

NOT VOTING—49

Abercrombie	Dent	Murphy, Tim
Ackerman	Dingell	Owens
Baca	Doyle	Pascarell
Barrett (SC)	Fallin	Paul
Barton (TX)	Gallely	Radanovich
Bishop (NY)	Gohmert	Rangel
Blackburn	Grijalva	Reichert
Blunt	Hall (TX)	Ryan (WI)
Boehner	Herger	Scalise
Boucher	Hoekstra	Stark
Boustany	Inslee	Stupak
Calvert	Jordan (OH)	Sullivan
Capps	King (NY)	Tanner
Carter	Larson (CT)	Westmoreland
Cole	Linder	Whitfield
Davis (AL)	Mack	
Deal (GA)	Moran (KS)	

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAFFEI) (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1159

So (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. REICHERT. Mr. Speaker, as indicated in the Leave of Absence request granted by the U.S. House of Representatives, I was not in attendance for votes February 22–26, 2010, so that I could support my family through the tragic and unexpected death of my 16-year-old niece.

Were I in attendance, I would have voted in favor of H.R. 4425 (RC No. 49); H.R. 4238 (RC No. 50), H. Res. 1066 (RC No. 52), H. Res. 1059 (RC No. 53), H. Res. 1039 (RC No. 54), H. Res. 1046 (RC No. 55), Hastings (WA) Amendment to H.R. 2314 (RC No. 56), Flake Amendment to H.R. 2314 (RC No. 57), H. Res. 1074 (RC No. 61), H. Res. 944 (RC No. 62), the Motion to Recommit H.R. 4626 (RC No. 63), H.R. 4626 (RC No. 64), H. Res. 1085 (RC No. 65), Concurring with the Senate Amendments to H.R. 3961 (RC No. 67), H. Con. Res. 227 (RC No. 68), Hastings (FL) Amendment to H.R. 2701 (RC No. 70), Schauer Amendment to H.R. 2701 (RC No. 71.), the Motion to Recommit H.R. 2701 (RC No. 72), and H. Con. Res. 238 (RC No. 74).

I would have opposed H. Res. 1083 (RC No. 51), Abercrombie Amendment to H.R. 2314 (RC No. 58), H. R. 2314 (RC No. 59), H. Res. 1098 (RC No. 60), H. Res. 1105 (RC No. 66), Reyes Amendment to H.R. 2701 (RC No. 69), and passage of H.R. 2701 (RC No. 73).

AUTHORIZING THE CLERK TO MAKE CORRECTIONS IN ENGROSSMENT OF H.R. 2701, INTELLIGENCE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2010

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Clerk be authorized to make technical corrections in the engrossment of H.R. 2701, to include corrections in spelling, punctuation, section numbering, and cross-referencing, and the insertion of appropriate headings.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Maryland, the majority leader, for the purpose of announcing next week's schedule.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the Republican whip for yielding.

On Monday, the House is not in session. On Tuesday the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business with votes postponed until 6:30 p.m. On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for legislative business. On Friday, no votes are expected in the House.

We will consider several bills under suspension of the rules. The complete list of suspension bills will be announced by the close of business today. In addition, we will consider H.R. 4247, Keeping All Students Safe Act, and further action on the jobs agenda.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, we have 4 weeks before our next district work period, and I would like to inquire from the gentleman about the upcoming legislative schedule during the next 4 weeks and what bills does he expect the House to consider prior to the Easter recess.

Mr. HOYER. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CANTOR. I yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I would expect a number of items, certainly the jobs agenda, which will be fulsome and we will be pursuing over the next months. Small business growth, tax cuts to spur growth and jobs will certainly be on the agenda in the coming weeks, in addition to addressing health care and the 2011 budget.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that.

So, from my understanding, we can expect to have a vote on a health care bill between now and the Easter recess. If that is the case, I ask the gentleman, Mr. Speaker, what is the thought about what that bill would look like? And I would ask the gentleman does he expect this bill to be the President's bill or will there be actually a chance for the minority to participate in crafting a health care bill?

I yield to the gentleman.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Well, the gentleman and I had the opportunity, a historic opportunity, I might say, to participate in an extraordinary event in the history, perhaps, of our country. I'm not sure that I can cite another instance certainly in my career when a President has spent a whole day sitting with the legislative branch, the leadership both of the Republican and Democratic Parties in the Senate and the House and also of the committee Chairs. I think that was an unprecedented meeting. I thought it was an extraordinarily good meeting

for the American public as I thought it was a good meeting for all of us who participated.

