 5 weeks. At that point, Benjamin Franklin was 80 years old. He was a little over 2 years away from meeting his Maker, meeting his Judge, meeting his Creator.

Yes, he had sowed some wild oats in his life, and some people thought he was a deist. That's someone who believes God created things or something happened to create things and then that being has stepped back and never

done anything, basically. Well, what some people call a deist today was recognized. He knew he was a couple years more away from meeting his Maker.

Witty and brilliant as ever, he stood up and said these words—well, he started by saying, We've been meeting for nearly 5 weeks. We've accomplished basically nothing. We have more noses than eyes on these votes. Then I want to use his exact words taken down by James Madison. "In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when presented to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not once hitherto thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights to illuminate understanding? In the beginning contest with Great Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayer in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered."

Benjamin Franklin went on. He said, "All of us who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending providence in our favor. To that kind of providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful friend? Or do we imagine that we no longer need his assistance?"

Ben Franklin then went on and said, "I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live, the more convincing proofs I see of this truth—that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without his aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writing, that 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' Firmly believe this; and I also believe that without his concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel.

"We shall be divided by our little partial local interest; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and by word down to future ages. And what is worse, mankind may hereafter from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing governments by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war and conquest.

"I therefore beg leave to move, that henceforth prayers imploring the assistance of Heaven, and its blessings on our deliberations, be held in the assembly every morning before we proceed to business."

After that, seconded by Mr. Sherman, it was unanimously adopted, and, from then to today, we have prayer to begin our sessions in here. But, oh, if we could ever come back together as a group and, as the very first Congress did, join and pray together as they did on their knees and come together. As one wrote to his wife, It was such a moving, powerful prayer time, even the surly old Quakers had tears in their eyes.

This is an important time. I thank God for those who have come and made their voices known this weekend. I thank God for the blessings with which we have been enriched, and I hope that people across America will pray to that same God Ben Franklin referred to and that he will move in the hearts of people in Congress that they will do the thing that will bring us together and create a stronger Nation that can survive for another 200 years.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 11 o'clock and 26 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 0012

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CARDOZA) at 12 o'clock and 12 minutes a.m.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF SENATE AMENDMENTS TO H.R. 3590, SERVICE MEMBERS HOME OWNERSHIP TAX ACT OF 2009, AND PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4872, HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION RECONCILIATION ACT OF 2010

Mr. POLIS, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 111-448) on the resolution (H. Res. 1203) providing for consideration of the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 3590) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to modify the first-time homebuyers credit in the case of members of the Armed Forces and certain other Federal employees, and for other purposes, and providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 4872) to provide for reconciliation pursuant to section 202 of the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2010, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. LATOURETTE (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. HIMES) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)