

helium program, but then refuse to act on a bill that would end the closure of over 400 national parks that are visited by millions of Americans every year? The contradictions in their words and actions are glaring. Such political posturing is not only illogical and hypocritical, but the result of that posturing punishes the American people.

Mr. Speaker, this does not need to happen, and it should not happen. So I urge the Senate Democrats and the President to stop going out of their way to make the government shutdown as painful as possible, and I urge the Senate Democrats and the President to come to the table and negotiate an end to this shutdown and to act today to take the reasonable and responsible step of passing a bill to open our parks and memorials to America's veterans, families, and all U.S. citizens.

TRIBUTE TO RAPHAEL BELL

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

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to express condolences to the family, friends, and parishioners of Bishop Raphael Bell, who passed away this past Sunday while preaching a sermon in his pulpit. As a matter of fact, his wife had suggested that he not go to church, but he indicated that he would go because he thought it might make him feel better.

He was 90 years old. He grew up the son of a sharecropper in Mississippi, moved to Illinois, founded several schools and colleges, became the senior bishop of a diocese, well-loved, well-respected, a tremendous personality. I came to know his family when I taught his nephew 40 years ago and have observed him ever since.

I just wanted to say to his family, friends, and parishioners that they have been graced by the presence of a tremendously great individual who died doing what he liked to do, and that is preach the Gospel.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT IS KILLING THE ECONOMIC ENGINE OF AMERICA

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

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Mr. Speaker, every day now for the past 3 years, I have heard from the good people of Georgia's Third Congressional District about how expensive their health insurance costs have become and will become as a result of ObamaCare. On Tuesday, their fears of just how unaffordable this Affordable Care Act is became a truly bleak reality to them.

If this train wreck of a law is truly affordable, then why have Georgians seen their premiums increase as much as 300 percent on the exchanges? If it is

affordable, then why do 57 percent of Americans oppose ObamaCare? If this law is affordable, then why is Ruth from LaGrange opting to pay the penalty and forgo insurance because she and her husband can no longer afford to pay their family's premiums under this Affordable Health Care Act? I guess even if Ruth likes her plan, she really can't keep it. She was lied to.

One thing supporters of ObamaCare always tout is that it will help those who are very sick or have preexisting conditions get access to affordable care. Well, let me tell you about Cindy from Newnan who is fighting a brave battle with cancer. Much to her surprise, she has been told by her doctor that under the Affordable Care Act, ObamaCare, some of the treatments in medicine that make a difference in her being sick just a few days instead of a few weeks will no longer be covered. What about someone who does not have a few weeks? What are they supposed to do? And how do we explain that to Cindy's children?

You know it is a sad day when employers like IBM are left with no choice but to kick retirees off their health care plans. What a reward to those like David of Griffin who have given so many years contributing to their company's success.

And it is not just hurting American families. It is killing small businesses, the economic engine of our country. I just got a letter from Dale in LaGrange, who is one of four owners of a heating and air conditioning company which self-insures their employees.

In an effort to comply with ObamaCare, the Affordable Care Act, in 2011, the heating and air conditioning company saw their health care costs go up \$38,000 compared to 2010. The same thing happened in 2012. Their costs went up almost \$40,000 from 2011. This means they went from spending \$115,000 on health care for their employees in 2010 to almost \$195,000 just 2 years later.

What is just as concerning is employers who have been forced by ObamaCare to increase their employees' premiums and no longer offer health insurance for spouses or children.

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This change has been a financial disaster for Melanie of Hamilton whose husband will no longer be covered by her employer, TSYS, a great company in my district and a stable source of jobs.

For 3 years, we have seen the disastrous consequences of this supposedly Affordable Care Act, and in just 3 days since the exchanges have gone live, we have heard hundreds of stories similar to the ones I just told. Imagine how much worse things can become in 3 months.

But listen, it's not just the lies we have been told, but it's the lies we're still being told—such as California reporting they had 5 million hits. Finally

today, they confessed, they only had 655,000.