I think what the public saw was each side thoughtfully and clearly, from an informed basis, expressing their view as to what was needed and how to get to where we wanted to go. It also indicated, I think, to the American public legitimate differences of opinion on the ways and means, if you will, of effecting health care reform, which obviously the overwhelming numbers of the American public believe is necessary. As I quoted, as you recall, both President Obama and Presidential candidate McCain in the debate in October of 2008 both said that health care reform was necessary, and Presidential candidate McCain indicated that he thought we needed a program that covered all Americans with affordable health care.

Now, that's the context in which we're going to move forward. I thought it was a productive, positive opportunity for us and, as I said, the American public. We are moving forward. The President indicated we'd be moving forward. The President, as you point out, I don't think he has a bill yet, but he's put language of the 11-page document you've seen and that was referenced at the meeting—he's put that on the table. It is obviously an attempt to reach agreement between the Senate-passed bill and the House-passed bill, which, although this was not a conference in the classic sense of a conference, in many ways it was, I suppose, a superconference in that rarely is the President in the room, but obviously Republicans and Democrats were in the room and had their time to discuss the President's proposals, trying to resolve differences between the two Houses. Certainly it's going to be taken into consideration over the next few days, I would think, to see whether or not there can be a resolution.

In addition to that, I tell my friend honestly that we went through a number of aspects of the health care bill in which I think we found common ground, and many of us said that. I think some of us were surprised that some Members were as focused as we think we are on certain items.

First of all, I think there was agreement on principle, if not on application of that principle, and that was that the solution is to be found in the delivery of health care through the private sector. And, in fact, both bills in the Senate and the House provide for private sector insurance companies to be involved and to be the insurers and to be the agents for financing health care insurance for Americans.

In addition, Dr. COBURN was very clear that he thought we needed to focus on wellness, on prevention. There are, in both bills, substantial provisions which deal with that, with wellness and prevention, best practices, with innovation, with efficiencies in the delivery of health care, health information technology, other issues.

In addition, he spoke of eliminating fraud, waste, and abuse. As you recall,

and both of us listened to him, he made the point that he thought 1 in 3 health care dollars were not spent on the delivery of health care. Now, they weren't all waste, fraud, and abuse. We know that there are very substantial administrative costs in health care. And as I responded to Senator COBURN, there are very substantial provisions related to waste, fraud, and abuse in both bills and in the President's suggestion.

In addition, the purchasing of policies of insurance across State lines was discussed by both sides. I think the President indicated, I think, we can reach agreement on that. I hope we do. And insurance pooling to acquire health insurance at lower prices was also discussed, not only with respect to small business, but, obviously, we discussed it with individuals who do not have availability to group policies.

The answer, therefore, to your question is we certainly hope we can move forward. We hope we can reach some areas of agreement.

I want to tell you very frankly, I don't think we have any intention of starting over with a clean slate, as you requested. I want to be honest with the gentleman. Literally thousands and thousands of hours have gone into countless hearings participated in by both of our parties, countless markups, public markups with amendments offered both in the House and the Senate. But that does not mean that these are set in stone. Therefore, the answer to your question is I continue to be interested in your thoughts, but if the thoughts are simply to, as Mr. BOEHNER indicated, scrap it, and Mr. ALEXANDER said that as well, I frankly don't think that's a very productive direction to go in given the complexity and challenge that confronts us.

There was a lot of discussion about polling data in yesterday's meeting. In point of fact, we believe that the polling data does indicate that Americans are not happy with this bill. In my view, in part they're not happy because they've seen it be the center point of confrontation, controversy, and, from my perspective, a lot of misinformation.

But having said that, I think every poll seems to reflect that when you ask them about component parts, do they believe that preexisting conditions ought not to be a disabling factor in the receipt of insurance, a very high percentage of the American public says, yes, they think that ought to be not a factor. Do they think that there ought to be lifetime caps? They think no. If they have insurance, they want to keep it, and if they get really sick, they want to make sure their insurance compensates them for that. They also want to make sure that they are not bankrupted in a year that they have a very serious illness because the insurance company has capped what they can get in any one year.

