

and the question they are asking the White House is: Can you hear us now, and do you understand this frustration that we feel?

I have got a constituent, Mr. Speaker, Diane, who got this letter from her insurance, Medicare, with these couple of sentences:

Effective January 1, all plans must be compliant with the new health care law; therefore, the insurance company plan you have now will no longer be available after December 31.

What happened to Diane? A plan that she liked, a plan that she was satisfied with as an 11-year cancer survivor, a plan that she could afford now was taken away based on ObamaCare, and she was "migrated" into ObamaCare, and her premium was nearly doubling.

What does Diane have to say about President Obama's offer to fix this? She said this:

I want to see legislation passed to fix this problem, legislation I can trust. I don't want an administrative trust. I don't trust that to anyone.

We need to fix this. We need to pass this legislation.

OBAMACARE

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Affordable Care Act, also known as ObamaCare, needs to be repealed and replaced with better legislation. There is no administrative or legislative fix that will repair this flawed law.

Millions of Americans across the United States are receiving notices that their health insurance plans are being canceled.

Jeff is a constituent of mine in San Antonio, Texas. His insurance company sent him a notice informing him that his current coverage will be canceled at the end of the year. His new ObamaCare policy will cost 98 percent more than his current plan.

After the administration's announcement today, Jeff and his family may be able to keep their health care insurance coverage, but only for 1 year, and at what cost?

We need to replace ObamaCare with commonsense solutions that lower costs, expand access to care, and eliminate unfair mandates and penalties.

OBAMACARE

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

Mr. CHABOT. Mr. Speaker, the Americans we are discussing today did nothing wrong. They purchased insurance before any Federal mandate ordered them to. Now they are losing their insurance.

Katie Rupert is a constituent of mine. At 33, she was diagnosed with breast cancer, a sickness that later spread to her brain. She started radi-

ation and travels to Houston to see her oncology specialist. Today, she is a Stage IV cancer survivor and doing well, but she knows that this will not last forever.

Katie had good coverage through her husband's workplace but is losing it because of ObamaCare. What is worse, she has been told that her doctors are not covered by her options on the ObamaCare exchanges. She is a wife, a mother, an inspiration, and now she is another example of this law's collateral damage. That is the impact of ObamaCare.

We can do better. We have to do better. We owe Katie and others like her at least that much.

□ 1715

REMOVAL AS CONFEREES AND APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 3080, WATER RESOURCES REFORM AND DEVELOPMENT ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to clause 11 of rule I, the Chair removes the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. GRAVES) as a conferee on H.R. 3080 and appoints the gentleman from Missouri (Mr. GRAVES) to fill the vacancy.

The Clerk will notify the Senate of the change in conferees.

There was no objection.

SECOND CHANCE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I am going to change the tenor a little bit and do a little switching, although I must confess that there is not much more important in this country than trying to make sure that citizens have access to quality, comprehensive health care. And I think that we are much closer to that than we have ever been and look forward to it actually happening.

As I was listening, I was reminded of something that my father used to tell us, that if you keep telling yourself the same thing over and over and over and over again, you will eventually get to the point where you believe it.

Being here to do a Special Order, though, reminds me of my good friend, Representative Major Owens, who was famous for doing Special Orders. I remember when I first came here that you could see Representative Major Owens on the floor late at night, by himself, talking about education and the need to make sure it happened. And I guess the fact that he was a trained librarian may have had something to do with that.

So I wanted to just take a moment and pay tribute to Representative Major Owens for the tremendous work that he did on education, and espe-

cially the work that he did that led to the creation of something called PBIs, predominantly black institutions, as a part of the Higher Education Act.

So, Major, many, many students will remember your contribution to the development of what we know as these 75 or so institutions across the country that are called predominantly black institutions, and who now receive special consideration for funds because of that designation.

I also, before I delve into my subject, want to express condolences to the family of Commissioner Devera Beverly, who passed away earlier this week and is known as probably the most profound advocate for public housing and public housing residents in the city of Chicago and, perhaps, throughout the Nation, because she has spent more than 30 years advocating for this population group and was a founding member of the Public Housing Museum, which is well on its way to being developed.

So we express condolences to the family, friends and associates of Commissioner Devera Beverly, who lived in the Abila Homes in Chicago. That is A-B-L-A, Abila Homes. But she was a public housing resident who advocated to the point of being selected by the mayor of the city of Chicago to be a commissioner of the Chicago Housing Authority. So we salute you, Ms. Devera Beverly.

