

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina 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.

THE PRESIDENT'S SHUTDOWN

(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, in less than 1 week, funding for the Federal Government is set to expire, which would result in a devastating government shutdown. On Friday, House Republicans passed a bipartisan continuing resolution to keep the government's doors open so that services are not interrupted, our national security will remain intact, and American families will be protected from the unsustainable, unaffordable health care law which destroys jobs.

It is obvious by the President's threat to veto the legislation that we cannot rely on our Commander in Chief to negotiate. Sadly, last week, he ordered his administration to prepare for a government shutdown, proving that he is unwilling to help solve this crisis.

Now is the time for the Senate to act. House Republicans remain optimistic that Senate leadership will find a solution to prevent the President's government shutdown. I appreciate the courage of Senator TED CRUZ to educate the American people on the consequences of Big Government, reducing freedom.

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

GRAY WOLF

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service recently published notice of two proposed rules. The first is to delist the gray wolf and list the Mexican wolf as endangered. The second is to consider expansion of the geographic boundaries of the Mexican wolf experimental population area in Arizona and New Mexico, as well as modification of the 10(j) rule for managing the experimental Mexican wolf population. Much of the area in consideration is in Arizona's First District, which I represent.

The Service has not scheduled a hearing of these proposed rules in Arizona, where folks live and work on these multiple-use rural landscapes. It is imperative that the Service hold hearings in Arizona, close to the areas that are most affected by these proposals, and that there be adequate time to analyze and submit comments.

It is equally imperative that the Service continue to work with, as a partner and cooperating agency, the

Arizona Game and Fish Department. This is the boots-on-the-ground State agency the Service has depended on the most in managing the Mexican wolf program.

OBAMACARE'S BROKEN PROMISES

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

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, in just 6 days, ObamaCare's insurance exchanges are scheduled to open. But what consumers will find in terms of health plans and cost will be a far cry from what they were promised by this administration.

The American people are tired of ObamaCare's broken promises. President Obama said that, "if you like your plan, you can keep your plan." But that just isn't the case. The authors touted this law as a "job creator," but, instead, it has caused employees to lose hours and made small businesses drop coverage for employees and question whether they can continue to hire.

Mr. Speaker, with the mentality of "we have to pass it to find out what's in it," this administration forced a 2,000-page bill into law. This doesn't even account for the already tens of thousands of pages of regulations folks are going to have to navigate through.

It's clear, from reports detailing increased costs and taxes to the polls showing that the majority of Americans do not want this, that ObamaCare must be repealed, reformed, or delayed.

BIPARTISAN SOLUTION TO IMMIGRATION

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the need for a bipartisan solution to our Nation's immigration challenges.

This past Saturday, I spoke at a naturalization ceremony in Tacoma, Washington, where 72 men and women from all corners of the world took their oath of allegiance to our Nation. I saw the joy on the faces of these new American brothers and sisters, including several military members who risked their lives to protect our Nation before they themselves had the rights to citizenship. Personally, the day also marked the 65th anniversary, to the day, of my grandmother's and mother's immigration to the United States from Holland.

The occasion served to remind me that we are a stronger Nation because of our Nation's diversity and the experiences that people bring here. We are indeed a Nation of immigrants, but we're also a Nation of laws. It's time to modernize those laws in a way that allows us to further secure our borders and create a feasible solution for the 11 million undocumented people here in the United States.

Improving our legal immigration system will ensure American workers receive the benefits of competing on an equal ground. It will reduce exploitation and give undocumented workers and their families a path toward achieving opportunity.

I hope we can cross party lines and pass a meaningful, comprehensive immigration reform bill.

OBAMACARE TO HIT NORTH CAROLINA HARDEST

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

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on behalf of North Carolinians who cannot afford to be worse off under ObamaCare.

Today, single North Carolinians in their mid-twenties can pay as little as \$35 a month for health insurance. Under ObamaCare, they will pay \$183 for a bronze plan. In direct contradiction to the President's promise of savings, health care costs for a family of four may even increase \$7,000. Where is the affordability in that?

Americans aren't interested in the administration's PR. They're concerned with whether they'll have to spend more on January 1 than they are spending today. The answer to that question is, sadly, yes for many in my State under ObamaCare.

ObamaCare is going to hit too many North Carolina families right in the wallet. It should be repealed and replaced with our American Health Care Reform Act.

OCTOBER 1 SIGNALS A NEW DAY

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, in just 6 days, the health exchanges will be open for enrollment and many people will have access to quality, affordable health care for the very first time.

The Congressional Black Caucus just completed 8 town halls across the country to fully and accurately inform our communities about the exchanges and Medicaid expansion and when and how to enroll and who their navigators and their certified enrollment assisters are. Everywhere we went, we found people hungry for the information we shared, including how the law had already helped thousands of people in their area: the young people who stayed on their parents' insurance, the many Medicare beneficiaries who were able to get preventive services and wellness visits without a copay, and the many people who got significant rebates from their insurance companies and how much each Medicare beneficiary saved in prescription drug costs. They were very angry about the misinformation that continues to be spread about the Affordable Care Act.

