

Maloney,	Pingree	Slaughter
Carolyn B.	Pocan	Smith (WA)
Maloney, Sean	Poe (TX)	Soto
Matsui	Polis	Speier
McCollum	Price (NC)	Suozzi
McEachin	Quigley	Swalwell (CA)
McGovern	Raskin	Takano
McNerney	Rice (NY)	Thompson (CA)
Meeks	Rosen	Thompson (MS)
Meng	Roybal-Allard	Tonko
Moore	Ruiz	Torres
Moulton	Ruppersberger	Tsongas
Murphy (FL)	Russell	Vargas
Nadler	Ryan (OH)	Veasey
Napolitano	Sánchez	Vela
Neal	Sarbanes	Velázquez
Nolan	Schakowsky	Visclosky
Norcross	Schiff	Walz
O'Halleran	Schneider	Wasserman
O'Rourke	Schrader	Schultz
Pallone	Scott (VA)	Waters, Maxine
Panetta	Scott, David	Watson Coleman
Pascarell	Serrano	Welch
Payne	Sewell (AL)	Wilson (FL)
Pelosi	Shea-Porter	Yarmuth
Perlmutter	Sherman	
Peters	Sires	

NOT VOTING—11

Barletta	Davis (CA)	Rush
Boyle, Brendan	Jones	Sinema
F.	Lawrence	Titus
Brady (TX)	Richmond	Walden

□ 1129

Ms. ROSEN changed her vote from "aye" to "no."

Mr. MARCHANT changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated for:

Mr. BRADY of Texas. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 158, I was unavoidably detained to cast my vote in time. Had I been present, I would have voted "Yes."

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Ms. KUSTER of New Hampshire. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, March 10, 2017, I missed the following rollcall votes to H.R. 720: number 153 the Soto Amendment, number 154 the Jackson-Lee amendment, number 155 the Conyers amendment, number 156 the Jeffries amendment, number 157 on the Democratic motion to recommit and number 158 on final passage. Had I voted, I would have voted "Aye" on rollcall vote 153, "Aye on rollcall vote 154, "Aye" on rollcall vote 155, "Aye" on rollcall vote 156, "Aye" on rollcall vote 157 the Democratic motion to recommit, and "Nay" on rollcall vote 158 on final passage of H.R. 720.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

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

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCARTHY), my friend, for the purpose of inquiring of the majority leader the schedule for the week to come.

(Mr. MCCARTHY asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday, no votes are expected in the House. On Tuesday, the House will meet at noon for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m. for morning hour and noon for legislative business. On Friday, the House will meet at 9 a.m. for legislative business. Last votes of the week are expected no later than 3 p.m.

Mr. Speaker, the House will consider a number of suspensions next week, a complete list of which will be announced by close of business today.

In addition, the House will consider several important bills from the Veterans' Affairs Committee.

First, H.R. 1181, the Veterans Second Amendment Protection Act, sponsored by Chairman PHIL ROE, which ensures that the Second Amendment rights of VA beneficiaries are not restricted without due process.

Next, H.R. 1259, the VA Accountability First Act, also sponsored by Chairman ROE, which grants the VA Secretary increased discretion to remove or suspend VA employees due to poor performance.

Finally, H.R. 1367, sponsored by Representative BRAD WENSTRUP, which enhances the VA's ability to recruit and retain highly qualified employees.

The failures of the VA are well-documented and completely unacceptable. These bills are a step in the right direction towards creating greater accountability at the VA, and keeping our promise to Americans' veterans who have sacrificed so much for us.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that information.

I would now like to ask him, we passed the DOD Appropriations bill and sent that to the Senate. We have already done the MILCON bill. And I am wondering—there are ten remaining bills—whether the majority leader could give me some idea, in light of the fact that the CR, which once it goes to April 28, we will either have to do those bills individually or in some sort of an omnibus, whether the gentleman has any idea how soon we might be considering the balance of the year's appropriation to September 30?

