

The Veterans E-Health and Telemedicine Support Act of 2015 removes these barriers and allows the VA to provide treatment through physicians free of this restriction. Veterans will no longer be required to travel to a VA facility but, rather, can receive telemedicine treatment from anywhere, including their home or a community center.

Mr. Speaker, these brave men and women put so much on the line each and every day in service to our country that when they return home it is our shared duty to be there for these heroes by making lifesaving resources readily available.

This legislation will eliminate the multiple layers of bureaucracy, allowing our veterans to have greater access to mental and behavioral health services, especially in rural areas.

I rise today and ask my colleagues in both parties to get behind this bipartisan, commonsense legislation.

Mr. Speaker, sadly, 22 veterans commit suicide every day. Let's end that crisis.

OBAMACARE RATE HIKES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. MOONEY) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia. Mr. Speaker, it has now been more than 5 years since President Obama signed his landmark achievement, which he called the Affordable Care Act, into law. At that time, the President and the Democrats in Congress promised that their massive Federal takeover of our healthcare system would lower costs on American families. Affordability was its central selling point.

But 5 years later, they must face the facts. Their law, which they forced on the American people, is a failure.

According to yesterday's much-anticipated Congressional Budget Office reports—an independent agency—insurance premiums are expected to increase even more significantly next year than they did this year.

One insurer in New Mexico, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, called for a 50 percent increase in premiums. And New Mexico is just the tip of the iceberg. Tennessee is also seeking an increase of 30 percent.

The average West Virginia family—the State I am blessed to represent—pays about the same as the residents in the State of New York, which is \$17,105 a year on their health insurance. That is \$271 above the national average.

We cannot pretend that the Affordable Care Act is anywhere close to “affordable.” ObamaCare adds taxes, regulations, and unfunded mandates onto the American consumers. The limited choice in health insurance plans is harming families and their budgets.

In my district in West Virginia, there is only one insurance provider through the exchange. And this one plan is asking for a rate increase as high as 21.6 percent.

President Obama has routinely and blatantly forced his failed policies on the American people. According, again, to the independent Congressional Budget Office report of February 4, 2014, ObamaCare has killed 2.5 million jobs a year.

Who are these 2.5 million Americans who have lost their jobs thanks to ObamaCare? They are disproportionately low-wage workers. The people who are hurt the most by ObamaCare are the same ones who ObamaCare was supposed to help. What we really should call it is the “Non-Affordable Care Act.”

West Virginians who get their healthcare insurance through their work are paying some of the highest rates in the United States for premiums and deductibles, according to a report from The Commonwealth Fund. The 33,421 West Virginians who are currently enrolled in ObamaCare cannot afford to have their rates hiked yet again.

Many Americans are left wondering how much more will we have to pay each year because of the Non-Affordable Care Act. To make matters worse, the Non-Affordable Care Act has added \$1 trillion in tax increases. This is money taken out of the pockets of hard-working American families.

The top Democrat leader here in Congress famously said on March 10, 2010: “We have to pass the Affordable Care Act to find out what's in it.” You should know what it is before you vote on it—come on. Well, it has been 5 years since the bill was shoved through Congress, and the American people deserve better.

We must halt ObamaCare's takeover of the U.S. healthcare system and pass commonsense reforms that lower costs for hard-working families and expand access to health care. The State of West Virginia and the Nation need lower costs and personal control over healthcare decisions, not more Federal Government intervention.

The budget that was recently passed by the House and the Senate repealed ObamaCare—including all of its taxes, regulations, and mandates—and ObamaCare's outrageous requirement that the taking of unborn human lives be covered as so-called “health care.”

Republican healthcare plans pave the way for patient-centered healthcare solutions. We need to focus on reform that will help reconnect doctors and patients and give patients better care through more options.

The goal of patient-centered healthcare reform is to empower the patients. Republicans in Congress have multiple proposals to address the healthcare issue. Republicans propose increasing competition and transparency in the health insurance market and stopping frivolous lawsuits against doctors and hospitals.

Americans should not be forced to buy into something that simply doesn't work. The Non-Affordable Care Act does not work. The estimated premium

increases that were announced yesterday are yet another example of the failings of this bill and this President.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 40 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HARDY) at noon.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Patrick J. Conroy, offered the following prayer: Dear God, we give You thanks for giving us another day.

There are many important issues facing our Nation—concerns about immigration, our national security, our personal privacy, the economy, and levels of unemployment. Bless abundantly the Members of this people's House.

Help them to see new ways to productive service, fresh approaches to understanding each other, especially those across the aisle, and renewed commitment to solving the problems facing our Nation.

May they, and may we all, be transformed by Your grace and better reflect the sense of wonder, even joy, at the opportunities to serve that are ever before us.

May all that is done this day be for Your greater honor and glory.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr.

CICILLINE) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. CICILLINE led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain up to 15 requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

AMERICA NEEDS A CHANGE

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, as American families continue to be under attack from radical Islam, it can be credited President Obama was correct on December 14, 2011, addressing troops at Fort Bragg: "We are leaving behind a sovereign, stable, and self-reliant Iraq . . . a moment of success."

