

The Affordable Care Act will change the landscape of our Nation's health care delivery system for the better. I hosted a telephone town hall last night with my constituents on the Affordable Care Act and was joined by the Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services, Bill Corr, to answer questions from folks in my district about how it will affect them.

We listened to comments and stories about people who have been in the doughnut hole, seniors, that cost them a lot of money. We told them about the fact some of them knew that once they go into the doughnut hole—after they spend about \$2,500 or \$2,700 and up to about \$5,000 you go into that hole—that the moneys will be paid for, for generic drugs, with a 50 percent discount because of the Affordable Care Act. That is extremely important for citizens and others with high drug prices.

Children will be able to stay on their parents' insurance, if they choose to, up to the age of 26, which didn't happen before; and that's so important for young people and for parents to know the security that their children will be insured if they have a health care crisis.

Doctors will be able to see seniors for preventative care without cost. That's happening right now for those on Medicare and will happen for everybody in 2014 when the law goes into effect for all—mammograms, colonoscopies, shots for children, vaccinations, et cetera.

The insurance companies will no longer be able to have lifetime limits on how much people can use their insurance in case of illness.

There will be a consumer-friendly exchange where you can shop for prices for insurance and compare insurance policies to get what's best for you.

You can't arbitrarily be dropped from coverage by your insurance company simply because you get sick, and pre-existing conditions will no longer be a basis to deny somebody insurance. Already today, for children up to the age of 19, preexisting conditions cannot stop you from getting insurance.

I had polio when I was a child. I would not like to think of any child that gets an illness such as that today, whether it be diabetes or cancer or any other illness, to be denied insurance because of a preexisting condition. That, because of the Affordable Care Act, will not occur in the future in this country.

Insurance companies have taken people off of insurance because they've used too much in a year or too much in a lifetime, and that's going to stop.

The idea of getting preventative care, which Medicare provides now and all will have in the future, will lead to lower health care costs because, if you catch illnesses early, it's much more cost efficient to treat them, and lives will be saved as well.

Insurance companies are required to spend at least 80 percent of their monies on treating patients, not on executive pay, advertising, administrative

costs, or other such costs to the consumer; and if they go over that in any way whatsoever, the consumer will get a rebate. Insurance companies must now publish justifications for any premium increases they are seeking of more than 10 percent on the Internet, and outside experts will evaluate whether those increases are justified. The consumer will be protected.

The doughnut hole ending, which I talked about earlier, has helped 3.6 million seniors receive discounts of \$2.1 billion, each senior saving an average of \$604.

The preventative care services I mentioned under Medicare, 32.5 million seniors have already received one or more of those preventative services; and youngsters have received them as well because they get preventative care in their vaccinations without having to have a copay, which might stop their parent from taking them to the doctor to get those vaccinations which can prevent illnesses later.

Seniors are now receiving free annual wellness visits under Medicare, and 2.3 million seniors in traditional Medicare have already taken advantage of the new annual wellness visit.

Young adults stay on their insurance, as I mentioned; 2.5 million additional young people have gained insurance over the last year.

Paul Krugman wrote in yesterday's New York Times that what is called by the Republican Party ObamaCare—which really, if you think about it, is a good thing, Obama cares, but it's not intended to be by them as, really, Obama-RomneyCare, because the plan we adopted is based upon what Mitt Romney did in Massachusetts to make sure that the people of Massachusetts bought insurance and the burden was shared in an appropriate way.

Thank you, Mitt Romney. Thank you, President Obama. Thank you, United States American Congress.

SENSELESS DEATHS BECAUSE OF RACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WILSON) for 5 minutes.

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am tired of burying young black boys. I am tired of watching them suffer at the hands of those who fear them and despise them. I'm tired of comforting mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, and brothers after such unnecessary, heinous crimes of violence.

In Florida, almost 3 years ago, as I served in the Florida Senate, a young black boy, Martin Lee Anderson, was beaten to death at a Florida boot camp. It was all captured on a State of Florida Corrections video and shown all over the world. Martin Lee Anderson was beaten and tortured until his lifeless body couldn't take any more, and then Martin Lee Anderson was dead at the hands of several boot camp guards—a young boy who wanted to be somebody, a young boy who was trying to turn his life around.

