

Nation? A Nation that was formed to be of the people, by the people, and for the people. This concept and the freedom that comes with it requires a level of responsibility in order to sustain it.

Pope John Paul II, when visiting America in 1995, spoke of the freedom that we enjoy and the responsibility that comes with it. And he summed it up by saying, "Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought." I pray that the rule of law, and equality for all Americans, our fundamental principles that are etched in all of our hearts, with the foundation of these principles and the civility that accompanies such, we are obligated to come together to find common ground and to talk to one another. And, Lord willing, we will.

SHUTDOWN CONSEQUENCES

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

Mr. HECK of Washington. Mr. Speaker, in the run-up to the government shutdown, and now into day three, I have sensed a gamut of emotions coursing through the veins of this institution, including emotional fatigue, and frustration, and outrage.

You can tell there is outrage because of the elevated decibel level. And for some of us as well is the emotion of sadness. I don't know how you can help but feel otherwise if you keep in mind what the consequences of our inaction are having beyond the doors of this Chamber. They are affecting real people, and they are having real consequences.

I have the unbelievable privilege to represent Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State, and the tens of thousands of servicemembers and civilian employees who support them there. The civilian employees already experienced furlough days. Just a few weeks ago I spoke to one of those individuals. As a consequence of the furlough, she lost her car. I am not sure what the consequence of government shutdown will be on her life.

You know, we tend to think of those people, I suspect here, often as what we would call GS-10s or -12s or -14s, but that's not the case. The preponderance of them are GS-2s and -3s and -4s. And a protracted shutdown will materially alter their lives. Real people, real consequences.

Yesterday, we received an email from a woman who is the WIC, Women, Infant, Children, provider in our area. She has already had 16 phone calls from moms who are scared they are not going to be able to feed their children. Women, infants, children. Real people, real consequences.

And as well, the wheels of commerce are grinding. We have been in contact with a commercial real estate person who is helping another person start up a propane distribution business in one of the communities in my district. He has one step left to go, that's a success-

ful SBA application, which appears likely, except for he needs one more data point to submit. One more, from the Internal Revenue Service, which is not available to him now. He cannot submit. He cannot start his business. He cannot grow the economy. Real people, real consequences.

So I am sad. I am sad because I know this does not have to be. I know, Mr. Speaker, that sitting up on that desk is a bill passed by the Senate last Friday, a clean, comprehensive bill which would reopen the Federal Government. And you know what else I know, and every single Member of this Chamber knows as well? It has the votes to pass if we would but bring it up for a vote.

And then, Mr. Speaker, we could reopen the Federal Government and we could take into account the real people and the real consequences of our inaction. We could put out the "Open for Business" sign on the Federal Government and help those that we were sent here to help.

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REOPENING GOVERNMENT FAIRLY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) for 5 minutes.

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, we all remember hearing the promise "if you like your health care, you can keep it." We also remember hearing that ObamaCare would reduce insurance costs for families by about \$2,500 a year. That is not what we are hearing now.

Ronald, one of my constituents from Advance, North Carolina, just received a letter from Blue Cross Blue Shield informing him because of ObamaCare his month monthly premiums are tripling from \$400 per month to \$1,200 per month. His deductible also skyrocketed to \$11,000.

William in Rural Hall, North Carolina, tells me the same story. His premiums are also tripling from \$400 to more than \$1,200. Dianne, one of my constituents from Clemmons, tells me that her health care premiums are slated to rise from \$193 per month to \$553 per month beginning on January 1, 2014, again due to ObamaCare. William from Winston-Salem recently informed me that his son's 2014 renewal rate came in. His premiums are rising from \$314 to \$821.96.

Mr. Speaker, until now we have been forced to debate ObamaCare in the abstract, using economic predictions and common sense to explain why this ill-conceived law is going to be, as one of its key proponents in the Senate predicted, a train wreck. But now the verdict is in. Families from across my district are receiving letters from insurers explaining that the so-called Affordable Care Act is driving their premiums sky high.

