

doctors of their choosing if Congress does not address this issue. According to the AMA, one in three physicians is limiting the number of new Medicare patients they see, and one in eight doctors is no longer taking new Medicare patients. That's today.

What is more disturbing than these immediate cuts is the fast approaching insolvency date. This is a critical problem. Ignoring the insolvency date of 2024 puts our seniors' care at risk, once again, on an even larger scale than what we are facing today.

We cannot continue to bury our heads in the sand. As a physician, on behalf of my patients, let's act now to protect the Medicare program and ensure access to quality care for America's seniors.

HONORING LARIMER COUNTY

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

Mr. GARDNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 150th anniversary of Larimer County, Colorado.

The first settlers arrived in 1858; and Antoine Janis, who led the party, declared the area of present-day Larimer County to be "the loveliest spot on Earth." Larimer County captures what outsiders envision as Colorado's true beauty. The county is named after General William Larimer, an early Denver settler and founder who was made the county's namesake as a tribute.

From the farmlands, to the majestic mountains, to the robust business sector, to the kind people, Larimer County is Colorado.

It is the sixth most populous county in the State. While other areas of Colorado were settled and founded at the prospect of gold and mining riches, Larimer County was different. It attracted many settlers because of fertile lands and reliable water sources. Larimer County started as an agricultural area and continues to flourish in agriculture production today. Aside from ag, Larimer County has a thriving business and health industry, a strong education system, picture-perfect scenery, wonderful locations for outdoor recreation, and a top-tier research university at Colorado State University.

In my humble opinion, Rocky Mountain National Park in Larimer County is one of the most beautiful places in the entire country and is the crown jewel of our National Park System. It is my honor to recognize Larimer County's 150th anniversary on the House floor and acknowledge all that it has to offer.

A PERMANENT FIX TO STOP MEDICARE PROVIDER CUTS

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Medicare physicians are facing a 28 percent cut come January 1, 2012, unless this Congress acts to stop it. If left alone, these cuts will force many physicians to stop seeing Medicare beneficiaries, a move that could harm millions of seniors who are in search of care.

It is incomprehensible that congressional Democrats have already cut Medicare provider rates as a way to help pay for ObamaCare and that they again offered to cut provider rates during our debt negotiations this Congress.

Providers in my district and across this country have told me that if Congress continues to cut provider rates they won't be able to see Medicare patients, pure and simple. In fact, CMS actuary Rick Foster has told us that the cuts to hospitals in ObamaCare alone will force 15 percent of these facilities to close. The seniors in my district tell me they can't afford to lose their doctors. Let's get a fix to this problem done, and done permanently.

□ 1220

THE BENEFITS OF HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, health savings accounts have been shown to lower health care costs and allow Americans to have more control over their money and their health care decisions.

Recently the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 14 percent of all workers in the private sector now have access to a health savings account. The number of people with HSA-type accounts rose to over 11½ million in January, up from 10 million a year before and 8 million the year before that.

But, Mr. Speaker, health savings accounts are at risk. Under the Affordable Care Act passed in this House of March of 2010, by 2014 there will be a phase-in of what's known as the medical loss ratio rules that may eliminate the ability of HSAs to continue to exist. It's all in the hands of the Secretary of Health and Human Services, who, in the past, has not been favorably disposed to HSAs.

Now, Governor Mitch Daniels understands the power of consumer-directed health care. Governor Daniels, when he came and talked to our Health Caucus a little over a year ago, talked about his Healthy Indiana plan, a plan that in his State has allowed him to provide for his State workers health care benefits that receive a positive approval rating by 94 percent of his workers and, at the same time, lowering costs by 11 percent.

This is the type of innovation that the Affordable Care Act should have fostered. Instead, it stands in the way

of this groundbreaking way to deliver health care to our Nation's folks.

MEDICARE BENEFICIARIES AND ACCESS TO CARE

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

Mr. DESJARLAIS. Mr. Speaker, as both a practicing physician and a Member of Congress, I have had numerous discussions with patients and constituents regarding how difficult it is for Medicare beneficiaries to find access to care.

Unfortunately, this dilemma will only be exacerbated if Congress fails to enact legislation by the year's end for the sustainable growth rate, the formula in which physicians are paid for treating seniors on Medicare. Without congressional action, physician reimbursement will be cut by 28 percent on January 1, 2011, which will drastically hurt seniors' ability to find medical care.

For roughly 8 years, Congress has applied a short-term fix to resolve these cuts. Republican doctors are committed to enacting a permanent solution to the flawed SGR formula. Democrats had a chance to deal with this issue during the passage of ObamaCare but, instead, chose to cut roughly \$525 billion in Medicare.

Congress must have the courage to repeal the flawed SGR formula and create a sustainable and reliable payment schedule.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, nearly 3 years ago, the President of the United States stood in this Chamber and said we need health care reform to address "the crushing cost of health care" and to "strengthen Medicare for years to come."

Well, we got the President's type of health care reform. Seniors had to help pay for it, however, by removing \$500 billion—a half trillion dollars—from Medicare in order to subsidize ObamaCare. But guess what. That has made Medicare even weaker.

Today we're trying to find billions of dollars to pay for another temporary fix to Medicare reimbursement rates to ensure access by patients to their physicians. Last year it cost \$19 billion, and it will cost more in future years.

ObamaCare did not bend the cost curve down as it was promised; it just pushed the issue down the road.

Republicans are committed to getting the doc fix done and finding a permanent solution; but Medicare is running out of money, and these fixes are getting more expensive. It's time to repeal ObamaCare and replace it with reforms that truly strengthen Medicare for years to come.