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I am pleased that we were able to pass the FY17 Defense Appropriations bill on a bipartisan basis this week. It is my hope that we can continue to pass the appropriation bills on a bipartisan basis as well.

As for future legislation, I would refer my friend to the Appropriations Committee, and, as always, I will keep Members posted of any scheduling updates.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for that insightful comment.

Let me say this, Mr. Leader, if, as we did in the Defense Appropriations bill, if we follow the template where we will reach bipartisan agreement on those bills in committee without any poison pills language in them—which you did on the appropriation bill, and, as you saw, we appreciated that, and we were

overwhelmingly supportive of that effort—I would hope that, Mr. Leader, you would urge—and I think, very frankly, I am a big fan of Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN, who is the chairman of the committee. I think he is a Member that I have worked well with over the years, and I think he is somebody who is going to do the committee proud as its chairman—but I am hopeful that we can do, as we did with the appropriation bill for the Defense Department, a similar procedure. So I think that the majority leader will be pleased with our support if, in fact, that can happen.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I have great trust in Chairman FRELINGHUYSEN. I think you will continue to see that behavior.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, on a less happy collegial note, it comes as no surprise to the majority leader at the height of our displeasure and disappointment as it relates to what is going on, back to the consideration of the reconciliation process for the repeal or modification of the Affordable Care Act with the American Health Care Act. The bill was posted this Monday, this past Monday night, it was marked up on Wednesday, there were no hearings, there were no opportunities for witnesses to come forward. And as the gentleman knows, he is absolutely correct, I like these quotes, but I like these quotes because they point out theoretically what I would have great agreement with in terms of process.

Particularly, I call your attention to a quote of Speaker PAUL RYAN: "Congress is moving fast to rush through a healthcare overhaul that lacks a key ingredient: the full participation of you, the American people."

That quote was July 19, 2009. That quote was referring to the process involved in the adoption of the Affordable Care Act.

As the gentleman knows, the Affordable Care Act had 79 hearings. As the gentleman knows, there were 181 witnesses who testified about the Affordable Care Act. As the gentleman knows, that process took approximately 1½ years, 8 months of which was waiting to see whether Senator GRASSLEY would participate in a bipartisan way in forging healthcare reform in this country.

The gentleman is well aware, not only have we had literally hundreds of thousands of people around the country come to townhall meetings, many that his Members have held, and express their deep concern about the loss of healthcare security if the Affordable Care Act is repealed. So there is no doubt that the American public—I am not saying it is 100 percent—but a large number of the American public are very concerned.

The gentleman further knows, I am sure, because I am sure he has seen the letters, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the American Nurses Association,

even the Consumers Union, and hundreds of other groups representing providers, patients, even insurance companies, have expressed deep, deep concern about the adverse consequences of the passage of the American Health Care Act that was marked up in the dead of night. We were criticized. The gentleman apparently doesn't agree with that. But the facts are the facts. They are not alternative facts.

You started marking them up on Wednesday morning, there was some delay during the day, as you know, because we were very concerned about how fast you were moving that. Less than 48 hours after it was introduced, it was marked up. No hearings, no witnesses, no ability to read the bill.

As a matter of fact, shockingly, Mr. BRADY voted against an amendment which said: Read the bill. Now, what was shocking about that is that was Mr. BRADY's amendment that he offered back in 2010. He voted against the amendment that said: Read the bill. I don't think anybody really had much opportunity to read the bill before it was marked up.

GREG WALDEN, who is chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, said also, in July of 2009:

On a bill of this significance, you would think that we would at least allow people to come in who are affected by the extraordinary changes in this bill and have a chance to let us know how it affects them.