Now I want to talk about something that is near and dear to my heart, but it is also near and dear to the hearts of many, and it is also part of a crisis that actually exists in our country.

Our country is known for many things, as it should be. It is one of the, and perhaps the, wealthiest country on the face of the Earth. It is one of the most technologically proficient countries in the world today. It is one of the most highly educated countries.

But it also is the country that has the distinction of having more people incarcerated, both per capita and in actual numbers, than any other country on the face of the Earth. More than 2.3 million people sit, tonight, in our prisons throughout America.

About 750,000 of those come home every year; and you know, of all the individuals who are incarcerated, most of them will come home, or they will go somewhere. There are numbers of individuals who do, in fact, die in prison. They are lifers, and in many instances they are individuals who have committed horrible crimes, sadistic crimes, crimes that suggest they should never be let out on their own.

But most individuals will return home, or they will return to some community; and when they do, what happens to and with them will often determine whether or not they remain on the outside, or how soon they will return to the inside.

There are some things that we know about this population. We know that if they do not receive any help, many of them, about two-thirds, within a 3-year

period of time will have done what we call recidivate, which means that they will have committed some offense for which they could be rearrested and reincarcerated.

And about 50 percent of them, within 3 years, if nothing happens to or with them, if they don't get any help, will be back in jail or prison, costing the public money, living and being cared for at taxpayer expense. In some instances, these costs have become so high, until some States are just looking for ways that they can release them, some of them, because in some instances they are spending as much money for corrections as they are spending for education, and that is an awful lot of money.

But there is an alternative, and that alternative is called the Second Chance Act, and that is what I am going to spend some time talking about. As a matter of fact, it was passed into law 5 years ago, signed by President Bush, so it is not a Democratic piece of action. It is not a Republican. It is a joint legislative initiative that had bipartisan, bicameral support, Democrats and Republicans, House and Senate passed.

The interesting thing about it is that all of the reports that we have seen, and there have been a number of them, Justice Center has put out a report called "Re-Entry Matters." Other groups have issued reports, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights.

And the reports that I have seen all suggest that, while it has not been a panacea, meaning that it certainly has not been able to solve all of the problems or diminish all of the issues surrounding this need, it has, in fact, been very helpful, and there are States who are reporting reductions in recidivism.

Recidivism is one of the factors which contributes to keeping the numbers of people incarcerated as high as it is because, for many of them, they are constantly in and out; and it becomes a cycle of going in and a cycle of getting out and going in again.

But what helps them is when there are programmatic approaches, evidence-based, that actually help them; and we have had about 600 such programs and grants that have been funded under the Second Chance Act. Of course, it has not been as much money or as much funding as would be needed, but 600 groups across the Nation, 600 institutions, 600 research groups, all working towards finding a solution and finding help, has made a difference.

It is time now to re-introduce this legislation, and I am pleased and delighted that on yesterday, in both the House and the Senate, very senior level and prestigious Members of both bodies have introduced, and we have seen the re-introduction of the Second Chance Act.

In the Senate, Senator LEAHY, chairman of the Judiciary, Senator ROB PORTMAN, Democrat, Republican; in the House, Representative JIM SENSENBRENNER, former chairman of the Judi-

ciary Committee, Republican, myself, Democrat. And so we have Democrats and Republicans on this issue.

There are a lot of things that we are not necessarily agreeing upon right now in Congress. There is a tremendous amount of disagreement, enough that actually shut down the government. But on this issue there appears to be the emergence of tremendous agreement, which makes all of us optimistic that something significant and even more significant can be done.

So I want to highlight some of the organizations and groups that have been actively engaged and seriously involved, groups like the Leadership Conference for Civil and Human Rights, groups like the Justice Center, from the Council of State Governments, groups who have worked fastidiously to demonstrate that people can be helped.

□ 1730

What is it that individuals actually need when they are released from jail or prison? Well, they certainly need more than \$20 and a bus ticket. Many of them have no place at all to go. But if they can find somebody waiting in some community who says, We are going to help you get reestablished. We are going to help you find a place to live, a place that you can call your own. Or if you have got a drug problem, we are going to find you a source of treatment. Or maybe, if you are in need of anger management help, we are going to find someone who can provide that.