After they beat him to death on international TV as the world watched, over and over again, not one guard was sent to prison. Not one was even reprimanded. In fact, after we closed down every boot camp in Florida, many of the accused received promotions.

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Well, guess what? In Florida, we have another Martin, Trayvon Martin. Trayvon Martin was shot to death by a renegade wannabe policeman neighborhood watchman.

Trayvon Martin lived in Miami, Florida, in District 17, my congressional district.

Trayvon, a 140-pound young black boy, 17 years old, was just trying to live and reach 18. In spite of that, the accused killer, George Zimmerman, has not been charged and is using the term of self-defense.

The 911 audiotapes tell it all. They tell the story of the last moments of Trayvon Martin's life, just as the videotapes told so visibly the story of Martin Lee Anderson's last moments. Trayvon was running for his life. He was screaming for help, fighting for his life, and then he was murdered, shot dead.

Today I applaud the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the FBI, and the Federal Department of Justice for their intervention. I encourage the citizens of Florida and the citizens from around the world to continue to fight for justice for Trayvon Martin. Justice must be served. No more racial profiling. I'm tired of fighting when the evidence is so clear, so transparent.

Twenty years ago while serving as a school board member, I founded the 5000 Role Models of Excellence Project. It is a million-dollar nationally recognized and honored foundation that specifically addresses the trials and tribulations of young black boys and sends them to college. It impacts almost 20,000 young men throughout Florida.

In spite of that, we still have to march and demonstrate and write letters and protest and fight and have prayer vigils and sue and sit in just to be heard. No more. No more, Florida. No more, America. No more hiding your criminal racial profiling by using self-defense to get away with murder.

Stand up for Trayvon Martin. Stand up for justice. Stand up for our children. I'm tired, tired, tired of burying young black boys.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act is styled such for a reason. Let us look back to 2009, at the time we embarked upon passing the Affordable Care Act. At that time in 2009, we were spending \$2.5 trillion per year on health care—\$2.5 trillion. That is a lot of money, and it

is very difficult to understand \$2.5 trillion. Well, \$2.5 trillion is \$79,000 per second. That's what we were spending on health care, \$79,000 per second. I'll be quite candid with you: these numbers are so huge that sometimes I do confuse them myself. That's \$79,000 per second.

We were spending 17.6 percent of GDP on health care. It was projected that by 2018, we would be spending \$4.4 trillion per year on health care. That would be \$139,000 per second. As I said, big numbers. It's hard to always get them correct because they are so huge and they can be confusing. That's \$139,000 per second.

We had 45,000 persons per year dying because they didn't have proper health care. We had 21 million people who were working full time and did not have insurance. That is 21 million people. In my State of Texas, 6 million people were uninsured. Twenty percent of the State's children were uninsured. In Harris County in my State of Texas, 1.1 million people were uninsured.

It was time for this Congress to act, and act we did. By passing the Affordable Care Act, we have reduced the cost of health care over the long term. It doesn't happen immediately, because the rising cost, as I've explained to you, was exponentially huge. It was almost unimaginable. To bring it down doesn't mean it comes down instantly, but over the next 20 years we will save a trillion dollars.

Here's what we've done. Aside from lowering the cost, which is important, we also impact lives. Preventive care is there. We also do away with pre-existing conditions. For those who did not know, pregnancy is a preexisting condition. We also make sure that women are not discriminated against. Women won't be charged more simply because they are females, because they are women. We equalize health care as it relates to the genders. We close the doughnut hole as it relates to senior citizens. I might also add that in '09, we were spending about \$100 billion a year on uninsured persons, much of that in emergency rooms where persons had to go to the emergency room to get the care that they did not have by virtue of not having insurance. They were getting their primary care in emergency rooms. They were also getting their pharmaceuticals through emergency rooms. It was a time to act, and act we did. We passed the Affordable Care Act.