That was GREG WALDEN, now the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, July 9, 2009. He is now in charge of that committee. Not a single witness testified on the bill that was marked up in his committee. And it was marked up through the dead of the night, if we want to parse our words, because it started in the morning of Wednesday. But it didn't end until the morning, 26 hours later, on Thursday. Which meant that Mr. WALDEN kept his members in their seats marking up a bill, except when they were voting coming over here, for 26 hours straight on one of the most consequential bills this House will consider and that the Senate will consider, affecting, as I said, millions and millions and millions of people.

Now, I understand the Budget Committee is scheduled to mark that bill up on Wednesday, just a week later. Again, I don't know whether there are going to be hearings and if those hearings will be open to the witnesses that should be called to testify on a bill of such impact.

Let me do one additional quote, because the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee had an interesting quote as well. He said: "The Democratic Congress and White House simply aren't listening. Democrats are ramming it through over the public's objections."

That was on March 17, 2010, some year after the bill had been introduced. Thousands of meetings had been held by Republicans and Democrats around the country on the bill. And, as I said,

79 hearings and 181 witnesses later. That is what Chairman BRADY said.

And, of course, Chairman BRADY, in less than 48 hours, had a markup. Now, he did not have quite as long a markup. It ended at 4:30 a.m. Thursday morning. So that was the dead of night. Or, if you want to parse words, perhaps, the dead of the early morning. But, nevertheless, most of my public wasn't up watching. I presume even at 4:30, which would have been 1:30 for your public, they weren't up watching.

So this was done out of the sight of the public and is inconsistent, I suggest to my friend, Mr. Speaker, the majority leader, inconsistent with the pledge of transparency, openness, and those three quotes that I just read you that said the American people should have the opportunity to express their opinion on legislation generally, but certainly on legislation of this consequence.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my friend.

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I always look forward to these discussions. I know they are about the schedule, but I always look forward to what quotes you are going to bring up next.

Let me see if I can answer all of those questions that you raised.

First, my friend did inform me, last week and again today, that the Democrats have held 79 hearings over 2 years on ObamaCare. Well, we have spent the last 6 years.

I promised you that I would see how many hearings we had. When I went back and checked, the Republicans have held 113 hearings on the ways to repeal and replace ObamaCare. We had expert witnesses on both sides of the aisle on everything from the individual mandate and Medicaid sustainability, to the medical device tax, and ObamaCare's failing co-ops.

We have been committed to repealing and replacing this law for years, and I am sure you will find a lot of quotes from almost everybody on this side of the aisle saying that same thing. We have done the work, we have listened to the American people, and we believe now it is time to act.

You did bring up about the committees. You brought up about reading the bill. So what we put forth is we put a website together for the patient-centered healthcare bill, and it is available online at readthebill.gop. Now, this is only 123 pages. That is a difference from your bill of 2,700 pages for ObamaCare.

Now, we remember what the Democrats said when they were passing ObamaCare, that you had to pass the bill to see what is in it. So I went back and checked how many people were unable to visit the website. We had over 350,000 visitors visit our website in just 36 hours, and 100,000 downloaded the legislative text.

□ 1145

Now, when you talk about dead of night, I was on this floor, you were on

this floor, and I know people on both sides of the aisle have used it before, but the dilatory activity on the other side of the aisle to slow this process down put us into nighttime.

And then let's think about how this process went. It was an open process. Why did it go so long? We debated hours of Democrats' amendments because we weren't going to shut it down. We never called the question. We kept going as long as people wanted to go. And we spent hours on one amendment that just wanted to change it to a hashtag of a different name. That was a Democratic amendment to somehow change the bill. We didn't stop with that. We let everybody talk, and we let everybody have their voice because we believe in regular order.

Yes, we spent 27 hours on it because we were not going to deny anybody the ability to talk or offer their amendment. And that is exactly what we did, and that is what the American people expect to have happen.

So, 113 hearings, I congratulate you on your 79; 123 pages compared to 2,700. I believe this is a great first step in three phases. For too long this health care of ObamaCare has failed.