Perhaps you don't have much in the way of formal education and skill, so maybe we will direct you to a GED program, or maybe we will direct you to a vocational or technical training program so that you can develop the skill that you need in order to find a job or secure employment. Or maybe if you have got some emotional, psychological, or just self-esteem problems, we could direct you to a program that will help you overcome these deficiencies.

And I can tell you that, if these individuals can find a job, a place to work, a place where they know that they can fit and make a contribution, many of them will never, ever see the inside of a jail or prison again because they have evolved into a person who knows that they have self-worth, self-esteem, that they can take care of themselves. They can earn what they need, and they can make a contribution.

But I will tell you, there are many barriers that often prohibit and prevent individuals from finding their rightful place or being able to successfully reenter society as a contributing member. For example, you may not be able to live in public housing if you have a felony conviction. You could just very well be barred. Well, who needs public housing more than individuals who can't find a job?

There are many entities within our society that say to an individual with a record, We don't hire people with

records, meaning, if you have been convicted of a felony, there is no point to making an application even if we have "help wanted" signs posted. Fortunately, there are some businesses and some companies who are beginning to ease up a little bit and see the futility of that kind of policy because, if these individuals are never able to find a job, they will be a cost to the public for the rest of their natural lives. Somebody's tax dollars will have to go to support them in one way or another.

So some State legislatures are beginning to look at some of the licensing requirements that their States have and say, Maybe you can't get a license to be a barber or a beautician or a cosmetologist, yet you are able to get trained while incarcerated; and now that you have been trained, you cannot work in that profession. Of course that does not appear to be very logical, and so some States are beginning to review their policies as it relates to certain kinds of licensure requirements and whether or not individuals can get what might be called a waiver or whether they can demonstrate that not only do they have the training and expertise to do the job, but they also have the character which will allow them to do it well. So a little bit of progress is being made in that direction. There are some instances where housing authorities are beginning to look to see whether or not there might be some way.

And I don't think anybody is suggesting when they are being asked to provide opportunities, certainly you wouldn't necessarily put a child molester in a day care center. Many of the programs and many of the individuals who try to help erase some of the barriers, they already know that, and that is not the kind of thing that they advocate; but they do believe that people should be given a chance, an opportunity, a chance to demonstrate that they want to be good citizens, that they want to work, that they want to contribute.

So I am asking my colleagues both in the House and the Senate to look at the invitation letters that they have received to become cosponsors of this legislation. It is not asking for as much money as it needs. \$100 million is money, but it does not break the bank. That is the appropriation asked.

I think one of the things that we look at is what it has spawned and what it has sparked, not just how much Federal money has gone into it, not just how many Federal dollars. But it has spawned response and reaction from State, local, and county governments who have established their own second chance programs, who have put together their own second chance initiatives.

I certainly want to commend Governor Patrick Quinn of the State of Illinois, my Governor, who, by the way, happens to live in my congressional district and is my constituent, for the State of Illinois' response to this problem.

And I also want to commend and congratulate the president of the Cook County government, the county board, which, of course, is larger than more than 25 States in the Nation. The county of Cook is a very large county, with more than 5 million people in it. I want to commend County President Toni Preckwinkle for how the county government is trying to respond to this need.

And I especially want to commend the sheriff of our county who has more than 13,000 people in his jail. He recognizes that many of them ought not be there because they have got mental health problems and mental health issues, and he is seeking and searching and looking for ways to change that.

I want to commend the mayor of the city of Chicago, our former colleague, Rahm Emanuel, because he has established a number of programs with city agencies and with city government where they are set aside specifically for individuals who have records, individuals who have been incarcerated, individuals who need a second chance with both the city of Chicago, itself, and the Chicago Transit Authority.

So there are bits and pieces of progress being made, and I commend all of those who are helping to make it. But my final ask is for my colleagues in both the House and the Senate to join in this effort, sign on to the Second Chance Act, help us to get it renewed, help us to get it reauthorized, to get it refunded, and get it seriously implemented throughout the United States of America so that these individuals will know that our country does, in fact, believe in a second chance.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN THE MILITARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. COLLINS of Georgia). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2013, the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Missouri?

There was no objection.

Mrs. HARTZLER. Mr. Speaker and my fellow colleagues, I wanted to share with you a picture that I have in my office, and it is my favorite picture. It is the famous picture of President and then-General George Washington on his knees praying at Valley Forge.

