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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
October 10, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IMPROVING HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, this body has attempted to repeal the health care law 41 times. The act's repeal or delay is being used as leverage in the current budget fight, but I just want to take a few minutes to remind people why we passed the health reform law in the first place.

Let's remember the situation before ObamaCare became law. Clearly the status quo was not sustainable. The number one cause of personal bank-

ruptcy in the United States was medical costs, and 60 percent of those who filed for bankruptcy had insurance. Forty-seven million Americans were without health care. Premiums were rising three times faster than wages, eating up more of our paychecks and bottom lines.

The average family was already paying a hidden health care tax of over \$1,000 annually in premiums as a direct result of subsidizing the cost of the uninsured. Small businesses were paying 18 percent more than larger employers for health insurance. People with pre-existing conditions were denied coverage or thrown off their coverage when they got sick and needed it most. Senior citizens fell into the doughnut hole and had to pay hundreds of dollars out of pocket for their prescriptions.

We cannot go back. We cannot repeal this essential law. We must move forward together and fix the very real problems with health care reform; but before we do that, we have to stop spreading falsehoods and set the record straight about what is in the law and what is not.

Myth number one: Members of Congress and their staffs are somehow exempt from the law. Not only are Members and their staff not exempt from the law, but they are actually subject to extra requirements. Insurance marketplaces that Members and staff must now join were actually designed for people who currently do not have insurance or get it on the individual market. People who already have insurance through their employers, like Members and their staff, don't need to get insurance through the marketplace because they already have coverage. Still, due to a messaging amendment in the ACA, Members and their staff were required to get their insurance through the marketplace and they will.

Myth number two: the Affordable Care Act is a job killer. First of all, 97 percent of small employers are exempt

from the requirements to provide insurance. Second, most large employers who are required to provide coverage already do so. Aside from reporting requirements, the ACA will only require about 1 percent of businesses to do anything differently. Some on the other side of this aisle often cite a Congressional Budget Office report which said the ACA would lead to a reduction in the amount of labor in the economy by one-half of one percent. What the critics failed to add is that the same report noted that the small reduction in labor would come primarily from people choosing to work less.

There are legitimate concerns from small restaurants and hospitality entities that are worried about affording affordable coverage for their part-time employees. These concerns are real and should be addressed; but exaggerating claims that the ACA is a job killer and trying to repeal or defund it rather than remedy it does nothing to help those businesses with real concerns.

Myth number three: the Affordable Care Act is driving up premiums. Some historical context is important here. Premiums grew 119 percent between 1999 and the year 2008. Over the last 2 years, premiums have only increased an average of 4 percent. On the individual level, because insurance companies can no longer charge older individuals significantly more than younger folks, this will shift some costs to younger Americans. However, the insurance subsidies provided by the law will significantly blunt those potential cost increases. Those who are uninsured with preexisting conditions who previously could not get coverage will likely pay less. Finally, those with employer-provided coverage, the majority of Americans, will see little change.

We need to do more to hold down the cost of health care; but rather than talking about real cost reduction reforms, opponents of the law are simply trying to repeal it—41 times. This Nation's health care system faces real

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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challenges, and we need real solutions. If critics of the law spent as much energy on developing legitimate solutions as they do on perpetuating falsehoods about the ACA, we might make some progress. Let's stop the fear-mongering, come together and have a real conversation about improving our health care system.

END HUNGER IN AMERICA NOW

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

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, here we are, 10 days into the Republican government shutdown and just a few days away from hitting the debt ceiling, and the Republican leadership continues to spin its wheels. The American people are rightly blaming congressional Republicans for this shutdown, and they will blame Republicans for a default too.

Every day seems to bring a new Republican strategy: repeal ObamaCare, defund ObamaCare, delay ObamaCare, stage a non-filibuster filibuster, ask for the entire Romney economic platform in order to raise the debt ceiling, yell at park rangers, fund this part of the government, fund that part of the government, pay furloughed employees, pay essential employees, hold a conference meeting, hold a press conference.

Meanwhile, as the Republican Conference tries to get its act together, Americans across this country are feeling the impact of the shutdown, and that impact grows every day. Last month USDA released the annual figures on food security in America. These are the statistics of the number of people who don't know where their next meal will come from, essentially the number of hungry people in this country; and once again we see the effects of the Great Recession showing up in these food security numbers.

According to USDA, over 49 million people are food insecure. That means they are hungry. Seventeen million are children. These figures are virtually unchanged from previous years. It means hunger is not getting better in America. It is not getting worse, but that is no consolation.