AMERICANS DISTRUST THE NATIONAL MEDIA

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Pew Research Center has found that negative opinions about news organizations now equal or surpass all-time highs. In their poll, 66 percent of those surveyed stated news stories are often inaccurate, and 77 percent think that news organizations seem to favor one side over the other. And in a recent Gallup poll, Americans were asked how much trust and confidence they have in the mass media. A majority, 55 percent, responded "not very much" or "none at all."

Three years ago I started the Media Fairness Caucus in Congress. This caucus helps encourage a free and fair media as our Founders intended. The purpose of the caucus is not to censor or condemn but to urge the media to adhere to the highest standards of their profession and to provide the American people with the facts, balanced stories, and fair coverage of the news.

Our national media should be held accountable for their performance, just like any other institution. We need to remind the media of their profound obligation to provide the American people with the facts, not to tell them what to think.

CONGRATS TO THE NIU HUSKIES

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Northern Illinois University Huskies football team for winning the 2011 Mid-American Conference championship.

Last Friday, the Huskies overcame three first-half turnovers and a 20-point deficit to defeat the Bobcats of Ohio University with a last-second field goal as time expired. The incredible win caps off another great season for the Northern Illinois University Huskies as they finished with a 10-3 overall record and now head to the GoDaddy.com Bowl on January 8 to play Arkansas State.

Congratulations to the players, coaches, and support staff for all of the Huskies for another fantastic season. Go Huskies.

THE OKLAHOMAN: OKLAHOMA CITY HAS MUCH TO OFFER MILITARY RETIREES

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

Mr. LANKFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to praise the incredible people of Oklahoma City and the wonderful community they're building for our retired military veterans.

A recent study conducted in 379 cities nationwide by USAA and Military.com ranked Oklahoma City as the number one city for a second career for military retirees. Oklahoma City's economy is boosted by a great combination of veteran-owned businesses, defense contracting companies, Federal workers, and Tinker Air Force Base.

This study simply proves what Oklahomans already know: Oklahoma is a great place to live and to work. Oklahoma City has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the Nation and one of the highest work ethics. Oklahoma City is a great place to raise a family, start a new career or retire.

The vets who have chosen to live in Oklahoma City are hardworking individuals with great skills, a great work ethic, and a love for our country. Military retirees make long-lasting contributions within their communities, and they're vital to our State's success.

My message to veterans across the Nation who want to start a new business or new career or find a new community that honors vets for their service, you're welcome to join us in Oklahoma City.

LOOMING CRISIS FOR OUR SENIORS

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

Ms. BUEKLE. Mr. Speaker, I rise to call attention to a looming crisis for our seniors. We are facing the very real prospect of millions of Americans losing their access to health care providers because of reductions in Medicare payments to physicians due to the flawed Sustainable Growth Rate, SGR, formula.

Mr. Speaker, on January 1, 2011, the SGR formula will trigger a 27.4 percent pay cut across the board for Medicare physician services. According to the AMA, in my home State of New York, Mr. Speaker, the cut will amount to \$28,000 per physician. That loss makes it harder for physicians to pay for office staff, space, and equipment, which translates, Mr. Speaker, to decreased access to care for many patients.

Many physicians have indicated that they will no longer accept Medicare patients. Our seniors, Mr. Speaker, rely on Medicare, which they have paid into and has been there for them.

Mr. Speaker, doctors want to provide care to our seniors, and we cannot allow Medicare payment cuts to prevent doctors from serving all of their patients. Our doctors deserve better. Our seniors deserve better.

MEDICARE

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

Mr. GOSAR. Mr. Speaker, 10,000 older Americans are entering the Medicare system every day, so access to quality

physicians is more important than ever. The sad fact is we are not paying our Medicare providers enough to keep their doors open, much less accept new patients.

In usual Washington fashion, past Congresses have kicked the can down the road; and if we don't act before the end of the year, physicians will face a 27 percent cut in their Medicare reimbursement.

We need to come together and find a better method to pay our Medicare physicians for the long term and include it in a properly thought-out health care reform. If we continue to allow these flawed policies, Medicare patients will suffer, and we owe our seniors better.

Our seniors were made promises by those that came before us serving you today, and I'm here to tell you that we will keep those promises. Taking up this important fix to health care before it's too late will allow us to continue to be the best Nation, a healthy Nation that we can be proud to leave our children and our grandchildren.

□ 1230

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 10, REGULATIONS FROM THE EXECUTIVE IN NEED OF SCRUTINY ACT OF 2011, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 479 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 479

Resolved, That at any time after the adoption of this resolution the Speaker may, pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XVIII, declare the House resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for consideration of the bill (H.R. 10) to amend chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, to provide that major rules of the executive branch shall have no force or effect unless a joint resolution of approval is enacted into law. The first reading of the bill shall be dispensed with. All points of order against consideration of the bill are waived. General debate shall be confined to the bill and shall not exceed one hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary. After general debate the bill shall be considered for amendment under the five-minute rule. In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on the Judiciary now printed in the bill, the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by the Committee on Rules now printed in the bill, modified by the amendment printed in part A of the report of the Committee on Rules accompanying this resolution, shall be considered as adopted in the House and in the Committee of the Whole. The bill, as amended, shall be considered as the original bill for the purpose of further amendment under the five-minute rule and shall be considered as read. All points of order against provisions in the bill, as amended, are waived. No further amendment to the bill, as amended, shall be in order except those printed in part B of the report of the Committee on Rules.