As I have said time and time again, the easy solution is for the President and my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to join House Republicans and agree to a 1-year delay and defund, just like he has done delay for Big Business and his buddies. Why don't we do it for the American people? Why don't we put all of us in the same class rather than trying to divide this country? Why don't we do the delay? Give them time, if they can, to straighten out this mess and put everybody, small businesses, Americans, everybody, employed and unemployed, in the same class.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I was sitting and listening to some of the previous speakers, and I heard more than one, but one in particular, make the point really forcefully that nobody wants this government shutdown, that universally we oppose, as Members of Congress, keeping our government closed. I just wish that were true.

I have been doing a lot of reading on this and looked back at some of the reports from months ago. There was a really interesting story in a magazine recently that described a strategy to not adopt the budget and to force an argument over the continuing resolution and to force the debate over the Affordable Care Act into the debate about the continuing resolution with the idea that if we don't, here in Congress, capitulate on a previously enacted law that the House and the Senate agreed to, that the President signed and the Supreme Court upheld, if we don't capitulate, that there will be a shutdown of the government. So I only wish it were true that not everybody in this body wanted to avoid this shutdown that is crippling our economy and hurting the American people.

There is something that we can do, however, to get out of this, and it would be simply to allow for a dose of democracy in the House of Representatives; because we know, and I have talked to many Members on both sides of the aisle, particularly Members on the other side, and it is not just the 17 that have already declared their willingness to buck the Tea Party leadership—and essentially the leader of the group in the House is the Senator from Texas. More than 17 are willing to vote for a clean bill to reopen government so that we can get back to the business of legislating. I think it is a big number. I suspect it might even be a majority of the other side. The Senate would approve it. It already has. The President said he would sign it, and a majority of this House, probably a majority of both parties, would approve a clean resolution to reopen government so that we can get on with the fights on things that we don't agree on. That's the way this democracy was designed.

I'm new here. I've only been here 9 months, but I've been following government, been a part of it for a long, long time. I'm a citizen who understands how our democracy is supposed to work; and I always believed that if a majority of both bodies agree on a particular position and the President agrees, that we can put a law through, sign it, and get on with the business.

The other side talks a lot about negotiating, having a conference committee. It is so interesting to me that back in April after both bodies, the House and the Senate, had adopted budget resolutions, that it was the Republican leadership that not only failed to, but refused to negotiate a budget resolution that could have avoided this whole thing in the first place. I had to wonder then—I was scratching my head—Why?

The charade of the last week or so has made it clear to me why: This was the intent all along, to shut down government and use that—the kindest term I can use, I suppose, is “leverage”; I've heard others use other terms—but to use that leverage to try to extract from the government that which the other side couldn't win legislatively, couldn't win at the ballot box, but will use every tool, including the closing of the Federal Government and now the threat to default on our Federal obligations, and wreck the economy in doing so.

The President agrees, the Senate agrees, a majority of the House agrees we should continue to operate government. We should adopt the continuing resolution at the number that the Republican leadership has supported all along and get back to providing the services that our country needs and provide stability back into our economy.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. PITTENGER. Mr. Speaker, I was frankly disappointed and really perplexed yesterday when the President of the United States called a meeting in the White House and asked the Speaker of the House to come and meet. He asked the leader of the Democrats in the House to come and meet. He asked the majority leader in the Senate to meet. And at the same time, his pressman, Jay Carney, was on TV saying: We're not going to negotiate. When they ended the meeting, Senator REID and Ms. PELOSI said: We're not going to negotiate.

Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that this bill has been 50 years in the making. The Democrats have wanted to nationalize health care for 50 years. They found their political timing to do it when they controlled the House and the Senate, when President Obama was President, and with a total partisan vote, they got what they wanted—even with-

out even reading the bill. As Ms. PELOSI said: We're going to pass it and then we're going to read it. Yet Mr. Obama has said that House Republicans are on an ideological crusade, Mr. Speaker. His staff has referred to us as suicide bombers. Really?

