

The Associated Press analyzed:

There's one number you will almost never hear: more than 1,030 seats. That's the number of spots in State legislatures, Governor's mansions, and Congress lost by Democrats during Obama's Presidency. It is a statistic that reveals an unexpected twist of the Obama years.

The Associated Press went on to say:

The defeats have all but wiped out a generation of young Democrats, leaving the party with limited power in statehouses and a thin bench to challenge an ascendant GOP majority eager to undo many of the President's policies . . . but, say experts, Obama's tenure has marked the greatest number of losses under any President in decades.

When it comes time to the battle of programs, American families overwhelmingly choose limited government and expanded freedom over the alternative: Big Government and lesser freedom. This is clear with the failing of ObamaCare destroying jobs.

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

Congratulations to our colleague Congressman TED POE on his remission under treatment of cancer. God bless TED POE.

OPPOSITION TO GOP AGENDA TO REPEAL THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition of the GOP agenda which will repeal the Affordable Care Act and cause 30 million Americans to lose healthcare coverage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the Republicans to please examine the harm that this will do. Because of the Affordable Care Act, the uninsured rate in Texas has fallen by 28 percent and still has the largest number of uninsured Americans, allowing 1.7 million Texans to gain coverage.

While Texas did not expand Medicaid, the State still benefits from many other reforms brought by the Affordable Care Act. For instance, Sean, a Ph.D. candidate in economic development at the University of Texas at Dallas and his wife, Jamie, relied on the Affordable Care Act when their son was born prematurely and with a heart defect that required surgery and a transfer to another Dallas hospital. Sean was reassured that, with his family's ACA marketplace plan, his newborn son would not be denied coverage for lifesaving treatment.

It is unconscionable to me that the GOP refuses to look at what works and what needs improvement in this law instead of a full repeal as the only option. This will deeply harm American families.

ENDING THE REGULATION NATION

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

Mr. EMMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk about the problem of excessive government.

The United States of America, the land of the free and the brave, a country created to provide everyone an equal opportunity to survive and thrive, has now become the regulation Nation.

In my travels across the great State of Minnesota, I have met and talked with people from all walks of life: farmers and manufacturers, teachers and entrepreneurs, community bankers and credit unions, and they are all crying out for relief from the excessive, overly burdensome, and duplicative regulation that is stifling growth and stealing opportunity.

For the past 8 years, opportunity in America has been under attack by regulations and unelected regulators from Washington. If every American is to have the opportunity to pursue the American Dream, this must end. That is why policy reforms such as the REINS Act are so important.

Under this vital legislation, any major rules from a Federal agency will require congressional approval. This is a great step to end the regulation Nation. We in the people's House must continue to work together to make life easier for the American people, not more difficult.

In the 115th Congress, we must—and we will—work with the incoming administration to roll back excessive and unnecessary regulation so that American families and businesses not only survive but can once again thrive.

DON'T REPEAL THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, Americans today have better health coverage and health care, thanks to the Affordable Care Act.

The ACA has expanded and protected coverage for millions of Americans. More than 20 million previously uninsured Americans have newfound health security, including 95 percent of America's children.

I just want to mention two of my constituents who tweeted me within the last day or so about the ACA. One is from Laurence Harbor. It said: "The ACA provided additional health care for my autistic son who had aged out on my employer's health plan. Attempts in the interim to find a healthcare plan for him were thwarted by insurance companies that did not want to cover him."

Another one of my constituents from Marlboro, New Jersey, said: The "ACA helped me to stay on my parent's healthcare for 3 years after college, which was a huge relief in a tough job market."

There are so many cases, Mr. Speaker. I could go on all afternoon. The bottom line is the Affordable Care Act is

also controlling costs for millions of Americans. Premium growth has slowed over the last 6 years, compared to the years before the ACA.

Mr. Speaker, if Republicans proceed with repealing the ACA, they will make America sick again. They will rip health care away from 30 million people and raise premiums for millions of others.

Repealing the ACA will move us from true care to total chaos. Republicans are blinded to the success of the Affordable Care Act. Repealing the Affordable Care Act is not logical, it is ideological, and I would strongly urge my Republican colleagues to start looking at this practically rather than ideologically.

REMEMBERING RONNIE HAWKINS

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

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a dear friend, constituent, and tremendous public servant in North Carolina, Cleveland County Commissioner Ronnie Hawkins.

Ronnie passed away right before Christmas, after a lengthy illness, but it wasn't one that slowed him. Throughout his illness, Ronnie displayed the same passion for helping others he showed throughout his career of public service.

A native of Cleveland County, Ronnie was an Army veteran and devoted husband to his wife, Libby. He was a respected and compassionate funeral director, comforting families in their time of need and grief. He took the same type of caring and compassionate approach to his service as one of Cleveland County's longest-serving elected officials, serving 16 years on the Cleveland County Commission, as well as 12 years on the Kings Mountain School Board. He never forgot who was actually his boss at home: his constituents.

Ronnie was a dear friend, and I extend my thoughts and prayers to his wife, Libby, his family, and his friends.

FEDERAL WORKERS

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

Mr. KILMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to defend jobs.

In my region, Federal workers at Olympic National Park, which brings millions of visitors to our area, help that park run smoothly. They provide needed health services and care for our veterans at local VA facilities. Federal workers serve our Nation and help our sailors and submariners be safe through their work at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, which has been operating for 125 years.