In that 2,700 pages they created 23 co-ops and provided more than \$2 billion. In this short amount of time, 18 of them have collapsed. They had the quote that, if you like your health care, you could keep it, but millions of Americans found out that wasn't true. They said your premiums would go down. Millions of Americans have found out that is not true either.

Now, across this country, one-third of the entire country only has one provider. And the very sad part of this, just within the last month, Humana announced that they are going to pull out. That is leaving 16 counties, and I see my good friends from Tennessee, with no provider at all.

We can do so much better. That is why we spent the years; we spent the hearings; we have had the witnesses.

And I know it is your right to come and ask to adjourn so somehow we couldn't get to the bill, it is your right to continue to ask to adjourn so Members can't offer their amendments, but you know what? If we had to spend through the dead of night and stay up so we made sure, even if it is on the other side of the aisle, a Democrat could offer an amendment, just a hashtag to change the name, that is your right, and we would spend the time and do it. And we spent hours at it.

If you ask me, personally, I didn't think that amendment changed anybody's health care in America. But you have a right to do it, and we made sure we kept that right, and we had regular order.

I thank the gentleman for his quotes. Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, we have had, literally, tens of thousands of hearings that have dealt with almost every issue that this

House considers. I suppose I should take from the majority leader's discussion that, if we have had those hearings in previous Congresses, in the last Congress, the Congress before that, the Congress before that, and we have a substantial number of new Members in this House, and we have millions and millions of voters who are counting on this, we will just simply tell them: Read the transcript of 2002 or of 2009 or of 2013. That is not regular order, Mr. Speaker.

Regular order is you introduce a bill. It is referred to a committee, which in turn refers it to a subcommittee, and, even if it keeps it in the bosom of the full committee, it has a hearing. It posts the bill. It tells citizens throughout this country: If you have an interest, come in and tell us what your interest is, what your perspective is, what you think the ramifications of this bill are. The subcommittee marks it up, if it was referred to a subcommittee, then the full committee marks it up, and then it is referred to the floor. That is regular order, Mr. Speaker.

To rationalize a procedure which has a bill introduced Monday night and is subjected to 26 hours, straight, of markup on the following Wednesday, less than 48 hours later, no matter how you dress it up, that is not, Mr. Speaker, regular order.

What it is is trying to jam through a bill before the American public has an opportunity to tell us what they think about the bill. What it is is jamming through a bill and not allowing the providers, the doctors, the patients, the insurance companies, all of the stakeholders, to have an opportunity to read that bill introduced about 72 hours ago now—a little more than that, maybe close to 96.

That, Mr. Speaker, is not regular order. And I will tell my friend for whom I have a great deal of respect, I think he puts the best face on it, but nobody believed the Republicans had a bill, Mr. Speaker, until Monday night. Well, actually, I believed they had a bill at the last colloquy, and I looked for it all over this Capitol. I couldn't find it. It wasn't posted. The ranking member on the committee didn't have it. No committee Democrat had the bill. They couldn't read it.

So to pretend, Mr. Speaker, that hearings on some other bill at some other time in some other Congress suffices for regular order is something, Mr. Speaker, I cannot agree with. And if the situations were reversed, as I have experienced over the last 36 years, that side of the aisle would have torn this place apart. Why do I think that? Because I have seen it.

Yes, we had some delaying, four motions to adjourn, so that we had some time to figure out what this bill was about and some time to hear from the American people. It certainly wasn't enough time. We are going to be hearing more from the American people, I think, Mr. Speaker.

I appreciate the gentleman trying to say that, well, we only had 48 hours. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, we do that in a hurry. And the reason is because we are about to go on a break. We are about to go on an August break or a recess or something of that nature. That is not the case. These committees didn't have to meet through the night. They could have met Thursday. They could have met today. They could meet next week. But this bill is being rushed through too fast with too much adverse consequence to the American people.