You know, Mr. Speaker, we were all elected to serve our constituents. The President was, and so was I. So was the Speaker of the House. We don't have a monarch in this country, Mr. Speaker, we have a representative government, and our role is to listen and to respond to our constituents. They are writing us, they're emailing us constantly telling us their concerns. Let's hear about one from Cornelius, North Carolina:

Just received my new monthly premium from Blue Cross/Blue Shield of North Carolina for 2014. With ObamaCare, my monthly cost now has tripled with more limited coverage. But what the heck, now I can get pregnant at 58 years old since I now have my mandatory maternity coverage. Please continue to push to stop this horrible mandate.

Here is another constituent from Huntersville, North Carolina:

We are currently paying \$270 per month for our high deductible health insurance policy through Blue Cross/Blue Shield. Today, we received our new rate for our family for 2014. A comparable plan now with Blue Cross/Blue Shield is \$1,037.02.

Mr. Speaker, this is deplorable. She goes on to write:

It was my understanding that under ObamaCare, premiums would go down. It was my understanding that this would be good for everyone. If ObamaCare is not good enough for government employees, like Members of Congress and the White House, why is it being delayed for certain corporations and labor unions who are asking for an exemption, and why can't I get out of this program?

She goes on to write:

I'm asking you to stand up for freedom, for choice, for the citizens of this country, to delay ObamaCare for at least a year, at the very minimum, or even better, to repeal the law in its entirety.

Mr. Speaker, this is not an ideological crusade; this is about meeting the needs of our constituents. There are other concerns out there with jobs. Companies aren't hiring full-time people. They are hiring part-time so they can stay under that threshold. The cost of this health care plan has gone up dramatically. The Congressional Budget Office says it is unsustainable. Why should we allow for corporations—there's 1,100 of them today, friends of the President—to receive a delay in ObamaCare, and yet ordinary Americans cannot do that?

That's why we proposed an amendment for an individual mandate deferment, that they would not be obligated at this time. We also said that Members of Congress should not receive the subsidy, nor should the White House staff, the President, and his Cabinet Secretaries. Why should we get something special that ordinary American people don't get? And yet these bills are lying on the desk of HARRY REID because he tabled them.

Mr. Speaker, it is time to bring sound reasoning to this process. Let's meet and negotiate, Mr. President and Senator REID.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

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

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, the American people are frustrated and angry that politicians in Washington can't even work together to keep the government open and operating. They're hearing a lot of rhetoric from the White House and Congress about who is to blame, but instead of trading accusations about who is to blame, the President and Congress should face the realities of divided government. The only way forward in divided government when there is a difference of opinion, when there's an impasse, is negotiation and compromise.

I come from the same congressional district that was once represented by Henry Clay, a great statesman and Speaker of the House. Clay, who was known as the “Great Compromiser,” knew that in divided government, the only way forward is through negotiation and compromise. Unfortunately, the President and the Senate majority leader continue to reject the model of Henry Clay. They continue to say that they will refuse to negotiate, refuse to compromise, refuse to work in a bipartisan way to achieve a middle ground and end this government shutdown.

Last night, the President hosted congressional leaders at the White House; but rather than offer to negotiate about how to reopen the government and fix some of the harmful effects of ObamaCare, the President reiterated his stubborn refusal to negotiate. Regrettably, the meeting was more political theater than a genuine effort to resolve this impasse.

In contrast, this House has offered to negotiate. The House has offered multiple compromises. Since September 20, the House has voted no less than 14 times to fund the government, to fund critical parts of the government, to fund the District of Columbia, to fund the National Institutes of Health, to fund our national parks, to fund our troops, to fund our veterans, and to end this government shutdown.

But instead of working with House Republicans to reopen the government, this administration directed barricades to be placed at the World War II Memorial, inconveniencing our Honor Flight veterans visiting our Nation's Capital. Instead of working with House Republicans to end the interruption of lifesaving clinical trials for cancer patients through the NIH, the Senate majority leader asked: Why would we want to do that?

Our friends on the other side of the aisle say they want to vote on a so-called clean CR. They insist that we ignore the voices of millions of our constituents who are flooding our offices