I will close with this. We live in the richest country in the world. One out of every 100 persons is a millionaire. In this country, if you are an enemy combatant and we should capture you and wound you in the process, we will give you aid and comfort. In this country, if you are a bank robber and you're robbing the bank and on the way out we should harm you, when we capture you, we will give you aid and comfort. In this country, if you're on death row and scheduled to meet your Maker next week and you get sick this week, we

give you aid and comfort this week and we send you to meet your Maker next week. In this country, if we can give aid and comfort to the enemy combatant, if we can give aid and comfort to the criminal who robs the bank, if we can give aid and comfort to the person on death row, surely we can give aid and comfort to hardworking Americans who do not earn enough to afford insurance.

The Affordable Care Act does this. It does not require people who cannot afford insurance to buy it, but it does say that every person who can should buy insurance.

The Affordable Care Act is making a difference in the lives of people. Children can stay on their parents' policies until they're 26 years of age. This was a good piece of legislation. I supported it then and I still support it now. The Affordable Care Act is affordable, and that is why we passed it.

REAUTHORIZE THE WORKFORCE INVESTMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. TIERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support legislation that I, along with Congressman GEORGE MILLER of California and RUBÉN HINOJOSA of Texas, are introducing later today to reauthorize the Workforce Investment Act.

The Workforce Investment Act, or WIA as it is commonly known, is the primary Federal law governing how employment and training services are provided to adults, youth, and dislocated workers. It was enacted in 1998 when unemployment was below 5 percent and before many of today's high growth industries even existed. It is long past time for WIA to be modernized and retooled to address our country's current challenges.

The bill I'm introducing today does just that. This bill increases access to training and improves the delivery of employment services. It strengthens the law's accountability standards to better evidence program effectiveness and provide assurances that our taxpayer dollars are being well spent.

My bill ensures that the kind of innovative work that's being done by the North Shore Workforce Investment Board in my district and elsewhere across the country can be replicated and taken to scale, and it expands the role of community colleges in job training.

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This is the kind of commonsense legislation on which this Congress should be acting. We need to make sure we provide the training and education so that Americans have the skills to fulfill the jobs of today and tomorrow. Too many businesses have job vacancies because they can't find qualified candidates. Working together to help

workers and those looking to hire them should not be a partisan issue. We need to find those qualified candidates and put them to work.

Modernizing and strengthening WIA will help both workers and employers, and it will ensure that our country can remain competitive in this global economy. I urge my colleagues' support for it.

PROTECTING AMERICA'S YOUTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning on a number of issues that I think are enormously important, and I am delighted to join initially my colleague from Texas to again emphasize and truthfully tell the story about the Affordable Care Act that is now 2 years old. But as a founder and the cochair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, and because our children are our presents and our tomorrows, I think it's important to ask the question: Do we want healthy children? And should health care be a question of wealth and status? Or should it be open to all of our beautiful and precious children and youth?

The Affordable Care Act allows our young college students to remain on their parents' health insurance until the age of 26. The Affordable Care Act allows a baby that has a proclivity to asthma as a preexisting condition to be able to be covered by insurance. It provides an opportunity for extensive research into some of the unsolved childhood diseases, such as pediatric cancer. And, of course, it provides greater access to health care by expanding what we call community health clinics, something that I have been a proponent of since coming to Congress and throughout the Bush administration, when I asked President Bush directly about the number of community health clinics not only in the Nation but in my State of Texas, where we have the highest number of uninsured persons.

So I don't know why our Republican Presidential candidates and many think that the rising pathway to victory is to condemn an opportunity for our children. I find that curious, at best. And I would applaud and celebrate President Obama and his administration, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, Secretary Sebelius, and all of those who are contributing to the implementing of this legislation. I can tell you, in Texas today, as I stand, women are being denied access to health care. Thank God for the Affordable Care Act for its constitutional or its Federal premise of providing access to health care for all Americans. At least we have something that we can use to question the denial of access to health care to women in the State of Texas.

I indicated that I chair the Congressional Children's Caucus, so I rise