I would hope the majority leader would slow this bill down. I hope the Rules Committee has full hearings on this bill and that it does not have just attenuated hearings with few witnesses, because there are a lot of people who want to tell us, their Representatives, what their view is of this bill.

I know the Speaker has said there are going to be three phases to this bill, and the majority leader said so as well, and there will be additional legislation. I hope, Mr. Speaker, that my friend, the majority leader, will urge the committees not to consider additional legislation either in the middle of the night or with no notice and no opportunity for witnesses and no hearings.

Previous hearings will not suffice, Mr. Speaker. Other Congresses had hearings. This Congress has a responsibility to hear from the American people. That is what Speaker RYAN said; that is what Mr. BRADY said; that is what Mr. WALDEN said. They said it at a time when they were in the minority, but it ought to apply when they are in the majority. And if we are in the majority, it ought to apply to us as well. I hope that happens, Mr. Speaker, for the country's sake, for our people's sake.

I will yield to the majority leader, Mr. Speaker, if he would like to speak.

Mr. MCCARTHY. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I appreciate the gentleman's comments.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to remind people, when you use reconciliation, what is the process? Well, the process states you have the authorizing committee post and they mark up. We did that. Budget Committee marks up. They will do that next week. Rules Committee will meet, then it comes to the House floor.

I will never apologize for having 113 hearings on repealing and replacing ObamaCare. I will never apologize for having all the witnesses in.

And I love that you bring a lot of quotes of people inside that are elected, but I will be very frank. The quotes I love and the quotes I care most about are the ones that come from my constituents.

For some reason, this idea that this is a complex issue but you had hearings before so you are going to forget all about those hearings, why do we have committees? Why do you keep Members on your own side of the aisle on the same committees? To build exper-

tise, to solve big problems. So, no, they don't forget what they learned in those hearings.

But let me read you quotes from a few constituents.

"Dear Kevin, thank you for your diligence in these disruptive political times. I have several concerns.

"ObamaCare blew us out of the water. I retired early as an RN due to health problems, so I have to pay for my entire health insurance. I am not complaining about that, but I am tired of having premiums go through the roof. I lost my doctor and my plan.

"In 2017 there were few options without a \$5,000 deductible. If I have to pay that much first, then why pay for insurance? Our income is not huge. We cannot afford this."

Or from another constituent: "Dear Kevin, I just wanted to convey that I strongly feel legislative action is needed to fix the ACA.

"My family deductible has increased over \$3,000 a year—it used to be \$1,000 8 years ago—and I practically only have health insurance in case a catastrophic accident were to occur.

"Also, my sister-in-law can no longer work more than 29 hours a week since her employer does not want to have to provide insurance. That is ridiculous."

Or: "Dear Kevin, I just got my 2017 health insurance renewal notice, \$650 per month, up 20 percent. I am 60 years old, have worked and saved all my life, so I don't qualify for subsidies. I can't go without insurance, but I can't pay for it either. Something needs to be done. I am so upset that I am crying right now."

But my friend, Mr. Speaker, on the other side of the aisle says to wait to help these people. Forget about the 113 hearings, even though it is more than the 70-some that ObamaCare had, or 123 pages is too much instead of 2,700.

I will never apologize for having the wisdom to listen and, now, the courage to lead. But I will promise you this, Mr. Speaker, and my friend on the other side of the aisle: I have never come to this floor to offer to adjourn just to disrupt the process.

And, yes, I had Members on our side of the aisle that would get frustrated that Democrats would offer an amendment that just dealt with a hashtag. No, let's let them have their say. If they feel that is important for American health care, to put a hashtag name change, then let's spend hours on it. Because we believe in the process, we will defend your right to have that process even though it will not help one constituent of mine or yours.

