

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, today is day two of the Republican government shutdown. It is day two of the Republicans throwing a temper tantrum because they don't have the votes to overturn the Affordable Care Act. They have chosen to hold the Federal Government hostage in order to placate a small, reckless, extreme faction of their conference. It's shameful and it needs to stop.

Already, National Parks are closed. Head Start facilities are beginning to close, and paychecks to Federal employees could be delayed. And if closing Head Start facilities wasn't bad enough, shutting the government down could cause great harm to pregnant women, infants, and children.

That's right, Mr. Speaker. Pregnant women, infants, and children will begin feeling the impacts of this Republican shutdown as funding for the WIC program begins to lapse. There are nearly 9 million pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants, and children on WIC. Nine million low-income people receive healthy food and nutrition education from this important and vital program.

WIC is a critical program that provides food and nutrition counseling for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women, as well as newborns and infants. It is a key program that helps pregnant and breastfeeding women stay healthy through proper nutrition and actually helps prevent many health issues associated with nonnutritious meals.

In about a week, funding for WIC will dry up. Funding for food and nutrition education for low-income women and their children will be eliminated. Some States will see their funds dry up right away; and some, like Massachusetts, have budgeted in a way that will allow them to patch funds together to prevent major shortfalls only for a couple of weeks.

I come to this floor week after week to talk about how we can end hunger now. A few weeks ago, this House of Representatives cut SNAP, formerly known as food stamps, by \$39 billion. Year after year, Budget Committee Chairman PAUL RYAN tries to block grant SNAP, a \$130 billion cut in the program. And a few years ago, the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, chaired then by the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. KINGSTON), attempted to cut WIC by hundreds of millions of dollars.

There's a pattern here of trying to balance the budget on the backs of the poor, on the backs of the hungry. There's a pattern here of saying to people who are struggling to make ends meet that they just don't matter.

The Republicans, who are forcing this government shutdown—those Republicans who are cheering on a government shutdown like cheerleaders at a pep rally—are inflicting real damage on real Americans. And those on the front lines are, unfortunately, poor women and their children.

We're not going to end hunger now by painting a target on their backs and

using them to balance our budgets. Income disparity is currently at its greatest gap since the Great Depression. Hunger is not getting any better in this country. Yet the Republicans in the House think it's okay to take food away from hungry people, including veterans and kids, just because they don't like those programs.

The cut in food stamps that we debated and voted on a couple of weeks ago would throw 170,000 of our veterans off the program—men and women who have served our country in battle. They'll be cut from the program.

What they are doing is wrong. It takes my breath away, Mr. Speaker.

Ending hunger requires real leadership and not letting some right-wing zealots eviscerate the Federal budget so that the hungry in America don't have the ability to put food on their tables. What is happening here is cold. It is heartless. It is unconscionable.

We should be working to end hunger now instead of shutting down the Federal Government. The low-income women, infants, and children of this country deserve a hell of a lot better than they're getting from this Republican-led House of Representatives.

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AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, the health care marketplaces are finally open. The only complaint is that people are so eager to learn more about their options and to sign up that too many people logged on yesterday.

Now, to hear my colleagues from across the aisle describe this day, you might expect to look out the window and witness the beginning of, as "Ghostbusters" once put it, 40 years of darkness—earthquakes, volcanos, the dead rising from the grave, dogs and cats living together, mass hysteria. Perhaps these warnings were overblown.

The start of the Affordable Care Act resulted in exactly zero people locked out of their offices with their paychecks on hold. By contrast, the Republican shutdown has furloughed 800,000 Federal employees.

Exactly zero people yesterday were deprived of their annual flu shots because of the Affordable Care Act. In fact, ObamaCare has made preventive care for things like vaccines free, without copay, to insured patients nationwide. By contrast, the Republican shutdown has forced the CDC to halt its annual seasonal influenza program, just as flu season is getting underway.