So there seems to be, on the individual items, pretty high support—and

when I say “pretty high,” high 50s, 60s, and sometimes in the low 70s—of various component parts of the bill. I think if we can respond to that which the public is for and listen to the public, I think we can have some success. And we look forward to working with you over the next few weeks to see if we can come to agreement. The President made it very clear that he wants to do that. I reiterate we want to do it.

But the President also made it clear, if we can't do it, then we're going to proceed, and that's what he told the American people he was going to do. And, very frankly, he was elected handily just a little over a year ago, and he said what he wanted to do was a health care plan which would provide access for Americans to affordable quality health care. And, in fact, that's what JOHN MCCAIN said in that debate in October of 2008 when they were both debating each other. That was not a contentious issue. They had differences of how to get there, but covering all Americans with affordable, quality health care was not one of the contentious issues.

I know that was a long answer, but I wanted to place it in context for my friend so that productively we can work on what has passed the House, passed the Senate, and if we can make changes that would lead you or members of your party to support legislation, then I think we can have a productive discussion about that. On the other hand, frankly, if it's simply scrap all the work you've done or we're not going to play, then I think we won't have much progress.

□ 1215

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that in-depth explanation of where he and his side is on this debate.

Without prolonging this colloquy, I would just say to the gentleman, on display yesterday were clearly two different visions for how we want to address health care in this country. Clearly, the Republicans, by our attendance there and the engagement in that discussion, indicated that we too care about people's health care and want to do something to increase the quality, access, and affordability. We just have a very different way of trying to go about it.

There are some areas in concept where we do have agreement. We just don't care for the bill. And the reason is, Mr. Speaker, the bill, from our opinion, is very much a bill which imposes on people in this country a preferred way of going about providing health care and covering people in terms of their illnesses. And we believe that on balance, it is better to err on the side of people and their individual choices and the way they think their health care should be delivered and in what form.

So I look forward to perhaps the gentleman working with us to see if we could, if he doesn't like the word “scrap,” move away from the construct

of the bill which, as the gentleman indicates, the public has rejected, as well as a significant portion of his caucus has rejected, and perhaps moving away from that construct and to try and address some of the issues that we discussed in a different context would be a way forward.

But if, as the gentleman indicates, the majority is unwilling to set aside the Senate bill, will the gentleman indicate whether we would then proceed with reconciliation? And is it his position that he will not take reconciliation off the table?

Mr. HOYER. It is my position, in the Republican tradition of using reconciliation for very major pieces of legislation, all of your tax bills in 2001 and 2003; as a matter of fact, reconciliation has been used 22 times since 1980. Sixteen of those times it was used by the Republican Party when you were in charge. Apparently you thought that was a procedure that was appropriate to pass. As a matter of fact, JUDD GREGG, when he was criticizing us for criticizing reconciliation, said, “What is wrong with a majority vote?” We think there is nothing wrong with a majority vote.

There is a filibuster in the Senate. That is under their rules. I think those rules are impeding the work of the American people. But be that as it may, they are the rules. There is also a rule that provides for consideration of legislation through a process that is called reconciliation, a fancy name for simply saying there are things that are important, you can put them on the table, you can pass them in a time frame. But, as Americans would expect, a majority of the representatives of the American people have to vote for it. So I am not going to take that off the table.

But it has been the President's expression, my expression, the Speaker's expression, the Majority Leader of the Senate's expression we would prefer not to use that, not because we think it is a wrong procedure, but because we would like to create a broader consensus if we can.

But I will tell my friend, I think he to some degree misquoted me, I think you could draw that inference, the American people don't like the bill because of what surrounds it. When you ask them about the internals of the legislation, as I said, they respond positively to it.

And I will tell my friend about polls. A lot of expression about polls yesterday in our meeting. My friend will recall that we considered expanding the Children's Health Insurance Program. You will recall President Bush vetoed that program. You will recall that I stood on this floor and said, “Do you understand 72 percent of Americans are for expanding SCHIP?” Notwithstanding that, we couldn't get sufficient votes from your side of the aisle to override the President's veto, notwithstanding the fact that 72 percent of the American people thought children in the richest country on the face

of the earth ought to be covered, ought to be healthy, ought to be included in our health care system. So you saw it differently. I understand that. You used your judgment.

I frankly think that the American people want us to do what we are trying to do. They want to make sure we do it right and don't undermine the security they now have. And that is our intent as well.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for those remarks.

