

The fact is property taxes will go up as less and less people are covered by insurance and they go to emergency rooms for primary care; and as hospitals give more uncompensated care, they have to raise your insurance rates in public hospitals and raise your property taxes.

The American Hospital Association has come out against this. The American Medical Association has come out against this. Next thing you know, the people living the lifestyles of the rich and famous at Mar-a-Lago will come out against it.

PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS

(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, Elizabeth Oddy returned from east Africa after spending 2½ years as a Peace Corps volunteer. Before returning home, she was examined by a Peace Corps physician. She was deemed healthy and okay to come back to America.

Two days after coming home, Elizabeth went to her doctor for a regular checkup where she was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness. She had stage I thyroid cancer. Her Peace Corps insurance ended the next day.

Peace Corps volunteers often have severe health problems upon their return from abroad. Health issues that are a direct result of serving in the Peace Corps should be covered by the Peace Corps.

Volunteers like Elizabeth are the spirit of humanitarian assistance. It is our responsibility to ensure they are properly cared for both at home and abroad.

My bill, the Sam Farr Peace Corps Enhancement Act, improves health care for all current volunteers and returned Peace Corps volunteers that contract illnesses during their service. We must continue providing support for our American angels abroad.

And that is just the way it is.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

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

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I am deeply troubled and disappointed that Republicans have chosen to move forward with their plans to dismantle the Affordable Care Act rather than working in a bipartisan fashion to improve this landmark legislation.

Republicans have had 7 years to work across the aisle to find solutions. Instead, they have chosen to ignore the ACA's success in pursuit of their single-minded focus on gutting the law. They have voted over 60 times to repeal the ACA. Could not even one of those votes have been to try to improve it if they saw these shortcomings?

Mr. Speaker, the ACA expanded healthcare access to over 100,000 Rhode Islanders and 20 million people nationwide who otherwise did not have health insurance. Unfortunately, the Republican proposal jeopardizes the comprehensive, affordable, quality coverage Americans received under the ACA.

Mr. Speaker, the Republican plan will lead to higher costs and less accessible coverage, and it will strain, not strengthen, our healthcare system. Their plan disproportionately harms seniors, people with disabilities, and those who rely on Medicaid.

I have long said, Mr. Speaker, that the ACA isn't perfect, but it is an important first step toward fulfilling our Nation's promise of compassion and opportunity because health care is a necessity. It is something that is a right, not a privilege. Unfortunately, the Republicans' American Health Care Act will break this fundamental promise by undermining the healthcare coverage of millions.

AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I rarely come down during the 1-minute time of the day, and I am glad I came down this morning for Father Conroy's prayer because there really is a lot of anxiety in this country as it relates to health care. Every family in this country has health care on their mind.

The gentleman from Rhode Island is exactly right. We have an opportunity to work together to fix it because we all know the ObamaCare system is failing. That is why we talk about how to fix it because we know that it is failing.

President Trump said on Monday that the Republican alternative is now open for review and negotiation. He didn't say take it or leave it. He didn't say pass it before you can read it. He said open for review and negotiation.

I challenge my colleagues to think about our opportunity to serve not just one constituent, but all of our constituents. Think about our opportunity to come together and put this healthcare discord behind us for a generation.

I thank Father Conroy for that admonition this morning. I hope we will rise to that challenge.

EPA PUGET SOUND BUDGET CUTS

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

Ms. JAYAPAL. Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose potential deep cuts to the Environmental Protection Agency.

According to many recent press reports, the EPA budget to restore our critical Puget Sound in my home State of Washington is facing a 93 percent

cut. What is worse is the EPA, overall, is potentially facing a 25 percent budget cut, resulting in a loss of 15,000 jobs.

Let us be clear that the EPA is the entity that ensures clean air, clean water, and strong human health. Because of the EPA's work on accountability and oversight of strong environmental regulations, we have seen progress on pollution mitigation, shoreline restoration, water treatment, and education projects that are aimed at protecting our sound and our environment.

This administration's cuts will be devastating to our environment. By signing an executive order to move forward on Keystone and the DAPL pipeline, appointing Scott Pruitt to lead the EPA, and rolling back environmental regulations, we are showing overt hostility to protecting our environment.

We need to be investing in our environment and not slashing it, and we need to make sure that we restore our environment and preserve it for our future generations.

NORWICH BOYS BASKETBALL SECTION 4 CHAMPIONS

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

Ms. TENNEY. Mr. Speaker, today I am honored to rise and recognize and congratulate the new Section 4, Class B boys' basketball champions, the Norwich Purple Tornadoes. The hard work, dedication, and sportsmanship of these young men helped lead their team to claim the Section 4 victory for the second year in a row.

In the game against the Waverly Wolverines, senior forward Chris Jeffrey scored 17 hard-fought points, taking Norwich into the second half leading 18-17. In the final half, Norwich took the court by storm to claim the title of Section 4 champion with a final score of 49-35.

On behalf of the 22nd District, congratulations to Norwich and Coach Brian Collier on an outstanding win. We wish you luck in the State quarter-final on March 11 against the Section 3 champions.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY AND A DAY WITHOUT A WOMAN

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

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of International Women's Day and to join the countless women across this Nation in participating today and, yes, dressed in red to celebrate our achievements of women across the world in many fields.

