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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,
October 8, 2015.

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 January 6, 2015, 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.

MEDICARE PART B PREMIUM INCREASE

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we take to the floor to deal with the daily reminders of turmoil around the world: the unrest in the Middle East, especially in Syria and ISIS; the sad reality of an unending string of events regarding gun violence.

There is a certain amount of unrest here in the House, as our Republican colleagues right now are trying to

chart a path forward to reconcile differences of opinion within their own ranks that have some spillover effects for us. But in the background, there is a critical issue that we should be focused on that may not command the headlines; but it is, nonetheless, a critically important item.

We are faced with arcane formulas that govern dealing with Medicare—the rates that recipients pay for their services—that have a perverse impact on some of the lowest income seniors. Through no fault of their own, 7.7 million senior citizens are going to be treated very unfairly. These are the 30 percent of Medicare recipients who are going to pay the burden for all Medicare recipients for the cost increases.

We have a provision in place that holds harmless people who get no increase in their Social Security payments, and they are immune from premium increases. But that is not so for the other 30 percent. These are the people who are facing a 52 percent increase in that part B premium, over \$54 a month.

Now, remember, nobody gets an increase in their Social Security, and there is going to be about a \$76 increase per month in the deductible.

A typical Medicare beneficiary pays almost \$5,000 per year for premiums, cost sharing, and other services that aren't covered by insurance. For many, that is not an unreasonable contribution for their health care, but not for everyone.

More than half the beneficiaries have incomes of \$24,150. These 30 percent, the 7.7 million who will pick up the slack for everyone else, are going to be facing a significant impact, given their low incomes. It doesn't actually have to be this way.

There are proposals that are available for Congress to deal with. Representative DINA TITUS, Representative JAN SCHAKOWSKY, and Senator RON WYDEN all have proposals that would

eliminate or minimize the impact on these vulnerable senior citizens.

And, bear in mind, it will also impact the States \$2.3 billion in terms of Medicaid programs, which inevitably will translate into service reductions, again, for some of our most vulnerable.

It is time for Congress to empower negotiators in both parties, in both Chambers to act now. If we get involved with these potential solutions, the costs are going to be far less than if we wait until the next year, and we will be shielding some of our most vulnerable citizens from significant increases at a time when they can ill afford it. This is one area where there is overwhelming support on both sides of the aisle.

I would call upon my friends in the Republican leadership to take a break from this strange process they are going through and debate in the acrimony and the churn. Let's take a break and empower people to solve these problems now. Our senior citizens deserve no less.

BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

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

Mr. EMMER of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remind us of the importance of the month of October as Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Like any disease that affects people regardless of race, color, creed, or their status in society, cancer not only tests the mental and physical strength of the person fighting the disease, it has a deep and lasting impact on family, friends, and communities.

Currently, more than 100 different types of cancer exist, but, in my humble opinion, none is more wicked than breast cancer. This is most likely because breast cancer is one of the most common and deadly cancers among women.

□ 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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In fact, one in eight women in America will be diagnosed with breast cancer in her lifetime. Breast cancer can be a cruel disease. It tears mothers from their children, wives from their husbands, and daughters from their parents.

In 2015, it is anticipated that, in our country alone, more than 40,000 women will die from breast cancer. While women are most at risk, we must remember that this disease does not just affect women; while less common in the United States, 2,350 men are diagnosed with breast cancer each year.

In the past 20 years, there have been incredible advances in the research and medicine surrounding breast cancer, but there is much left to be done. We can't rest until we can prevent or cure this horrible disease.

Again, we have already made huge strides in the fight against breast cancer. Death rates due to breast cancer have been declining since 1989, and women younger than 50 are now less likely to get breast cancer than ever before. This is largely due to the awareness that has been raised on the importance of self-exams and yearly doctor physicals.

However, currently, 29 percent of insured women are still not receiving mammograms; and for women without health insurance, the percentage is even higher, with 68 percent not receiving mammograms.

It is extremely important that we continue to place an emphasis on early detection so that we can catch this disease as early as possible and have the best shot at beating it.

While there are factors like genetics and age that can make someone more susceptible to the disease, breast cancer does not discriminate against education, upbringing, or wealth. From CEOs in New York City to a stay-at-home mom in small town Minnesota, this disease knows no bounds.

I expect that just about everyone who walks these halls and too many to count across our country have been impacted by breast cancer in some way. I am no exception. Fifteen years ago, I lost my sister, Bridget, to breast cancer. Bridget was only 38 years old when she left us. She left behind two beautiful daughters and a husband who loved her.

