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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. DUNCAN of Tennessee).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
December 11, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable JOHN J. DUNCAN, Jr. 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 Janu-

ary 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, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

NOTICE

If the 113th Congress, 1st Session, adjourns sine die on or before December 24, 2013, a final issue of the *Congressional Record* for the 113th Congress, 1st Session, will be published on Tuesday, December 31, 2013, to permit Members to insert statements.

All material for insertion must be signed by the Member and delivered to the respective offices of the Official Reporters of Debates (Room HT-59 or S-123 of the Capitol), Monday through Friday, between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. through Monday, December 30. The final issue will be dated Tuesday, December 31, 2013, and will be delivered on Thursday, January 2, 2014.

None of the material printed in the final issue of the *Congressional Record* may contain subject matter, or relate to any event, that occurred after the sine die date.

Senators' statements should also be formatted according to the instructions at http://webster/secretary/cong_record.pdf, and submitted electronically, either on a disk to accompany the signed statement, or by e-mail to the Official Reporters of Debates at "Record@Sec.Senate.gov".

Members of the House of Representatives' statements may also be submitted electronically by e-mail, to accompany the signed statement, and formatted according to the instructions for the Extensions of Remarks template at <http://clerk.house.gov/forms>. The Official Reporters will transmit to GPO the template formatted electronic file only after receipt of, and authentication with, the hard copy, and signed manuscript. Deliver statements to the Official Reporters in Room HT-59.

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By order of the Joint Committee on Printing.

CHARLES E. SCHUMER, *Chairman*.

AMENDMENT TO FERS ANNUITY FOR MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

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

Mr. COBLE. Mr. Speaker, on the June 13 of this year, I introduced a bill, H.R. 2357, to provide that Members must complete 12 years of credible service to become vested into the retirement system. I have not professed

to be an expert on pensions, Mr. Speaker, but 5 years appear to be very generous. So in my bill I had extended that from the 5-year timeframe to 12 years.

☐ 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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Taxpayers subsidize this plan. I believe by increasing the minimum time-frame, I think it would, obviously, result in considerable savings. I have conducted no survey to support that, but commonsense tells me that. In fact, this is a commonsense proposal.

For example, Mr. Speaker, a Member of Congress now must complete only 5 years of credible service to become vested. I know of no plan, other than this one, that would vest at 5 years. Such a Member would be required, if my bill is enacted, to complete at least 12 years of service prior to becoming vested.

I figured after 4 or 5 weeks I would have attracted at least 20 to 25 cosponsors. Today, I have no cosponsors. So, to walk you through how it would work if my plan is adopted, a Member of the Congress must complete not 5 years, but 12 years of service. That can be done through six 2-year House terms or two 6-year Senate terms or a combination thereof.

It is a commonsense proposal. Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, I will anxiously await the knock on the door for cosponsors willing to sign up. The welcome mat is out. It is a good proposal.

GIVE DIPLOMACY A CHANCE TO SUCCEED

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, in the rush to wrap up and go home, there is too much unfinished business, including leaving 2.15 million long-term unemployed in the lurch.

But one item should not be on the agenda: an attempt to undermine the diplomatic breakthrough with Iran, the most encouraging development with that country in 34 years. We would give the hardliners in Iran who really hate the preliminary agreement an excuse to walk away. It would be a continuation of 60 years of mismanagement by the United States with our relationship with that proud nation with deep ties to America.

The worst thing we did was team with the British to overthrow their democratically elected government in 1953 and replace most of that with the Shah, who for 25 years, was a repressive dictator.

Few remember, if they ever knew, that the Iranians helped stabilize Afghanistan after we drove the Taliban from power. They don't know that the people in Tehran had candlelight vigils in sympathy to the United States after 9/11 where some of the supposed allies of the United States were celebrating our loss in the streets. For that, the Iranians were rewarded with the label of being part of the Axis of Evil.

We must make diplomacy the key. We are not going to be able to bomb away the knowledge of how to develop nuclear weapons. Experts I have talked to say they could have made a nuclear

bomb years ago if they had really been bent on that creation.

