

Accordingly (at 9 o'clock and 5 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1230

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN) at 12 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, September 11, 2014.
Hon. JOHN A. BOEHNER,
The Speaker, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on September 11, 2014 at 10:21 a.m.:

That the Senate passed S. 2154.

That the Senate passed S. 2323.

That the Senate agreed to without amendment H.J. Res. 120.

That the Senate passed with amendments H.R. 1233.

With best wishes, I am
Sincerely,

KAREN L. HAAS.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH CARE PROTECTION ACT OF 2014

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 1(c) of rule XIX, further consideration of H.R. 3522 will now resume.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. I am, in its current form.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Ms. BROWNLEY of California moves to recommit the bill H.R. 3522 to the Committee on Energy and Commerce with instructions to report the same back to the House forthwith with the following amendment:

Add at the end of the bill the following new section:

SEC. 3 PROHIBITING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN HEALTH CARE COVERAGE.

Nothing in this Act shall result in discrimination based on gender, including higher premiums for women or loss of contraception or pregnancy care.

Mr. CASSIDY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I reserve a point of order against the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. A point of order is reserved.

The Clerk will read.

The Clerk continued to read.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California is recognized for 5 minutes in support of her motion.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, this is the final amendment to H.R. 3522, which will not kill the bill or send it back to committee. If adopted, the bill will immediately proceed to final passage as amended.

My amendment would ensure that nothing in the underlying act would result in health care discrimination against women. It would prevent insurance companies from charging small businesses that employ women higher premiums, and it would stop insurance companies from selling group plans that deny women contraception or critical maternity care coverage.

I hope that we can all agree that women should never have to pay more for their health care than men would pay simply because of their gender. Being a woman is not and must never be treated as a preexisting condition.

Health care reform has created many new and needed consumer protections, which are helping women live healthier lives and build stronger families. Health care costs are the number one cause of bankruptcy in the United States. Allowing insurance companies to charge women more than men would hurt working women struggling to make ends meet. It would hurt families raising children who are trying to give them the healthy start they deserve.

Before this unfair practice was banned, the National Women's Law Center reported that gender discrimination in premium prices alone cost women approximately \$1 billion per year more than men. That is \$1 billion that could have prevented many women and their children from living in poverty or being homeless.

That is \$1 billion that women and their families could have spent on rent. That is \$1 billion that women and their families could have spent on child care. That is \$1 billion that women and their families could have used to pay for college. That is \$1 billion that women and their families could have used to start a business. That is \$1 billion that could have been better used to strengthen the American economy.

In a nation where women earn only 77 cents for every dollar that men earn, charging women more for health care compounds the financial strain on women and their families. Stopping gender-based premium discrimination is just one example of health care reform that works, and it is a new consumer protection that women and their families cannot afford to lose.

My amendment will ensure that insurers continue to cover critical maternity care and contraception coverage. Until recently, many States did not require all health care plans to cover maternity care.

Today, the law requires every new insurance policy to cover maternity care. We must ensure that women continue

to have access to this critical coverage and access to contraception coverage that gives many women the economic independence to succeed because when women succeed, America succeeds.

Contraception coverage ensures women can prevent unplanned pregnancies and choose the best time to start a family. When surveyed by the Guttmacher Institute, 63 percent of women said that access to contraception had enabled them to take better care of themselves and their families. Over half said they were better able to support themselves financially or complete their education.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of Americans support these policies. A Kaiser health poll found that Americans support birth control coverage by a 2 to 1 margin and 86 percent of Americans support coverage of maternity care.

A vote for my amendment is a vote to protect women from unfair discrimination. It is a vote promising our mothers, our sisters, and our daughters that they will be treated fairly and equally.

These are the values of my constituents in Ventura County, and they are the values of the American people.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the motion to recommit. Vote "yes" for equality for women.

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

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation, and I claim the time in opposition to the motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The reservation is withdrawn.

The gentleman from Louisiana is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. Speaker, this bill empowers female-owned small businesses and workers to keep the health care policies they prefer and make their own decisions regarding health care.

Women make 95 percent of the decisions regarding health insurance and families across the United States. I don't think we have to be patronizing and assume that they cannot make their own decisions.

In fact, I am asked continually by women who are 50 years and above why are they having to pay for maternity benefits. They are just flabbergasted by that.

This is important economically. The Manhattan Institute reports that the Affordable Care Act, so-called ironically, has increased insurance premiums by 41 percent on average—for women, as much as 62 percent.

Imagine that woman sitting at home, lying awake at night, wondering how she is going to pay her bills, being forced to pay for benefits the opposition doesn't think she is smart enough to know that she doesn't need and unable to afford her house. That has happened in an instance I know of.

Now, today, the House has the opportunity to help Americans keep the health care plan of their choice, and how we vote comes down to two questions: First, do you think control over