While her life was a lesson on how to get the most out of each second of every minute of every hour and every day, there is not a day that goes by when I don't wish there could have been a cure for her.

For those who have experienced personal loss and pain from breast cancer, and for everyone who is fighting this disease, we join with you this month not only to raise awareness about breast cancer but to sound a call to action, to strengthen our resolve, and to eradicate this disease once and for all.

In Congress, we can absolutely play a role in this effort. To the extent possible within our constitutional authority, we can and should encourage further advancement of medical research.

I am proud to be a cosponsor of the Accelerating the End of Breast Cancer Act of 2015, which will establish a commission to work to defeat this disease. The commission will consist of experts in cancer research who will work to identify opportunities and ideas to advance our quest to prevent and cure breast cancer for future generations.

October is a month to raise awareness. We have made progress, and we are making progress in our fight against this unforgiving disease. Let us use this month to rededicate ourselves to our shared goal of eradicating breast cancer once and for all.

WASHINGTON IS OUT OF STEP WITH AMERICA

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

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, as Donald Trump and Ben Carson have turned up the volume with more and more outrageous statements and policy proposals, Members of Congress have been trying to keep up.

Now, Republicans in the House not only have to play to the small, but extremely vocal, segment of the electorate that feels Washington is "out of step with the American people," but they have another audience to woo—each other—because a lot of our colleagues are currently running for leadership positions.

But is it really Washington that is out of step with America or is it the most vocal, most active, and most vitriolic elements of the Republican base that are out of step with America?

Last week's NBC News/Wall Street Journal poll was pretty startling. It shows in issue after issue that on the positions adopted by the leading GOP candidates, vast majorities of Americans disagree with Republicans. On abortion restrictions, immigration, LGBT equality, racial diversity, and reproductive health, some in the Republican base demand we go back to the Dark Ages. But it is not, in fact, the direction that most Americans want to go.

For most Americans, "Mad Men" was a good TV drama set before racial integration, before the women's movement really took hold, before gays and lesbians dared come out of the closet, and before we removed racial quotas from immigration. But some in the Republican Party aspire to turn it into a reality TV show.

The latest throw-down from the right has been over Planned Parenthood and reimbursing this respected organization for health services it provides to women across the country.

In many cases, Planned Parenthood is the only source of affordable and accessible reproductive health care, contraception, HIV and STD testing, cancer screenings, and basic health care for women.

Under Federal law, our tax dollars cannot pay for abortions, and there are

no credible claims that this is being violated. Under law, abortion is legal in the United States, despite all of the restrictions imposed and proposed by my Republican colleagues. But this goes further than abortion rights and a woman's right to control her own health care and reproduction.

Some Americans here and around the country are, frankly, not too comfortable with the whole family planning thing. In my family, I have two daughters who are brilliant and whom I trust to make decisions for themselves. They were born 8 years apart and not by accident.

My wife and I planned her pregnancies around her career as an investment banker and had our children when we were ready. That is an option that opened the world of opportunity and self-determination to my wife that my mother never had. Puerto Rican women in this country in my mother's day had one thing forced on them by the government, and that was sterilization, period.

So when I hear talk about shutting down the government to appease the far right on Planned Parenthood, I think of the progress we have made from my mother's generation to my wife's generation and now to the world in which my daughters live.

It seems to me that we should not be looking for ways to limit choices women have, to force them into back alleys or across State lines for health care or to treat them as if only wise men in Washington can make decisions for the women of America.

But that desire to turn the clock backwards, to undo the progress of our lifetimes, and to punish America for evolving over time is basically at the heart of the Republican agenda, as driven by their most active and vocal base. Republicans run for office and legislate as if they want gay people back in the closet, as if they want Latinos and Asians to become invisible, as if they wish women were just in the kitchen or in the bedroom, as if we could go back to those golden days before the Civil Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act, Brown v. Board of Education, when everything was separate and some people were more equal than others.

Well, with all due respect to Mr. Carson and Emperor Trump, every poll indicates that the American people are not with them, and that is especially true of young people in America. Dr. Carson must be nostalgic for the anti-Catholic days before John Kennedy was elected because he is now raising doubts that people of certain religions are qualified to serve their country as President.

Senator CRUZ must look at the old days when we turned away refugees from Europe because of their religion, as we did in the 1930s and 1940s when anti-Semitism gripped this country. Now he wants to send Muslims back to die in Syria.

And now there is Donald Trump. He wants to deport about a quarter of the