I stand with the women today to highlight the economic injustices women face: unequal pay, unpaid leave, gender discrimination, and the list

goes on. Oh, yes, to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Women are the primary breadwinners. Six out of 10 American women are paid only 80 cents on the dollar, and for women of color like me, 64 cents.

But today it is so important for us to say we are faced with the dangerous and irresponsible repeal of the Affordable Care Act, which will once again make being a female a preexisting condition and take away access to free preventative services like mammograms and cervical cancer screening.

You should ask yourself: Why are they doing this markup without hearings? You should ask yourself: Why should families pay more? Why should those with disabilities and preexisting conditions pay more? Why should billionaires benefit more?

Stand with us women on International Women's Day.

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

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

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor to join so many of my women Members of Congress to recognize and celebrate International Women's Day. In my lifetime, women have made so much progress, but our journey toward full equality still has so far to go.

More than five decades ago, a half a century, we began the work to achieve equality in the workplace when President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act. We took another important step forward when President Obama signed his first bill into law, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act. Even with those laws, women in my congressional district still only make 72 cents on a man's dollar. For women of color, the wage gap is even worse, 63 cents for African-American women and 54 cents for Latinas.

When you consider that women make up almost half of the workforce, and women are either the sole or primary breadwinner in 40 percent of the homes, this isn't just a women's issue; it is a family issue. This is why we must pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to give every woman additional tools to fight for equal pay they earn on each and every payday.

In a country as great as ours, we must guarantee that our daughters have the same opportunity to earn a fair and equal wage.

STEPHANIE CHANEY AND THE ACA

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

Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, well, here we are, on International Women's Day, 7 years from when we started the Affordable Care Act, 60 votes to repeal behind us, and

yet only this week we have had the big reveal of what the plan will be for replacement. What are we seeing? We don't have any cost information, but we know we are going to protect wealthy insurance executives, and we know that an estimated 15 to 20 million Americans will have their health insurance ripped away from them.

Let me introduce you to one who is concerned about her ongoing coverage. Her name is Stephanie Chaney, and she is from my district in Framingham, Massachusetts. She is a recent grad student at Lesley University, where she studied to be a clinical counselor and dance therapist. She was diagnosed with a rare and extremely painful joint disease, and because of the ACA, she got the treatment she needed.

Because she was a student and not employed, the healthcare law and the changes we make are going to have a direct impact on her life. She worries that if she cannot find another affordable plan, she will have to start over again. Let's think of her and do the right thing by Americans with their health care.

DEFENSE SPENDING IS IMPORTANT

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

Ms. ROSEN. Mr. Speaker, as a member of the House Committee on Armed Services, I rise to voice my full support for the fiscal year 2017 Defense Appropriations bill. This legislation supports our Armed Forces by helping pay our troops and provide care for our men and women in uniform and their families, and it gives our military the resources necessary to combat terrorism, deter our adversaries, and support our allies.

The Defense Appropriations bill includes a 2.1 percent pay raise for our servicemen and -women, which will help our military families like those who are currently struggling in Nevada to make ends meet.

One of the most important investments proposed is increasing our military readiness, which helps strengthen our national security. The legislation fully funds troop number increases authorized and provides an additional \$6.8 billion in procurement spending. This is especially important for helping modernize our Armed Forces by fulfilling unmet requirements for additional ships, weapons, and aircraft, such as the F-35 Joint Strike Fighters at Nellis Air Force Base and unmanned aerial vehicles flying counter-ISIL operations missions from Creech Air Force Base.

Finally, the NDAA helps support programs that strengthen relations with our allies. I urge my colleagues to pass this important legislation.

TODAY WE RAISE OUR VOICES

(Ms. FRANKEL of Florida asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, today is International Women's Day, a day without women. I am going to join millions of women in recognizing the important economic power of women in the United States and around the globe.

In a few minutes, I will exit this Chamber with colleagues to show solidarity with our sisters, who are staying away from normal duties and mainstream commerce to call attention to the inequities that women and gender nonconforming people continue to face. We are wearing red to signify our love for our sisterhood and our passionate energy to pursue measures that will advance the lives of women and families, such as equal pay, paid family leave, quality affordable child care, access to Federal health care, and freedom from violence.

In Congress, Democrats will resist efforts to take us back from hard-earned gains, standing strong against the unrelenting attempts by Republicans to repeal the Affordable Care Act, defund Planned Parenthood, and block access to full reproductive care. In the words of the Women's March, today we raise our voices to say that women's rights are human rights, regardless of a woman's race, ethnicity, religion, immigration status, and so forth. When women succeed, the world succeeds.

OPPOSING REPEAL OF THE ACA

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

Mr. PANETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition of the plan to repeal the ACA. A recent analysis of this plan concludes that 10 million people would lose their health insurance. That is mainly due to the fact that the plan would stop Medicaid expansion and shorten the Medicare trust fund.

Many people in my district would be affected by this plan. 68,000 of my constituents are covered by the Medicaid expansion, 23,000 constituents receive assistance to afford health insurance through the exchange. If the ACA is repealed and the new plan implemented, thousands of my constituents, my neighbors, and my friends would lose their coverage.

But don't just take my word for it or my constituents' word for it. Let's ask the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office to look at the plan carefully and to give a report as to who and how many people it will affect. If you are going to take on something that affects so many Americans, then America deserves to know how our health care and our lives will be impacted by your plan.