Because of the Affordable Care Act, exactly zero infants yesterday were deprived of healthy food and nutrition information. By contrast, the Republican shutdown has put at risk the entire Women, Infants, and Children program,

which provides some 9 million Americans with the support they need to feed their children.

The Republican shutdown has also brought to a standstill critical life-saving biomedical research being conducted at the NIH and NSF. Exactly zero people yesterday went untreated because of the ACA for foodborne illnesses. By contrast, the Republican shutdown has forced the FDA to cease many of its food safety operations.

The Affordable Care Act has not ushered in an era of doom and gloom that the Republicans promised. Instead, it has offered hope and opportunity for good health care coverage.

Here is the reality: The ACA is helping my constituents who previously found health insurance out of reach. The access provided by ACA is long overdue. Rather than seek delay, we should be embracing it.

For years I've been hearing from people like Nicole, from Lawrence, who writes not about the fear of the ACA but, rather, "the fear that the health care of your family will bankrupt you and that your lack of resources will leave you and your loved ones vulnerable to sickness and death."

Now, I also hear optimism—optimism—that comes from the options that can now be found in the new marketplace. Just ask Mary, from Princeton, who wrote me earlier this week:

Please do not allow the implementation of ObamaCare to be delayed. I've been waiting and waiting for a time when my adult children would be able to afford health insurance.

She goes on to say that the health care marketplace has given her "the opportunity to review plans with them and to assist them to choose the best plan."

There is the single mother from Scotch Plains who wrote me:

I am a registered Republican, and I am embarrassed by all that has been happening for the last few days. The Tea Party and some Republicans keep yelling that they're speaking for the people. Well, they're not speaking for me or anyone I know.

ObamaCare must be given a chance. I have been without coverage since my COBRA ended 2 years ago. I was unable to get reasonable coverage at a reasonable rate. I don't want charity; I'm not looking for a handout. I want affordable health care. I've been praying I stay healthy. I'm patiently waiting for the affordable care exchanges so that I can finally try my luck there. Please, please don't let the Tea Party take this away from me and so many others who need it.

Now, I wish my colleagues on the other side of the aisle would accept this as the good news that it is. I wish they would accept that their stories of doom and gloom for ObamaCare were wrong. But instead, we're learning that the dire stories were not a prediction, they were a threat.

The Tea Party, confronted with the prospect of a duly passed law that has been upheld by the Supreme Court, have thrown a temper tantrum. They have taken hostage the entire Federal Government, and they have sabotaged the process of self-government—all to

prevent Americans from gaining access to affordable health care.

Let's make the health care law work as well as possible. Let's, together, make our other government services—necessary services—work as well as possible.

REPUBLICAN SHUTDOWN AND ACA

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, here we are, day two of the Republican shutdown. The Tea Party extremists are really achieving their goal of dismantling government. Their shutdown is step one.

It's no secret that the Tea Party Republicans came here not as public servants, but to destroy and decimate our government. Now, millions of families, children, seniors, Federal employees, and our economy are paying the price. The Republican refusal to back off their extreme, ideological demands has taken our country down a very dangerous path that will surely push millions more into hunger and poverty.

In my congressional district and throughout the State of California families are already feeling the impact of the Republican government shutdown. The California Women, Infants, and Children program is on the brink of turning away low-income pregnant women and new mothers if this shutdown continues. How ruthless can you get?

The California National Guard, the largest in the Nation, is forced to furlough technicians and aviation mechanics, even as the fire season is still upon us. And throughout the State of California, eighth graders, like my constituents from Oakland who wrote to me yesterday, are cancelling field trips to national parks and monuments which are closed to visitors. What are they going to do now?

To add insult to injury, Republicans have shut down the government because they are obsessed with destroying the Affordable Care Act, which is the law of the land and which the Supreme Court upheld. Most Americans continue to see how senseless and wrong it is to shut down the government because you want to deny health care to millions. Two wrongs don't make a right.

Despite the Republican government shutdown, health care exchanges established under the Affordable Care Act have successfully opened for enrollment, and now millions of uninsured Americans are just 3 months away from having the health care coverage they so desperately need.