While these figures are bad enough, House Republicans apparently thought they should be worse and decided to pass legislation cutting \$39 billion from SNAP, our Nation's best, most efficient and effective anti-hunger program. Those cuts would cause hunger to get worse; 170,000 unemployed veterans would lose access to SNAP. Two million kids would be kicked off the free school meal program. Overall, around 4 million people would lose access to SNAP because of these terrible cuts.

Now, that is pretty bad, especially considering that hunger is still a problem in America; but it is still not bad enough for the Republicans, so they shut the government down. Now, I

know this shutdown isn't about hunger; it is about irrational demands by a few Republicans. But like the bill cutting SNAP by \$39 billion, the impact of the shutdown is beginning to make hunger worst in America.

Look at Nevada, where 362,000 food stamp recipients will see their benefits halt on November 1—not reduced, halted; 425,000 women, infants, and children would see their food benefits provided under WIC halted as well. That is right, nearly 800,000 hungry low-income Nevadans would lose access to food because of this Republican shutdown.

But it is not just Nevada. North Carolina announced on Tuesday that it had discontinued issuing food and nutrition benefits through WIC to women, infants, and children specifically because Federal funding for the program has dried up. Eighty percent of those Carolinians eligible have already received their October benefits, but that means 20 percent of the 264,000 enrolled low-income women, infants, and children will not get the help they qualify for to buy the food they need including formula, fruits, and vegetables.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we are going to continue hearing stories like this as the Republican shutdown continues. More and more low-income families will see the food they rely on taken away from them simply because Republicans in Washington will not open the government.

This is not the way to end hunger now, Mr. Speaker. We will only end hunger now if we finally come together and decide that ending hunger is a priority, that it is something we believe we can do, and that we commit ourselves to accomplishing it.

Mr. Speaker, we can stop hunger from getting worse by reopening the government. We can stop hunger from getting worse by preventing \$39 billion in SNAP cuts from being enacted. We can stop hunger from getting worse by preventing the automatic cut to SNAP already scheduled to take effect on November 1 from taking place.

We need to end this Republican shutdown today. Republicans should not let poor Americans go hungry simply because they can't agree on a political strategy in Washington. That is not right. That is not how we should treat our fellow Americans. It is wrong, and they know it. We should be working to end hunger now, not to make hunger worse. We can eliminate it. This is a fight we can win if we just find the political will and courage to do so.

Mr. Speaker, I will conclude by saying once again to my Republican colleagues, bring a clean continuing resolution to this House floor so we can have an up-or-down vote so that we can reopen this government and so we can prevent hunger from getting worse in this country.

HUMAN CONSEQUENCES OF IRRESPONSIBLE AND IRRATIONAL SHUTDOWN

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to continue speaking out about the human consequences of this irresponsible and irrational government shutdown. We are now 10 days into this ridiculousness, and what I have been doing is spending time on the phone each day with the people from my region who tell me their stories about suffering due to the needless and increasingly maddening shutdown.

I recently spoke with the family of Jeremiah Johnson. They are from a town called Prophetstown, Illinois. It is a small town of about 2,000 people in Whiteside County, right in the heart of my congressional district.

Jeremiah is a disabled combat veteran who served his country bravely in Iraq. He now is also a Federal law enforcement employee who happens to be working without any pay; and while he is receiving no paycheck, he is also worried about the disability benefits being delayed because of the shutdown. So absolutely a double whammy for this father and husband.

In fact, he and his wife, Pam, just celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary on Monday; and rather than go out and celebrate like many couples do to mark their joyous occasion, they ate at home because they don't know when to expect their next paycheck. So Pam made a pie for her husband and Jeremiah gave his wife an anniversary card, very simple and very sweet. On top of that, their 12-year-old daughter, Carissa, actually offered her parents her entire savings in case they need it. When Pam told me this story, she got a little emotional about it and spoke over and over about just what a good daughter they have.

So in spite of their seventh grader's loving offer and Pam and Jeremiah removing any extravagance from their wedding anniversary plans, of course they remain worried about the lack of a paycheck and really their own ability to be able to pay their car payment and their house payment. This is absolutely an unacceptable way that we would ever as a Nation treat our disabled veterans like Jeremiah.

We have the votes right now to open up our government and put Jeremiah and his family at ease; but there is one way to do this, and it is only if Democrats and Republicans come together. That is our path. It is that simple. It is commonsense, it is reasonable, and it is absolutely the right thing to do.

TRIBUTE IN CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE OF MARVIN DANIEL PRICE

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 rise to pay tribute to Mr.