

State of Maryland, who will not get an unemployment check. There are 48 million Americans, mostly our seniors, who are going to see their benefits essentially ripped out from under them in Medicare as their doctors won't be able to treat them because their doctors are getting a cut.

I'm not really sure which Christmas House Republicans are celebrating, but in my house it's a Christmas of charity and of goodness. I am so saddened that here in this House we have ripped out from under the Christmas tree the Christmas for millions of American families who will not get to go into the New Year with a tax cut and who will go into the New Year without an unemployment check. The House Republicans have done a great disservice to this country.

DEMOCRATS, APPOINT YOUR CONFEREES

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

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, we've had an awful lot of conversation this afternoon. It twists on the idea that somehow the 100 Members of the Senate are so much smarter and so much brighter and so much more intelligent than the 435 Members of the House of Representatives.

Our colleagues from the other side of the aisle would ask us to simply accede to whatever the Senate does as ludicrous as it is. A 2-month extension is nonsense. It has no commonsense value whatsoever. Everyone in this Chamber knows that. Yet speaker after speaker says that we need to just accede to the wisdom of the Senate. The wisdom of the Senate is represented by a 2-month extension that is not paid for by anything that makes the remotest amount of sense.

We can fix this this coming week, and we think we should. Have them appoint their conferees, Mr. Speaker, so we can fix this for the American people. Then all this doom and gloom that's being spouted out down here goes away with a 1-year extension of unemployment, with a 1-year extension of the payroll tax, and with a 2-year extension for our doctors.

A SHELL GAME ON THE FLOOR OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. COHEN. We've witnessed a shell game played here on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Republicans talked about having voted for an extension of the unemployment compensation and for extending the payroll tax, but what they gave with the right hand they took from the left. They said, We give you this, but we cut your benefits to 59 weeks of your unemployment compensation.

They all voted against the Affordable Care Act. So in this bill as well, if you have a preexisting condition, they want you not to get health care as you can today. If you're 26 years of age or younger, it would be that you can't get on your parents' insurance policies, which you can today because of the ACA. Also, the doughnut hole would be closed, which it is because of the ACA, but they're against that because they wanted to cut funds to put the America Cares Act into operation.

The fact is that Senate Republicans and Democrats didn't vote for a 60-day extension. They voted for time to get together and do a 1-year extension. That's what we need. They had wiser heads. You saw a good reason not to have term limits. First-year Members are acting as if they know everything; and in a petulant way, they have jeopardized millions of Americans.

THE BOTTOM LINE

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

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Well done, my good and faithful servants.

That must be what the Koch brothers and the corporate Tea Party backers are saying. Their Republican Party in the House has for the whole year been able to stave off any fairness by protecting their millionaires and billionaires from being denied tax breaks.

Here we are at the end of the session, and they leave having not allowed this body to vote on the bipartisan agreement that the Senate reached with the House leadership's consent—an agreement that passed 89-10—and they went home. So we won't get a chance to vote on that package. They refused to let us do so. That's the story that we end with.

That's the bottom line, and that's the way it is.

A SAD AND WORRISOME TIME MADE WORSE BY THIS DAY

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

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. At just about this hour, the Sun is setting, and Jewish families around the country, including mine, are going to their Hanukkah Menorah—the festival of lights, the festival of a miracle that the lights lasted for 8 days. Usually, this is a joyful time—a beautiful, holy celebration. For many families around this country, this is a very sad and worrisome time, made worse by this day.

With millions of Americans unemployed and relying on a meager average \$286-a-week check while they look for work, Republicans voted today to not extend unemployment insurance, to not extend a tax cut for middle-income people who need it so badly this year when the economics were so hard. It just breaks my heart that at this holi-

day season and when people are feeling in such a fragile economic state that today's vote took place. It didn't need to. We would have helped the American people today.

Happy Hanukkah.

REPUBLICANS, HAVE A HEART

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

Mr. PALLONE. I want to follow up on what my colleague from Illinois said, because it really is true.

We are talking about hurt for America's families here. I know that, in the next week, as this time expires on the unemployment compensation, on the Medicare reimbursement, on the payroll tax cut, I'm going to get calls from seniors telling me that the doctors are not accepting them for Medicare anymore. I'm going to find out that people have lost their unemployment insurance.

Here we are at a time when we're just starting to see the economy improve a little bit; and I know there is a real risk, if we don't extend that payroll tax cut, that we will send the economy back into a recession again.

It is amazing to me to see my colleagues on the other side suggest that somehow they're going to stay here and that the conferees are going to be here. None of that is true. They're home. They're not here. They're going home, and they're not going to come back until after January. I really think it's outrageous to think that they're running the risk that the economy will be hurt by this and that people won't have money in their pockets and that those who receive Medicare may be refused a doctor.

We're simply asking, as Democrats, to have a heart. Why is it that Republicans don't understand the negative consequences of this?

□ 1640

TAKEAWAYS FROM THE DAY

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

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, the two key takeaways from the debate today are, number one, there is nobody in this Chamber—nobody, Republican, Democrat—nobody in the Senate on the other side—Republican, Democrat, Independent—nobody believes that a 2-month fix is the end result of this process. The 2-month fix is to allow the benefits to continue so that the 160 million Americans that are now benefiting from the reduction in the payroll tax continue to have those benefits while we come together and while we compromise, while we come to a long-term agreement. That's what this is all about.

