

JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

(Ms. WILSON of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, last week there was a ribbon cutting at Miami International Airport for 36 new customer service kiosks. While this was greeted as good news, there is still a great unanswered question: What happens to all the customer service workers that machines like this replace?

It is the same story at grocery stores, drugstores, toll booths, and so on. Customer service jobs that used to be gateways to the middle class are increasingly being replaced with technology.

Mr. Speaker, this is not bad news. Time-saving technologies must be created, constructed, maintained, and repaired—and this takes human labor as well, but we must train our workforce to perform these jobs. This is the essence of the skills gap that is afflicting our communities. By cutting job training programs, reckless budget cuts like the sequester are making it harder to close the skills gap and, in turn, reduce unemployment. The mantra of this Congress should be jobs, jobs, jobs.

ENSURING AMERICANS CAN KEEP THEIR HEALTH PLAN

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

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to tell the story of one of my constituents, Jane, whose health care plan was canceled in the wake of ObamaCare. Here is a recent email she sent to me:

I am a 61-year-old woman with a husband on Medicare. The day before the exchange opened, I received a letter from BlueCross/BlueShield informing me my policy is no longer available. The policy that is closest in coverage is approximately 50 percent higher in premiums and had an almost 50 percent higher deductible. I feel it is extremely unfair that I was told I could keep my coverage if I liked it. I will also have to pay substantially more for the same coverage. I wonder if the administration ever thought about those of us who have to pay for our health coverage with no extra help and how much more we would be paying.

Mr. Speaker, this House passed H.R. 3350 so Jane and others can keep the plan they want and can afford. The Senate must act and not cover for the President, who conceded he broke his promise to Americans. Let's give good news to Americans.

PASS IMMIGRATION REFORM

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

Mr. HIMES. Mr. Speaker, since this Congress convened, it has done nothing to help create jobs. In fact, through ill-advised and overenthusiastic cutting, the sequester, the shutdown, the threat to our full faith and credit, this Congress has destroyed jobs.

Mr. Speaker, what if I told you there was a jobs bill just sitting waiting to be passed that would add almost \$1 trillion to our economy in a 10-year period? What if I told you this jobs bill would create 121,000 new jobs every single year for 10 years? What if I told you that this would also make us a more humane Nation that would stop the breakup of families and the deportations of moms and dads, of Dreamers? What if I told you that this jobs plan got 68 votes in the United States Senate, a divided United States Senate.

Of course, I am describing the comprehensive immigration bill, which the Speaker of this House refuses to bring up. There is no principled, no logical objection to this thing. There are just scare tactics that people with funny accents and names you can't pronounce will come and take your job. That is not true. It is time to pass that jobs bill.

MORE BROKEN PROMISES

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

Mr. HARRIS. Mr. Speaker, American families are watching the train wreck of the President's health care reform law coming down the track at them each and every day.

Promises were made by the President and by supporters of the law that if you like your plan, you can keep it. Promises were made that family plans would cost \$2,500 a year less under ObamaCare. Those promises just weren't true.

David in Carroll County wrote me just this morning to let me know what his family is going through with their health insurance. David is self-employed and is married with three children. He likes his family plan. He doesn't think it is substandard in any way, but his family just got a cancellation notice.

Mr. Speaker, they won't get to keep the plan they like. His new plan, which the Federal Government says that they have to buy, will cost \$400 more per month, an increase of almost \$5,000 more per year, not a decrease as the President promised.

David's family is just a hardworking, middle class family trying to make ends meet. Mr. Speaker, David and his family deserve better than broken promises.

BENEFITS OF OBAMACARE

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

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tout the very real benefits of ObamaCare.

Karrie Brooks, a resident in my district, wrote to me saying:

The individual coverage that I could afford as a healthy 54-year-old woman has been \$418 a month with a \$5,000 deductible. I avoided going to the doctor mostly for fear that if I

used the insurance, my policy would be canceled.

She goes on to say:

Recently, Anthem let me know that I would have to change to a compliant plan. The plan they suggested is similar, but it will cost me \$53 less each month. Yes, less. Most important, I know that it cannot be canceled. The peace of mind and security that these changes have given me is huge.

Mr. Speaker, for the first time in decades, a single illness or accident will not plunge American families into financial ruin. The positive effects of ObamaCare are real, and Americans like Karrie Brooks are evidence of that.

DECREASING SPENDING

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

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, yesterday The Washington Times reported that the U.S. is now spending millions on life skills and art seminars for prisoners at Guantanamo Bay in Cuba. The paper said a multi-million dollar Federal contract is teaching Gitmo detainees basic landscaping, calligraphy, and Microsoft PowerPoint, among other seminars and library services.

Last July, the Comptroller of the Defense Department reported that the cost of keeping Guantanamo prison open during 2013 would be an astounding \$454 million for just 164 prisoners. This comes out to roughly \$2.7 million per year for each one of these detainees held in the prison camp. This compares to \$72,000 per year per prisoner in Federal high security prisons. Because the Federal Government is so wasteful and inefficient, States are housing State prisoners for half that amount.

The taxpayers of this Nation should not be forced to spend \$454 million to give the good life to former terrorists. They should be sent to the most unpleasant prison in the U.S., but this and other abuses of U.S. taxpayers will continue until we drastically downsize the Federal Government and greatly decrease its funding.