Torpedoing the agreement will be counterproductive. It risks collapse of sanctions which depend on the Chinese, the Indians, and the Japanese not buying Iranian oil. If we appear unreasonable, we lose international support, and we can lose ground.

It would undercut President Hassan Rouhani, elected by the Iranians who want change and a more moderate approach to the world. Iranians—people who have been there and testify—actually like Americans. They don't much like the repressive government. But that support can help reach more than just a nuclear deal.

Iran is key to solving the nightmare that is Syria, prying them back from supporting the insurgents in support for a long-term solution. Iran is key to holding Iraq together and not having it spin off into civil war and to defeat or at least contain the Taliban resurgents in Afghanistan.

A recent poll showed 57 percent of the American public supports the agreement. When they are given greater detail about what it entails, that support increases to 63 percent.

Don't undercut the best chance to reorder the Middle East in a third of a century. I think we ought to give diplomacy a chance to succeed for a change.

THE NEW YEAR OF OBAMACARE

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

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, a great tragedy is now unfolding across America as we prepare for the new year.

Millions of Americans are losing their health plans. Millions more are facing staggering price increases. Millions more are having their hours cut back at work or seeing their salaries pared back because of ObamaCare.

Sadly, this is just the beginning. In coming days, millions of employer-provided plans face cancellation, multiplying this disaster many fold.

The administration recently held a contest for videos to promote ObamaCare. Its grand prize winner featured this message: Don't worry about the price tag. Don't worry about the price tag? Isn't that helpful and compassionate advice to the millions of Americans who are struggling through the fifth year of Obamanomics and who are now also facing the reality of seeing their premiums doubling or tripling.

Just don't worry about the price tag, skip the House payment, and cough up the extra cash. That is the best that this administration can offer? Many millions of Americans who had health coverage on New Year's Eve will not have it on New Year's Day because of ObamaCare.

What awaits those who actually can sign up? According to the government's

own numbers, about two-thirds of exchange applicants have been forced into Medicaid. That includes many on limited incomes who have maintained bare-bones policies because they are desperately trying to stay out of Medicaid. Some have found that nearly by looking at prices they have ended up trapped in this dreaded welfare program.

A major study documents that Medicaid patients have worse health outcomes than those without any insurance. If you doubt that, just see how long it will take you to see a Medicaid doctor, if you can find one, for a bad cold.

If you are a part of the one in three exchange visitors who escaped this fate, the next problem will be to find a doctor—any doctor. The president of the California Medical Association reports that 70 percent of California doctors will not accept ObamaCare patients. That means the remaining 30 percent will be overwhelmed, resulting in life-threatening waiting lines.

As patients desperately seek doctors in emergency rooms, actual emergencies will go waiting. Top-flight specialized doctors and facilities will become increasingly inaccessible as they opt out of the system.

Those patients who actually can get an appointment may then discover that there is no record of their policy because the government hasn't been able to connect patients with their new insurers. Patients will next face the cold reality of sky-high deductibles and copayments that many will be unable to pay. Many hospitals that serve large populations of the poor can only do so because of supplemental payments, but ObamaCare is phasing those out. Some may be forced to close their doors.

Those ObamaCare patients fortunate enough to stay well in this brave new world can expect a highly elevated risk of identity theft in what the founder of McAfee Security Software calls a "hacker's dream." And there is no need to wait for hackers. In some cases, the government has already accidentally released patients' private financial and medical information.

Since so many people—particularly the young—are choosing not to pay inflated prices to subsidize others, we can expect another major round of rate increases next fall on those remaining in the system in order to make up the shortfalls.

That is what the new year will bring to our country. Many of us in the House warned of this coming train wreck, and we tried at least to delay it. For this, we were called arsonists, terrorists, jihadists, and demagogues; but now those warnings have proven chillingly and entirely accurate.

This program has devastated the lives of millions of Americans. This damage now cannot be undone by delaying it or tinkering with it. It must be repealed and replaced with the patient-centered plan proposed by House