The other takeaway is the majority party did not allow a vote on the Senate plan. For all the talk about how

flawed they believe the Senate plan to be, they didn't allow a vote on the Senate plan because they would have lost their position. That bill would have passed. We would be done with it today.

So when you hear Members of the majority talking about how flawed the Senate bill is and how the American people don't support it, their own Members would have voted for it, and we would have passed the bill if they would have allowed it.

STOP TRADING ON CONGRESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

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

Mr. WALZ OF MINNESOTA. Mr. Speaker, again, this august body displayed the worst of what we can do. The opportunity to try and compromise was there. I have to say, last week I supported a bill put forward by my Republican friends, sent it to the Senate. It came back. And as the previous speaker said, I didn't even get a chance to vote on it. The real tragedy here is that there is another piece of legislation that is being held up that the American public knows needs to happen.

We can have a difference of political opinions across the aisle. The one that needs to get done is to believe people here are playing by the rules. The Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge, the insider-trading bill that's 18 pages long, it's been sitting around for 6 years. It now has 240 bipartisan cosponsors. It is now suddenly buried and gone. The American people demand us to do one thing: be honest and work for them. That bill can ensure that happens.

MIDDLE CLASS AMERICA, TAKE NOTICE

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, at the expense of the taxpayer, Members of the House of Representatives were called back to Washington to conclude business on a payroll tax extension. The truth of the matter is we never even voted on the bill. Why, perish the thought! The bill would have probably passed. Who loses? 160 million Americans who won't realize a payroll tax extender; 48 million Americans, seniors who won't have access to their Medicare health provider; 2.2 million unemployed Americans who through no fault of their own lost a job, won't have their unemployment insurance extended.

You know, when it came to providing tax cuts for millionaires and billionaires, there were no bells and whistles. There were no pipelines attached to the legislation. There were no pay-fors.

But when it comes to a tax cut for middle class Americans, all kinds of bells and whistles are attached, all kinds of demands. This is a facade that is seen through clearly. When they had a chance to address this issue, they called it "a gimmick"; it wasn't worth their attention. So don't let them fool you. This is just a way to keep moving the goal post and not do the right thing. Middle class America, take notice. We regret not taking a vote in this House.

ANOTHER DAY IN CONGRESS

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

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, there are some funny things that go on here. We watched the supercommittee operate for about 10 weeks and produce absolutely nothing. So today the Speaker comes out here and says, we want a conference committee. Now, the supercommittee was 12 members, three from each caucus; a conference committee, three members from each caucus. We're going to create another one, and we think that somehow it will solve this problem.

The definition of insanity is doing the same thing again and again and expecting a different result, and clearly we're not going to get a different result. The Senate sent us a compromise between two people that can't agree on the time of day, HARRY REID and MITCH MCCONNELL, and they got 90 votes for it. That is America. Ninety percent of America agreed on that; and the Speaker wouldn't even allow it to come to a vote. He said, Let's create a committee.

Don't forget it in 2012.

GED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS

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

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, we often talk about poison pills, and I don't know that all of the American people really understand what we're talking about. I want the American people to know that this 1-year bill that the House Republicans seemed to be in love with had some poison pills in it. One of them cut 40 weeks off of unemployment insurance. That's what they want us to agree to.

But another one, and the one I think is most egregious, said to those people applying for unemployment insurance that you must pass the GED in order to get unemployment insurance. We would say to a Vietnam veteran who is a master electrician, who went off to fight a war, never finished high school, but now that you are unemployed with all your skills, because you don't have a high school diploma or a GED, you must take a GED in order to get your

unemployment insurance. That is not only a poison pill; that is insulting and egregious.

ONE OF THESE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHER

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

Mr. RICHMOND. Mr. Speaker, the unfortunate incidents of today remind me of that song I learned from Sesame Street which is, One of these kids is doing his own thing. The truth of the matter is we need adults today. If you look at the Republican Senators, they stood up and reached a compromise with the Democrats in the Senate. The House Democrats came along. The President came along. There was only one outlier, and that was our House Republicans.

Over the holidays, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you remind and encourage my House Republican colleagues to go see the wizard, go get a brain so we can talk about the intelligence needed to spur this economy. Go get the courage to stand up to the private interests, the Koch brothers, and the lobbyists so that you can do the right thing for the country. And after all, go get a heart so you can help the 2.2 million people that are unemployed have a merry Christmas, so that you can help the 160 million people who will face a tax hike on January 1 and, more than anything, the 48 million seniors who will have less access to health care.

Mr. Speaker, I will close with one thing, and it's just a bit of advice: be careful because the unemployment benefits you save may be your own.

WARREN HELLMAN

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

Ms. PELOSI. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise to pay tribute to the passing of a man whose legacy to San Francisco is a great one. I rise to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Warren Hellman, a community leader, a San Francisco legend, and an American success story. Sadly, Warren passed away on December 18, surrounded by his loving family. That was the way he lived, surrounded by his loving family.

Warren was a tremendously successful businessman. And it was his business acumen that allowed him to pursue his true fashion, philanthropy. He was a Renaissance man. That's how his daughter described him, and that's how we all saw him. With his deep generosity, intellectual curiosity, and his visionary dynamism, he changed the face of San Francisco. His legacy will live on through his contributions to education, to music, to civic life, and to the memory we all happily have of him being such a modest athlete, something he took great pride in.