PROPOSALS TO CREATE JOBS

(Ms. TITUS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. TITUS. Mr. Speaker, recently the Republican leadership handed out a blank piece of paper labeled "Agenda 2014." Blank means no goals, no plan, no immigration reform, no jobs, no nothing.

Well, I have a list of proposals that I would like to write on that blank slate, proposals that would create jobs, grow the economy, and strengthen the middle class. So I will start today by introducing commonsense legislation that achieves these objectives and invests in our country's ability to compete in the 21st century.

The Training Highly Skilled Americans Act would use revenue from H-1B visas to promote STEM education at minority-serving colleges and universities and provide scholarships to minority students who are going into STEM fields.

Science and technology companies are already paying our government to bring foreign workers to the U.S. to fill STEM jobs, so why not use some of these funds to train our own folks to have these skills to fill these jobs in the future? This is particularly critical for minority students, who are significantly underrepresented in these fields. By opening our doors to STEM education, we will strengthen our education system and our economy.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT WEB SITE PROBLEMS

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

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, earlier this fall the President said the Affordable Care Act is more than just a Web site and that the problems with the Web site will soon be fixed. While I don't disagree with either of those two statements, I don't understand the timeline involved because yesterday in the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee of the Energy and Commerce Committee, the deputy chief information officer for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services told us that the Web site was launched, but it wasn't finished upon launch.

I have to ask: Why in the world would they proceed with this if they knew it wasn't finished? When asked to give a percentage completion, it was confusing. His answer was either 40 or 60 percent; no one really knows, and here is the kicker. When you get to January and providers, doctors, and hospitals are seeing patients who think they have coverage under the Affordable Care Act, part of the problem with the unfinished Web site is there may be difficulty in delivering provider payments. That is an intolerable situation that must be resolved and must be resolved quickly. It could start with the administration being honest with the committee about where they are in the development of the Web site.

NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, today world leaders are meeting in Geneva to negotiate an agreement that could lead to the elimination or reduction in the threat of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. This is a good thing. The goal of the negotiations is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, particularly those in the possession of or that could

potentially be developed by Iran. We don't want Iran to have a nuclear weapon. We ourselves are trying to reduce stockpiles, so negotiations to prevent that are squarely within the United States national security interests.

The American people support these negotiations. A new Washington Post poll shows that Americans want a negotiated deal with Iran by a 2-1 margin. The alternative to negotiation is not good. In fact, it could lead to war. Americans do not want another war. Therefore, negotiations are the right way to handle this particular problem with regard to preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. Support negotiations. We support them, and hope they succeed.

AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE COVERAGE

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

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, recently, I received an email from a woman in my district named Shannon. Shannon received a letter from her health care provider stating that her current health care policy did not meet the requirements of the Affordable Care Act and that she would have to choose a new plan or go to the health care marketplace and find coverage.

She went to the health care marketplace and found a comparable plan that cost \$400 a month more. This is outrageous. More than 300,000 Floridians, like Shannon, received letters that their current health care plans were canceled. Premiums and deductibles are increasing for countless Americans. So many people received notices that their plans were canceled. We have only begun to experience the devastating effects of this law.

I submit that the next concern of my constituents will be not only that they can't keep their health care plan, but they won't be able to keep their doctors. We need to get rid of this law, and we need to replace it with one that is consumer-focused and market-driven so that Americans like Shannon can get affordable health care coverage and keep their doctors.

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AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues have highlighted the challenges of implementing the Affordable Care Act at the Federal level. While these must be addressed, I would like to take a minute to highlight the successes we have seen at the State level in Rhode Island. Although a majority of States opted not to operate an exchange of their own, Rhode Island

chose to be a leader in creating a State-driven, integrated marketplace to provide quality, affordable health insurance for its citizens.

On October 1, Health Source RI, the Ocean State's online portal and health insurance marketplace, opened for business. It has successfully enrolled over 5,000 residents to date without many of the issues plaguing the Federal Web site. Of course, we are still at the beginning stages of this process, and efforts are under way to improve and expand the successful rollout with many of our State partners.

This has been a highly collaborative effort, and I look forward to continuing our work together so that individuals, families, and small businesses can shop for insurance that meets their needs based on transparent, competitive pricing and robust coverage.

PRO-GROWTH ENERGY POLICY

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

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, Americans are working hard to make ends meet during this sluggish economy, and a clear and predictable pro-growth energy policy will help to alleviate financial stress on American families as energy costs rise. But most of all, pro-growth energy policies will create jobs and put Americans back to work.

If you are looking for legislation that will create jobs across America, there are several opportunities to vote "yes" this week in the United States House.

The Natural Gas Pipeline Permitting Reform Act, Federal Lands Jobs and Energy Security Act, and the Protecting States' Rights to Promote American Energy Security Act are all pro-growth, pro-energy policies that the House will consider this week and will give all my colleagues an opportunity to show whether they are pro-jobs or not.

These bills will promote natural gas pipeline infrastructure construction projects, expand onshore American energy production, and create jobs by passing these bills that will streamline government red tape and eliminate duplicative and costly regulations that only delay safe energy production on American soil.

Mr. Speaker, let's unite on behalf of the American people and support these pro-energy growth, pro-job creation bills.

CONGRATULATING TEACHER OF THE YEAR, ART ALMQUIST

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

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate Tucson High Magnet School's teacher, Art Almquist, as being named Teacher of the Year by People Magazine.