We Democrats are proud of the work we did with President Obama to create

this law and to make wellness a possibility for many who, for far too long, had been left out of the health care system. October 1 signals a brand new day for them and for our country, and we should celebrate it and do everything we can to make sure everyone in our districts enjoys these benefits.

HHS: A TRICKLE OF DATA, A TORRENT OF SPIN

(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, once again, the President is trying to mislead and hide the truth from the Congress and the American people. The Department of Health and Human Services released a report yesterday on the pricing of health plans on the Federal exchanges—a perfect example of bureaucratic doublespeak.

The report was quick to say that rates were 16 percent under their projections. Well, that sounds great, but what were their projections? Does that mean the rates will increase or decrease? They went to a lot of trouble to avoid answering that question. Some digging by Forbes Magazine, however, uncovered the truth. For 40-year-olds, rates will increase by an average of 99 percent for men, and 62 percent for women. It seems that the truth is a lot different.

The biggest problem, however, isn't the rate increase. With only 5 days left until implementation, the administration is unwilling or incapable of answering even basic questions. The data they released was only partial data samples.

It's time for the Department of Health and Human Services to stop playing games and hiding the truth, and time to give the American people the full truth about what the President's takeover of health care really means.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 5 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 5 p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas

and nays are ordered, or on which the vote incurs objection under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken later.

FIRE-RETARDANT MATERIALS EXEMPTION EXTENSION

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1961) to amend title 46, United States Code, to extend the exemption from the fire-retardant materials construction requirement for vessels operating within the Boundary Line.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1961

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF EXEMPTION.

Section 3503(a) of title 46, United States Code, is amended by striking "2008" and inserting "2028".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. PETRI) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CUMMINGS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 1961.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

H.R. 1961 renews the exemption for the Delta Queen from certain Coast Guard requirements adopted decades after the vessel was built.

The Delta Queen, a paddle-wheel riverboat, was built in 1926. It operated in California until 1947 and then carried tourists up and down the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers for more than 60 years. Forty years after the vessel was built, Congress set new rules prohibiting wooden ships from carrying 50 or more overnight passengers. The vessel has a steel hull, but a wooden superstructure.

Between 1968 and 2008, the Delta Queen operated under an exemption from the restriction on wooden passenger vessels, which was renewed nine times by Congress. H.R. 1961 reinstates the Delta Queen exemption. The vessel will still be subject to all other Coast Guard passenger vessel safety requirements. It must undergo required inspections and receive a certificate of inspection, like any other passenger vessel.

I commend my colleague from Ohio, STEVE CHABOT, and the bill's bipartisan cosponsors for introducing this bill. Permitting the Delta Queen to return to the river is estimated to create 170 jobs and produce economic activity of \$9.3 million annually.

The bill before us was reported favorably from the Transportation Committee on a voice vote. I urge my colleagues to support this bill and allow this historic vessel to return to the river.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I was the chairman of the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee in 2008 when Congress last rejected the measure before us today, and there has been no change in the intervening years that would now make this measure good policy. H.R. 1961 is a bill that would amend Federal law for the benefit of one single vessel, the Delta Queen. As such, I think we should call this bill what it really is: it's an earmark. Let me say that again: it's an earmark.

And what would this earmark do? First, it would create a potential fire trap on the water. In 1936, the United States required all passenger vessels to be constructed of fire-retardant materials. The Delta Queen was built in 1926, and part of its construction occurred in Europe. Its superstructure is wooden and not flame retardant. Exempting the Delta Queen from current fire safety standards would present an unacceptable and, frankly, unnecessary risk to passenger safety.

When this issue was last considered, the Coast Guard stated the following:

The combustible construction of the vessel presents an unacceptable fire risk that cannot be mitigated by the addition of fire suppression measures.

Just yesterday, I talked to Rear Admiral Joseph Servidio, the Coast Guard's assistant commandant for prevention policy. He oversees vessel inspections, and he made it clear to me that the Coast Guard continues to oppose this waiver. He also made it clear that a number of safety concerns may persist from the Coast Guard's 2008 special inspection of the Delta Queen.

And, frankly, the exemption this legislation seeks to make is not needed for the Delta Queen to operate on the Mississippi again if it wanted to do so. Let me say that again: the Delta Queen does not need the exemption that would be provided by this bill to operate in U.S. waters. The Delta Queen could take passengers on day cruises, and it could host up to 49 overnight passengers right now. But under current law, it cannot host 50 or more overnight passengers. The only thing the exemption sought in H.R. 1961 would do is increase the number of overnight passengers the Delta Queen could carry along our Nation's waterways, thus increasing the number of passengers who would be at risk should a fire break out on the boat.

What else would this earmark do? This earmark would interfere in a competitive market to pick winners and losers by giving an advantage to one vessel, something I thought my friends on the other side of the aisle said Congress should not be in the business of doing.