

a better proposal. The Republican bill has a cap in terms of how high these rates can go over time. The President's does not.

We need, obviously, to get both sides to come together and come up with a real compromise which comes up with an affordable, sustainable way for the Stafford student loan program to work. With only 5 days to go, I would argue that the better course now is just protect the lower rate, give us some time to come up with, again, overlapping good ideas from both sides of the aisle to fix this problem.

Let's not let the rates double. Let's pass H.R. 1595. Let's help 7.5 million college students pursue their goals and dreams and help the U.S. economy.

SYRIA—ANOTHER GUNRUNNING OPERATION BY UNCLE SAM

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there is a civil war raging in Syria. No question about it, President Assad is a bad guy. He hates Israel and he hates his own people. The humanitarian situation in Syria is dire. I have been to Syrian refugee camps in Turkey and seen firsthand the devastation of this war. In one camp I went to, there were 150,000 Syrians in Turkey fleeing from the devastation of war.

However, there are numerous rebel groups trying to remove Assad from power. Who exactly are these rebels? We really don't know. But we do know the most powerful among them is al Nusra, an affiliate of al Qaeda. These extremists on both sides are killing each other in the name of religion, and the people of Syria are caught in the middle.

Lining up on President Assad's side are the nations of Russia and Iran; also, the terrorist group Hezbollah, of course, sponsored by Iran. Lining up on the so-called rebels' side are Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, and numerous rebel groups from patriots to criminals to al Qaeda and outside mercenaries.

For 2 years, the United States has just ignored the situation; but now, suddenly, the administration has decided it's time to get involved. The administration's answer: send the rebels American guns. Send the rebels American guns? Blindly traffic American guns into Syria and, I guess, hope for the best.

Does this sound familiar, Mr. Speaker? We've tried this before. We've seen this song and dance in Libya and even in Mexico, our neighbor. This administration is gun-happy to give guns away. In Libya, the administration armed the rebel group to oust Muammar Qadhafi, another bad guy. Well, where are those guns now? Were they used in Benghazi? Who knows. The administration is still silent on Benghazi. Those guns are scattered all over the Middle East and in north Africa.

Were they used in Algeria? Remember, Mr. Speaker, in Algeria there were

Americans working at an energy plant there, along with other citizens from other countries. Two Americans were killed in that attack. Were they also used in Mali? Who knows. Only time will tell. And who has died because these weapons end up in the wrong hands every time we give American guns away to rebel groups?

By providing weapons to radical sectors fighting against Assad, we're really taking sides in somebody else's war. We're also arming some radicals who seek to destroy us, like al Qaeda, who is fighting on the side of rebels. More weapons will only escalate this conflict. More people are going to die because the United States picks sides.

But Syria and Libya are not the first time this administration blindly trafficked weapons to terrorists. Let's go back to our own hemisphere. Let's talk about our neighbor, Mexico. Do you remember Operation Fast and Furious? We still haven't gotten answers on that scandal.

In an effort to help fight the drug cartels, the administration sent thousands of weapons to Mexico without even telling the Mexican Government. And who got those weapons? The drug cartels.

□ 1220

Of course these guns ended up in the hands of the terrorists—the narco-terrorists—and resulted in the death of at least two or three Americans and hundreds of Mexican nationals. Another botched gunrunning operation sponsored by the U.S. Government.

Too bad we don't learn from history and stop this nonsense of furnishing guns to groups in somebody else's country. Did we implement universal background checks on the violent criminals we armed in Syria, Libya and Mexico? Yeah, right. Is this the new foreign policy of the United States—international weapons trafficking?

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, this administration is on a tireless crusade to ban guns in the United States. Mr. Speaker, why is the White House so determined on disarming Americans while arming known potential terrorists, bandits, drug lords and mercenaries? Ironic, don't you think? But that's a different issue for a different day.

And I ask this question: What is the national security interest of the United States to be involved in Syria, in somebody else's civil war? There is none. This is not our war.

Mr. Speaker, this is a regional religious war that we should not be involved in. It's a war between the Sunnis and the Shias. These two religious groups have been fighting each other since the year 630, and now we're involved in this regional, religious war. What's next? Is the administration going to propose and implement a no-fly zone? Well, if this occurs, I believe the President must ask for congressional approval under the War Powers Act.

Almost 100,000 Syrians are dead.

No question, the U.S. should help with humanitarian aid.

The U.S. should work for a political solution, not a military solution.

But the Administration's policy seems to be traffic guns to third world countries and subversives and hope for the best.

However, recent history has shown this is a bad idea.

This is a dangerous foreign policy.

What area of the world is next for our gun running government?

Wait and see.

And that's just the way it is.

WAR POWERS ACT

(IN PART)

50 USC §1541—Purpose and policy

(a) Congressional declaration

It is the purpose of this chapter to fulfill the intent of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and insure that the collective judgment of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, and to the continued use of such forces in hostilities or in such situations.

(b) Congressional legislative power under necessary and proper clause

Under article I, section 8, of the Constitution, it is specifically provided that the Congress shall have the power to make all laws necessary and proper for carrying into execution, not only its own powers but also all other powers vested by the Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any department or officer hereof.