Of course, we all remember from our history lessons the story of what happened during that time. But the winter at Valley Forge was a terribly, terribly trying time for the Continental Army. They had suffered a lot of defeats that

fall, and they went into a very cold, harsh winter with very, very limited supplies, and the stories that come from that are just heartbreaking.

There were 12,000 men that were encamped. Many of them did not even have a tent or a shelter. Several of them did not even have a blanket. And as you know, here in Washington, D.C., and back home in Missouri, the weather has started to turn cold. I think it was about 30 degrees this morning. And to think about what it would have been like to have to sleep out in the cold with no blanket during that time. And of course, snow came along.

We have heard stories about how many of the men did not even have shoes. They had marched so much that fall and had gone through such harsh battles that their shoes had fallen apart. And we have all seen pictures and heard stories of how their feet bled. Even in the snow, there were foot tracks like that. And what is worse, many of them didn't even have food.

This was the situation of 12,000 men. The conditions were so bad that they ruled at one time that a third of them, almost 4,000 men, were unfit for battle. And then 2,000, over the course of those winter months, died as a result of disease and dysentery and other things that occurred during those very harsh conditions.

And during that time, we have learned a story that George Washington, the commander of this ragtag but yet valiant group of men, went to the woods and got down on his knees and prayed. And the reason we know this is because of the story of Isaac Potts who later shared the account that was later recorded.

He was a local Quaker farmer. He was riding his horse through the woods, and he heard a sound that was strange, as if a man was crying out in plaintiff prayer. So he quietly got off his horse and wrapped the reins around a sapling tree, snuck through the woods to get closer, and as came into an opening, he could see something that shocked him.

□ 1745

He said it like this:

I saw the great George Washington on his knees, alone, with a sword on one side and his cocked hat on the other. He was at prayer to the God of the Armies, beseeching to interpose with his Divine aid.

We know what happened later—and, I believe, as a result of those prayers. That ragtag group of army over the winter gained courage and strength. Supplies started to come in. General Baron Von Steuben was sent by Benjamin Franklin from the Prussian Army to start drilling the men and turn this ragtag but courageous group into a major, strong fighting force, and they came out that next spring a force ready to meet the British Army, and they did.

That was a turning point in the war. It wasn't to be decided for years to come, but at Valley Forge the whole outcome of not just the war, but of our

country, was turned, and I believe it was because of the prayer of the general of the Army.

Faith has been important to the armed services and to the people of this country from the beginning, and it is just as important now to our men and women in uniform as it was back at the beginning of our country. Yet their ability to express their religious beliefs is being attacked from forces outside and forces within.

It has been discouraging the last few years to hear accounts of some of these infringements on the basic religious rights and freedoms of our men and women in uniform. So that is why my colleagues and I are here for the next hour. We are here to, first of all, stand up for the religious rights and freedoms that are guaranteed in our Constitution.

I think it is very fitting and appropriate to remember that George Washington was there and helped craft that Bill of Rights, and what is the first right? The freedom of expression of religion.

We want to not only celebrate that and stand up for that but to also raise awareness of the concerns that we have and to implore the Department of Defense to push back on some of the negative policies that have been coming out that infringe on their rights, and to change course and to continue to remain strong as a country, preserving those basic freedoms so that we can continue to be strong in the future as we have in the past.

So now I want to invite someone who knows from very personal experience and can speak to this issue, my friend from Georgia, Representative DOUG COLLINS, who is still an active member of the Air Force Reserves, not only serving his country in many ways, but also serving his God by being a chaplain.

Representative COLLINS, I would like to hear what you have to say about this very important issue.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. I appreciate the gentlewoman yielding and being a part of this tonight and really bringing something to the forefront that we need to discuss. It is a part of our foundation. It is a part, as you have so rightly shown by that wonderful reproduction of a painting there, that—our values and our founding were founded really on a sense of prayer, and not from a prayer that led to an exclusive Nation, but a prayer that led to an inclusive Nation. I think that is something that we often many times have forgotten in this process.

Tonight, as we talk about this, I want to discuss that on Veterans Day, the President laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. As the final resting place for so many men and women of faith, Arlington is, understandably, full of religious symbolism. It is considered this country's most hallowed ground.

Veterans Day gives Americans an opportunity to honor those laid to rest at