We should have admiration and respect for the work they do. I don't think that this Chamber did right by them this week. That is because the

House approved a rule that would allow any Member to add an amendment to spending bills to cut Federal jobs and lower the pay of workers.

These workers shouldn't be unfairly singled out on the House floor. This is not the way to do business. Having worked in the private sector, you would never see a successful employer treat their employees with the disrespect that Congress treats the Federal workforce.

It is time to tell everyone at that shipyard, at the park, at the VA, and all Federal workers in my region and throughout this country that Congress respects and honors the work that they do. It is time to do away with this rule.

SMART BORDER ACT

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I have traveled to the southern border dozens of times over the years, and the problem is always the same. The people who defend our border—really, defend our country—do the best they can with what they have got, but they are outmanned, outgunned, and outfinanced by the drug cartels and the people coming across from the other side.

The continued failure to protect our border threatens our national security and the sovereignty of America. The reality is that the majority of the southern border territory is controlled by someone other than the United States. Why? Because there is no workable plan. Also, there is no moral will by this administration to protect our border.

My bill, the SMART Border Act, outlines a robust border protection strategy that includes achieving operational control of the border within 1 year, provides smart border technology, and mandates more boots on the ground, including 10,000 National Guard troops at the request of the four border State Governors.

Mr. Speaker, we must have the moral will to protect our borders. All types of people are crossing the border into the United States illegally—the good, the bad, and the ugly—and those days need to end. No one should come into America without America's permission.

And that is just the way it is.

ACA AND WOMEN

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

Ms. DELBENE. Mr. Speaker, at this very moment, House and Senate leaders are working on a dangerous plan to dismantle the Affordable Care Act and strip more than 20 million Americans of their health insurance. And if they succeed, it will have devastating consequences for our constituents, particularly women.

Repealing the ACA means allowing insurance companies to charge women more, simply for being a woman; endangering access to care for 65 million women with preexisting conditions; and stripping more than 55 million women of free preventative care, like birth control and cancer screenings.

It is easy to forget how broken the system was before the Affordable Care Act. But make no mistake: dismantling it now means being a woman will once again be treated as a preexisting condition. It will mean fewer options, less access, and higher costs for tens of millions of women.

We should be building on the progress we have made, not turning back the clock. Women deserve better.

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MEDIA SHOULDN'T DECIDE WHAT IS FAKE

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, you may have heard about this new phenomenon called fake news. Fake news usually consists of false and made-up stories. Actually, it is not new and it has been around as long as there have been media.

What is new is that a few liberal media organizations are going to label news stories suspect if they feel the stories are not true. This should be of great concern to anyone who believes in free speech.

It works this way: nearly half of all Americans get information from Facebook. Facebook has now decided to let liberal media like ABC News and the Associated Press determine whether news is fake or not. This represents the liberal mindset that the media know better than the American people what is good for them.

A better idea is to trust the American people and let them determine what is real news and what is not. The American people will learn to discern the good from the bad if the media stops telling them what to think.

SAVING THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

(Ms. MCCOLLUM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. MCCOLLUM. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the Affordable Care Act, a law that has made a real difference in the lives of Minnesotans and Americans.

After 7 years of attacking the ACA, Republicans still have not come up with a plan to replace this law. Instead, they plan to work with President-elect Donald Trump to repeal the law and destroy the progress we have made.

Repealing the ACA would leave tens of millions of Americans uninsured.

Repealing the ACA would let insurance companies deny coverage to more than 2 million Minnesotans with preexisting conditions. Repealing the ACA would eliminate free, high-quality preventive health care for hundreds of thousands of families in my district. Make no mistake, Republicans' ACA repeal plans would turn back the clock, leaving millions of Americans just one illness away from bankruptcy.

For the sake of Minnesotans and all Americans who have benefited from this law, join me in fighting to save the Affordable Care Act.

SUPPORT THE REINS ACT

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

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, as the House is set to begin debate on H.R. 26, the Regulations from the Executive in Need of Scrutiny Act, commonly referred to as the REINS Act, as a cosponsor of this bill, I rise to express my strong support for its passage.

This bill requires that any Federal regulation with a significant economic impact be subject to an up-or-down vote in both Chambers of Congress. Currently, the President has the power to implement regulations over executive agencies on a broad basis with little congressional consent.

The balance of power in Washington has often shifted increasingly toward the executive branch. This enables executive agencies to create regulations that Congress would never have approved. The pace and volume of Federal regulations and rules are increasing. In 2016 alone, the Obama administration broke all records in printing more than 97,000 pages and by issuing more than 3,800 rules and regulations in the Federal Register.

Unfortunately, the bureaucracy has been empowered to create punitive regulations rather than promoting collaborative efforts with States, businesses, and the average citizen. Mr. Speaker, I encourage each of my colleagues to think of the American people and vote "yes" on the REINS Act.

REDUCING GUN VIOLENCE

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, a little over a month ago, I attended the funeral of Javon Wilson. Javon was the grandson of my good friend, Congressman DANNY DAVIS, and he was just 15 years old when he was shot and killed in Chicago.

At the funeral, Javon's best friend remembered their talks. "We were going to be the ones that never died . . . if we get shot, we were never going to die," he said.

No child should grow up in a world where gun violence is so common that this talk seems normal.