Clearly, then-President George W. Bush's strategy of denying mass murderers safe havens to kill Americans anywhere was admitted successful. I am grateful my two oldest sons served in Iraq to protect American families.

President Obama's failure to achieve a status of forces agreement in Iraq and his failure to uphold his declared red line in Syria led to murderous advances of ISIL/Daesh, which he publicly dismissed as junior varsity.

I hope President Obama changes course for victory in the global war on terrorism, which began with the declarations of war in 1997 against America with a goal of death to America, death to Israel, and mass slaughter of Muslims who do not submit.

President Obama's legacy should be peace through strength, not weakness, as future attacks threaten American families.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and may the President by his actions never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SUPPORTING THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

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

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, the Export-Import Bank is a critical resource for small- and medium-sized businesses in Rhode Island's First Congressional District and all across this country.

In fact, over the last 8 years, the Ex-Im Bank has provided more than \$20 million in insured shipments, guaranteed credit, or disbursed loans for companies in my district, enabling them to export products valued at nearly \$50 million.

The Ex-Im Bank provides financing that enables these companies to access foreign markets, compete in the global economy, and create good-paying jobs here in America. American jobs are supported by the Ex-Im Bank, 164,000 American jobs. It generated \$675 million for the taxpayers in 2014, and the default rate for the Ex-Im Bank was less than one-fifth of 1 percent, 0.175 percent.

Support for the reauthorization of the Ex-Im Bank is bipartisan. 180 Democrats have signed a discharge petition to force a vote on reauthorizing the Ex-Im Bank before it expires on June 30, and many Republicans have publicly supported reauthorization.

I have had the opportunity to meet with companies in my district that rely on the Ex-Im Bank, companies like the Cooley Group in Pawtucket that designs, develops, and manufactures a diversified industry-leading portfolio of premier engineered coated fabrics used across an array of industrial, commercial, and military applications.

This issue is too important for the usual partisan politics that Washington has grown used to. We need to stand up for small- and medium-sized companies and reauthorize the Ex-Im Bank before the end of this month.

ALZHEIMER'S & BRAIN AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, June is Alzheimer's & Brain Awareness Month. Alzheimer's is the only top 10 cause of death in America that cannot be prevented or cured; however, we are making strides.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 6, the 21st Century Cures Act, is a historic, nonpartisan bill that will help spur the development of cures and treatments more quickly to help patients with chronic or rare conditions.

I am an original cosponsor of a provision in H.R. 6 to create a national data collection system for neurological diseases. Better data will pave the path toward better treatments.

In April, I held a neurological disease roundtable in my district to engage with doctors and patients, including Ron Hall, a constituent and Alzheimer's patient. We discussed how to advance the development of treatments and cures for diseases like Alzheimer's.

Mr. Speaker, by working together, we can help Alzheimer's patients.

WESTERN NEW YORK'S PRIDE WEEK

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

Mr. HIGGINS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I joined the Pride Center of Western New York to celebrate the LGBTQ

community and kick off Buffalo Pride Week. Last week Niagara Falls Mayor Paul Dyster, Councilwoman Kristen Grandinetti, and the Rainbow City Coalition raised the rainbow flag for the first time at city hall in Niagara Falls.

Western New York's Pride Week comes at a particularly historic time. The Supreme Court is expected to rule soon on whether the Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the right to marry. I believe that it does. I was proud to join 211 of my colleagues in Congress in filing an amicus brief urging the Court to find such a right in its ruling.

Mr. Speaker, marriage equality is one of the important components of a larger effort to ensure that everyone has the same basic rights as each and every American. I congratulate the Pride Center of Western New York and the Rainbow City Coalition for their community efforts this week and advocacy for equality each and every day, and I hope next year Pride Week will celebrate a Supreme Court decision that honors the right of all Americans to marry the person they love.

HIGHLIGHTING ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF TIMBERLAND SHOE COMPANY

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

Mr. GUINTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the significant contributions of a New Hampshire-based business that employs almost 1,500 people and contributes approximately \$1.8 billion in economic revenue.

For nearly 40 years, Timberland Shoe Company has remained a staple in the New England region business community. From what started out as a small shoe company in Boston, Timberland has grown into a worldwide leader of outdoor footwear and apparel.

Headquartered in Exeter, New Hampshire, Timberland employs over 400 Granite Staters in a variety of departments such as marketing, operations, retail, administration, and more. The accomplishments of Timberland also transcend the workplace in ways where they have logged 8,300 hours of community service just in the last year.

Mr. Speaker, giving back to the community is an important aspect of successful business, and Timberland sets a great example for what all businesses should strive for. It was a privilege to visit Timberland's headquarters last month, and I look forward to their next 40 years in the great State of New Hampshire.

NATIONAL GUN VIOLENCE AWARENESS DAY

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Today we recognize the first National Gun Violence Awareness Day, and when you