(c) Presidential executive power as Commander-in-Chief; limitation

The constitutional powers of the President as Commander-in-Chief to introduce United States Armed Forces into hostilities, or into situations where imminent involvement in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances, are exercised only pursuant to

- (1) a declaration of war,
- (2) specific statutory authorization, or

(3) a national emergency created by attack upon the United States, its territories or possessions, or its armed forces

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, having traveled home this weekend and listened to so many back in my district concerned about the lack of solutions and the lack of effort on behalf of the United States Congress to get things done, I told them to take heart, that sometimes these things are difficult. And I added:

What if I tell you that we could deal with the rising cost of health care, we could bring down the national debt, and do it all by providing better quality, coordinated, and patient-centered care? That would be a good goal, they surmised.

And what if I told you we could do this without raising taxes or cutting Medicare benefits? And what if I told you that all of this notion began from the seeds of an idea that was an out-growth from the Heritage Foundation,

piloted by a Republican Governor in a Democratic State, and that served as the basis of the Affordable Health Care Act, which is the law of the land?

The Affordable Health Care Act was not, in fact, what many Members on my side of the aisle support—a single-payer plan or a Medicare-for-all approach. But the law of the land is based on the Heritage Foundation idea and a Republican Governor from Massachusetts' formula for making sure that we could provide care to all of our citizens.

Although the health care act has become politically driven and charged, what the American people want to see is a Congress that's serious about solutions, solutions that are workable on behalf of the American people.

So let's start where we all agree. PAUL RYAN has stated over again, very eloquently, that the rising cost of our debt and deficit is due to health care. I agree with him. When it comes to making sure that quality is improved for patients and care is coordinated more effectively, these are not Republican or Democratic ideas; these are American ideas, and why we need to move forward.

We have no less than 10 separate studies—studies from the Institute of Medicine, Reuters, the Commonwealth Fund, among others, that show that there is between \$750 billion to \$800 billion in waste, fraud, abuse, and lack of coordination within our health care system. Why, then, would we consider, with that kind of waste, taking any money out of Medicare or taking any money away from the beneficiaries who use that to pay for their hospitals, their medical devices, their pharmacists, their doctors?

What we need to do is face what the reality is. The reality is that the United States spends 18 percent of its gross domestic product on health care. We need to drive those costs down. By doing so, as businessmen will tell you, any model that is that inefficient, when the rest of the world is at 8 and 9 percent for health care and provides universal access to health care, and we're at 18 percent, with millions of our people still uninsured, if we drive that down and wring out all the inefficiencies, the waste in the system, then we can have health care for our constituents that's both coordinated and essential and drives down the national debt.

All we have to do is recognize a simple fact. Take the very best of our public health system. Take the very best of science, technology and innovation. And then take the very best of our private sector and its entrepreneurs and have this body come together in a co-ordinated fashion to bring that about.

It's happening without us. It's happening in the private sector, where leaders like Mark Bertolini from Aetna and others around this country are taking steps to drive down the cost of health care. They're doing it by coordinating care with the Mayo Clinic, with

the Cleveland Clinic, with Sloan Kettering, with labs like Jackson Labs in my State. All of this is focused on making sure that we're going to have better outcomes for our people.

We can do this together. Let's work toward solutions. This Congress is capable of doing it.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS SUPPORT ALL-OF-THE-ABOVE ENERGY POLICIES

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans are focused on solutions that will give our economy the boost it needs to fully recover and help put Americans back to work. Our Nation has an abundance of energy resources that, if accessed, would create jobs, promote our energy independence and lower prices at the pump.

Today, the President will once again abandon his claim to support an all-of-the-above energy stance and will unveil a new plan focused on waging a “war on coal” with Big Government regulations destroying jobs.

In contrast, this week, House Republicans will have the best interests of American families at heart when we vote on two key pieces of legislation included in our all-of-the-above energy plan. Increasing our offshore energy production, introduced by Congressman Doc HASTINGS of Washington, and lifting moratoriums on exploration and development, introduced by Congressman JEFF DUNCAN of South Carolina, are necessary to provide American families with a more secure future.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

Congratulations, former Chief of Staff Eric Dell and his wife, Torry, on the birth of their son, Noah Isaac Dell, on Sunday, June 23.

BOBBY (BLUE) BLAND

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

Mr. COHEN. Bobby (Blue) Bland, a Memphis and American music and blues idol, passed away at the age of 83 on Sunday.

Bobby (Blue) Bland was born Robert Calvin Brooks in 1930, and in the forties he moved to Memphis. In 1949, he joined a group called the Beale Streeters, which was a loose-knit group and it included Johnny Ace, Rosco Gordon, Earl Forest, and B.B. King—giants. He later worked for Junior Parker and B.B. King, two other giants. Then he went on his own way and became one of the great blues singers of all time.

His four top singles were “Turn on your Love Light,” “Call on Me,” “That's the Way Love is,” and “Ain't Nothing You Can Do.” He had top 100 hits almost every year for 40 years. His songs were covered by the Grateful Dead, The Band, and Van Morrison. He influenced Otis Redding, Wilson Pickett, and the Allman Brothers. He has been in every music hall of fame you can think of, including the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and the initial class of the Memphis Music Hall of Fame.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until 2 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 12 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1400

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at 2 p.m.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

Guide the Members of the people's House by the spirit of understanding, which will lead them ultimately to eternal wisdom. Since we live in a world of human failure and broken promises, may they be tolerant of the faults of others because they are so aware of their own unfaithfulness. All of us are yet to realize our own full potential as being truly the free children of God.

Bless all with a quiet respect for the diversity of opinions. Through honest dialogue and contemplative listening, may Your servants, gathered in this assembly, search all the avenues open to them to meet today's challenges of integrity and justice.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. SLAUGHTER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. SLAUGHTER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.