California, the first State to commit to establishing its own exchange, launched the Covered California exchange. Covered California's exchange includes health care options for individuals and small businesses. In my congressional district alone, there are nearly 100,000 uninsured constituents,

and the opening of the exchanges means that they are one step closer to health care coverage that can literally—mind you, literally—make the difference between life and death.

Hostage taking really is a deplorable tactic. Members of Congress are elected to make sure our government functions. Time and time again, Democrats have reached across the aisle to try to negotiate a budget plan that is fair and that ensures that the government pays our bills on time. Yet, instead of working together to do our jobs, Republicans continue to double down on the Tea Party plan to destroy and decimate our government.

Instead of working on a serious option to reopen the government, Republicans' latest strategy now—and this is really cynical—is to exploit our veterans and to exploit the people of the District of Columbia by voting on piecemeal bills that will not end impacts of a shutdown that extend across the country.

Mr. Speaker, of course we support our veterans and of course we support our national parks and of course we support the District of Columbia to use its locally raised funds, but let's not use them to score political points to advance an ideological agenda.

How do Republicans vote this week to allow the District to use its discretion on local funds during a shutdown—that they created—yet next week block the same funds being used for saving reproductive health care services or badly needed needle exchange programs to fight HIV and AIDS?

Again, this is so cynical and it is so wrong. The American people deserve a functioning government. This hostage taking must end.

WORKING TO END GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I come here today just perplexed at what I see unfolding here today. My colleague just said that two wrongs don't make a right; and indeed, she is correct. But today, this fight is really starting to get to be more political and we're not focusing on the people.

Yesterday in this very Chamber, Mr. Speaker, we put forth three different bills, one that would pay our veterans and make sure that those benefits continue to flow. And what did the Democrats say? They said "no." One would open up our parks and monuments to be that economic stimulus once again. And what did the Democrats say? They said "no." Then, even in the District of Columbia, where we looked, Mr. Speaker, at truly putting forth and allowing them to use some of their funds to pay the teachers and do some of the operations—I can tell you, I don't get any votes from the District of Columbia.

For me, that is not a politically expedient thing to do, but it was the right thing to do. So what did we do, Mr. Speaker? We put forth a bill. Yet what did the Democrats say? "No."

I am so troubled that what we are seeing over and over again is this banting back and forth, and yet we are willing to open up parts of the government and continue to do that every single day until we get everything restored.

This is not about ObamaCare. ObamaCare is mandatory spending. This is about getting the government back open in a responsible way. What we're doing is working very hard, trying to work in a bipartisan way to do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to just say that it is time that the Senate comes back to the negotiating table and starts to negotiate on behalf of the American people that they represent. We have a responsibility to our veterans, to those that serve in the Reserves. So today, we will see more opportunities in this very Chamber to fund those things that are precious, near and dear to all of us. I humbly ask my colleagues on the other side to join us, in a bipartisan effort, to start working for the American people and representing them.

THE PRICE OF PARTISAN GAMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, partisan games have serious consequences. One of the many consequences is in my Arizona district where the Grand Canyon National Park is closed and our local economy is taking a direct hit.

Instead of acting responsibly and funding the government with a clean bill, on Monday night the House GOP acted recklessly. The bill that they passed Monday night was so weighted down with partisan baggage that they knew it would lead to a government shutdown, and yet they chose this approach intentionally.

The price of these partisan games is high and the American people are now stuck with the tab. Some estimates have the shutdown costing our Nation about \$300 million every day. In Arizona and across the country, this hurts our working families, small business owners, veterans, and seniors. And this hurts our tribal communities. I have 12 Native American tribes in my district. All of these folks need and deserve to have elected leaders working to help them, not hurt them.

After what happened on Monday, we must now do the urgent work of funding and reopening our government. But instead, the House GOP is stalling with more games, introducing piecemeal bills that pick winners and losers for funding. Last night, they tried to do it with piecemeal bills for veterans and for national parks.