My constituents don't want to be forced to change their health care

plans or risk losing access to doctors they trust. Again, they were promised that if they liked their doctor, they could keep their doctor and if they liked their health care plan, they could keep it. Those promises were broken. These aren't abstractions or predictions; these are real people whose health and livelihoods are being threatened by this law.

Mr. Speaker, the proponents of this disastrous scheme keep reminding us that it is "the law of the land." They implore us to simply give up and move on. We will not give up on our constituents. We will not move on when they need us to seek fairness on their behalf.

The other side acts as if this bill which they hastily cobbled together and passed on a party-line vote against massive popular opposition is so firmly entrenched in American law that it can never be amended or repealed. This is nonsense and they know it.

ObamaCare is the law. But what do we do in Congress every day? We work to change bad laws, and we certainly work to make sure laws treat all Americans fairly. And as Rich Lowry recently pointed out:

If this were consistent principle rather than opportunistic advice, Democrats would have been content to leave a number of policies they vigorously fought in place out of deference to duly constituted policy and law.

Mr. Speaker, this is about basic fairness. The President has given special treatment to Big Business, Congress and his well-connected political allies; but he refuses to offer the same relief to working families. That is wrong. That is not fair. Ordinary Americans deserve the same exemption that the President has given businesses.

Let's reopen this government. Let's reopen it fairly.

THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND THE IMPACT ON THE U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Mrs. CHRISTENSEN) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday was a bittersweet day. It was an unfortunate day because of the government shutdown, but it was a good day because of the millions of Americans who live in the States and Washington D.C., who finally had the opportunity to leave the ranks of the uninsured when they logged in or called the toll-free number and enrolled in affordable quality health care coverage through the health insurance marketplaces.

However, October 1 was bittersweet for other reasons for me, and I rise today as a Congresswoman from the United States Virgin Islands because on October 1 my constituents, who are also Americans, were largely left out in the cold on this key part of the law.

As a member of the Health Subcommittee of Energy and Commerce, I was at the table and an active participant in the drafting, negotiation, and

amending of the Affordable Care Act, and I am proud that I was. But it was and remains sadly clear that one of the U.S. Virgin Islands and the other territories' biggest public health and health care challenges when it comes to Federal policies is benign neglect. Despite our efforts, still too many people, well intentioned, just don't acknowledge that, for example, across nearly every health indicator, from HIV/AIDS, cancer, heart disease and obesity prevalence, to rates of uninsurance and health care provider shortages, the U.S. Virgin Islands often are worse off than the national average.

So I, working in close collaboration with leadership and my territorial colleagues, the Black, Hispanic, Asian and Progressive Caucuses, worked tirelessly to ensure that the more than 4 million Americans who live in U.S. territories, as well as our collective health care systems, would enjoy the positive benefits of health care reform.

The great news is that we were in very large part successful. Today, Virgin Islanders and other persons in the territories are included in the consumer protections that make it illegal for a health plan to deny health coverage because of a preexisting disease or to rescind or deny coverage when someone gets sick and to impose lifetime dollar limits on essential benefits.

Today, U.S. Virgin Islanders can keep their children on their health plans until the child is 26 years of age. Because of The Affordable Care Act, today seniors in the U.S. Virgin Islands receive free annual wellness visits and free preventive care. They receive Medicare prescription drug rebate checks and meaningful help covering the cost of their prescription drugs. In the U.S. Virgin Islands because of the Affordable Care Act, our community health centers and community health workers are strengthened and better equipped to serve as medical homes.

But the devil is in the details. You see, the sad reality is that just because U.S. Virgin Islanders are included in the law and eligible for these great benefits does not mean that the law has been implemented in a manner that allows them all benefits or to fully experience the positive impact the Affordable Care Act was intended to have on every American.

The law gave the Governor in the U.S. Virgin Islands a choice between two options, and all the territories: one, to establish a health insurance exchange, either separately or in partnership with a State that was also setting up a State-based exchange; or, two, to use the funds that would have gone towards the exchange to expand our Medicaid program.

The Governor, based on advice of a task force and consultants, opted for option number two. And so amid all of the information that is being promulgated about the opening up of enrollment for the exchanges, wonderful news for many Americans, my constituents and those in the other terri-

ties feel very much left out and unfairly treated. To add insult to injury, there are no individual policies being written and the industry is blaming it, I think unfairly and not rightly, on the Affordable Care Act.