I would ask the gentleman if we could turn, Mr. Speaker, to the question of jobs. As he indicated, that will be a focus of the next 4 weeks. The gentleman said earlier in this colloquy that we just participated in an historic event yesterday, that he in his career here has not seen an opportunity like that where both sides sat down with the President for 7 hours and the President spent the time on the issue of health care.

In that vein, in terms of trying to open up dialogue and discussion, it would be very appropriate, I believe, Mr. Speaker, for us to give equal or more time to the pressing issue of jobs in this economy.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Leader BOEHNER and I have forwarded to the gentleman as well as Speaker PELOSI a letter indicating that we would like to have a bipartisan jobs summit akin to what we had yesterday with the President, but perhaps just in this body. The Speaker's press reports have indicated that the Speaker is willing to engage in such a jobs summit. And I would just like to ask the gentleman if he intends to respond to the Leader and my letter. And if not, certainly responding here is just as well as to perhaps a scheduled time for such a summit to occur.

Mr. HOYER. I think the same letter was sent to both of us, and I was yielding to the Speaker to respond. But I will respond here. I think that is a good idea.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that. Does he have any sense of when we could expect the acceptance and the scheduling of such an event?

Mr. HOYER. Let me talk to the Speaker about it and see what schedule, and we will talk to you about it. But I think certainly jobs is an absolutely critical objective of ours this year, as you know, as it was last year.

The good news, as you know, is that CBO says that over a million jobs were created in the last quarter, or retained in the last quarter as a result of the Recovery and Reinvestment Act. As the gentleman also knows, in the last quarter, the last 3 months of the Bush administration, we lost on average per month 726,000 jobs. As the gentleman also knows, on average over the last 3 months we have lost 35,000 jobs. That is extraordinary. That is 5 percent of what we lost the last 3 months just a year ago. So that is progress. We are moving forward, but that is not success. Success will be, as you and I both know, when we are adding jobs, when we are creating jobs.

Unfortunately, over the last 8 years we have had the lowest job production in this country than we have had since Herbert Hoover. As a result, we are very much down in terms of supply of jobs for people who are out of jobs and need jobs to support themselves and their family.

I want to also say, I want to thank the gentleman and his colleagues on his side of the aisle for their positive participation yesterday, positive in the sense that yes, we didn't agree, but nobody expected there to be agreement down there, that everybody was all of a sudden going to change their perspective of how you get to where we all want to get. But I thought the American people, as I said, had an opportunity to see some serious people who had differences of opinion discuss them in a civil and, I thought, productive manner. I think that is a good civics opportunity for the American people.

Very frankly, we ought to do more of that. Because, unfortunately, all too often they see us on the floor not on the uncontentious, which we do pretty much working together, but they see us on the contentious, where tempers can get pretty hot, and the American public draws the inference that that's all we do. They don't like it, and I don't blame them. I know you and I don't like it either.

I want to thank you and your colleagues for your participation.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I look forward, along with the Leader and the rest of my colleagues, to begin working with the gentleman and the majority to start on an earnest attempt to create an environment for job creation so that people in this country can get back to work.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

ADJOURNMENT TO TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2010

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday next for morning-hour debate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KRATOVIL). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland? There was no objection.

WE MUST PASS A JOBS BILL

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I think it is important to note the change in the economy as we move forward. But the challenge to us as Members of Congress, even as we reflect on the enormous impact the investment dollars have had, last year in January of 2009 we had lost 779,000 jobs. In January of 2010, only 22,000 jobs were lost and the

economy is percolating. But 22,000 is unacceptable.

So we must pass a jobs bill now. But we must also be concerned not only for the recently unemployed, for the white collar workers, but we have to be concerned about the young workers, 18 to 30. We have to be concerned about the chronically unemployed, or the ex-felon who has paid his or her dues, has a family, and other than getting work, they would be dependent on a government handout. They don't want that.

So when we talk about jobs, we have to worry about seniors, and working families, and people who have been unemployed for a long period of time. We have got to put a job in their hand. And that is what I want to do, work to get jobs for the American people and the 18th Congressional District.

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 California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

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

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

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

THE NEED FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, besides the question and the need for jobs, I think it is important for America and for my colleagues to know that the meeting yesterday at the White House at Blair House was a vitally important meeting. I know that many Americans were able to see it in its purity, meaning that you were able to watch it live.

The President intended that we have the opportunity to hear real discussion. And I would beg to differ whether this was an opportunity for just show