It is important to remember that because of the Affordable Care Act there is a very significant increase, though in the hundreds of millions of dollars, in funding for the Medicaid program and the Governor can establish a local poverty level that could significantly increase Medicaid eligibility. The robust increase in funding for Medicaid can allow for thousands of Virgin Islanders to be newly eligible for meaningful health insurance coverage under that program. Unfortunately, although the House passed a provision that would have changed the match, it did not make it through the Senate, so the match is set so high that it is difficult for us and the other territories to fully utilize the increased funding.

As a physician who practiced for more than 20 years before coming to Congress, I know what happens to someone's health and wellness, as well as personal finances, when they do not have health insurance coverage. It is catastrophic. That is why I requested meetings with Secretary Sebelius to explore how and whether the moneys that could have been used to establish a health insurance exchange can instead be used for making health care reform a reality for those who are uninsured but make too much to qualify for Medicaid.

So there is a small but distinct window of opportunity to work with the Secretary and our Governor to think outside the box, to identify meaningful and thoughtful solutions to the unique health care challenges facing the Americans in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Some will require legislation, and I ask for the support of my colleagues on that; but also please let us pass a clean CR to keep our government open and provide services to Americans wherever we live in this great country.

REOPENING OUR NATION'S MONUMENTS AND MEMORIALS

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

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I have been a runner all my life. I ran in high school and college, and it has always been my way of sort of clearing my head. Sometimes I clearly haven't run enough.

Over the years, during my roughly 20 years in and out of Washington, I have made it a tradition of running down the Mall, down to the Lincoln Memorial. I have been down at the Lincoln Memorial on those runs in the dead of night when there was not a soul down there. I have been down there at sunrise when there was nobody there. I have been there on a summer afternoon when it seemed like every tourist from

this country and every tourist from around this world was gathered there.

But yesterday I went for an evening run after votes, and I saw something I have never seen before, because as I ran down the Mall, I got to the World War II Memorial and it was chained up. Mind you, this is an open-air rock memorial dedicated to the sacrifice of so many soldiers there in World War II, an open-air rock memorial.

But I continued only with my run, and I got down to the Lincoln Memorial, and to my amazement that thing was chained up too. I was so agitated in seeing this that I turned to a tourist and I said, You got to be kidding me. Would you take a picture of that? And it was actually a family from Shanghai, China, here halfway around the world. They took the picture, and they emailed it to me last night and it is an amazing shot.

As you can see there, the Lincoln Memorial, two guards. Now, mind you, I have been there many times when nobody was there, no security guard, nobody. And yet in this instance you have chains around it, two police cars, simply to keep people out of one of the great memorials to freedom in our country.

It just strikes me that that is a picture of political gamesmanship and hostage taking, and I would say respectfully, Mr. President, you have gone too far on this one. At the time of the sequester, you ended school tours to the White House. Now, mind you, not since Jefferson's time and war has the people's House, the White House, been shut down for public tours. But you used that as a political tool to somehow gain advantage in the sequester that still exists so kids from 8th grade may take their one trip to Washington, D.C., and can't go to the White House because you think it will gain political favor. And I see the same thing going on with this.

So let's agree that we disagree. We agree that we as Republicans think we ought to be spending less. You and HARRY REID think we ought to be spending more. I think the Congressional Budget numbers are on our side. They say that in just 12 years we are only going to have enough money to pay for interest and entitlements and nothing else, and in that regard this is just a sneak preview of much more damaging things to come if we don't get our financial house in order.

But I would say it is okay to have disagreements, but it is not okay to hold, I guess, citizens hostage and try to maximize and inflict pain in their ability to do normal things, particularly when the House has offered four different bites at the apple in keeping the government open and particularly when just last night bills were sent to HARRY REID that would have kept government open, would have kept the Park Service open, would have kept groups like NIH open.

I think this is really important. Reagan once said there at the Brandenburg Gate to Mr. Gorbachev, tear down