But you want to spend your time doing that? We will do that. And we did do that. That is why we worked through the night. But we will not give up on the American people. That is why we are doing what we are doing, and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the remarks of the majority leader. I presume that he has heard from—I don't have the quotes in front of me,

but maybe I will bring them next week—the thousands of people who have said their lives have been saved by the Affordable Care Act; the thousands of parents with a child with a preexisting condition that, if the Republicans had succeeded in their 65 votes to repeal it, would not have been protected; the millions of seniors who are paying less for their prescription drugs because of the Affordable Care Act.

□ 1200

I could read all those letters.

Why do I read the letters of Mr. WALDEN, Mr. BRADY, and Speaker RYAN?

Because they are in charge.

All our constituents, on either side, had no opportunity to testify on this bill. But Speaker RYAN, Mr. WALDEN, and Mr. BRADY could have given them that opportunity, and they chose not to. They rationalize it apparently because, well, we had hearings in the past.

Does this bill have the subject matter of the ACA?

It does. But this bill was offered just some, as I said, 90-or-so hours ago. And the leader says: Well, that is okay. It is based on all those hearings we had.

The fact is this bill has not been brought forward for the last 7 years while there was a repeal for ACA.

Why?

We all know why. Mr. Speaker, it is because the majority could not come to an agreement, and they are not in agreement now. Perhaps, if this bill stands out there a little bit, it is so flawed they won't be able to get the votes on their side of the floor.

I was here—I don't think the majority leader was here—when we adopted the part D prescription drug program. It was called up by the majority, the Republican Party at the evening hour; and we voted from 3 a.m. until 6 a.m. And when I say we voted, that vote was kept open for 3 hours while they opportuned their Members: You have got to vote for this. President Bush wants it. You have got to vote for this.

We voted against it. But the vote was held open 3 hours, I tell my friend. That was not regular order.

Now, our side has held a vote open from time to time—never for 3 hours, but from time to time. That is why it is being rushed. It is not because they had a lot of hearings before, not because witnesses had testified they didn't like the Affordable Care Act. We understand that.

The issue is not whether people like or dislike the Affordable Care Act. It is how are we going to provide what the President has promised: access for everybody to health care at a lower cost and a better price.

I told the majority leader last week—and I repeat my comments, Mr. Speaker, to the majority leader this week—if they bring such a bill to the floor, I will support it. This bill does not do that.

So what President Trump promised during the election and what he prom-

ised from that podium just a few days ago is not what this bill represents. It is not what they promised to the American people.

What I asked the majority leader was—they are apparently going to have some additional bills—whether or not they will be also rushed through without hearings on the premise that there were hearings in the past.

I repeat that there are a lot of new Members in this body that didn't have the opportunity to have those hearings and weren't in this body. I don't know how many there are because I don't know how many Congresses we are talking about if we adopted this bill 7 years ago and then there were hearings subsequent.

So I don't know where we are going, Mr. Speaker, but I think the American people expect an opportunity to be heard. Yes, I may quote some next week.

The people who were elected by the American people to do their job have the power to open up the doors and open up the windows and pull back the curtains so that the American people could come in and testify. There were all those witnesses who testified in the last Congress and the Congress before that, but I am talking about the people who testified during a Congress in which we considered the bill. We haven't had an open rule this year, Mr. Speaker. We have had structured rules. We have had no open rule.

So in terms of the majority leader telling me, Mr. Speaker, that we want everybody to have their opportunity, and he caricatures one amendment that was—I think I would agree with him—more to show that not a single Republican would vote. And Mr. BRADY, as I pointed out, didn't vote for his own amendment that he offered when the Affordable Care Act was marked up to say read the bill.

Time was not given to read the bill.

Mr. Speaker, I understand we are not going to come to any conclusion today; but I am hopeful that the process that was perpetrated on not only the minority but also the majority this week will not be repeated, and that the representations that have been made by the Speaker, by the young guns, and by so many others would be a process that is, in fact, open, thoughtful, and democratic.

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

ADJOURNMENT FROM FRIDAY,
MARCH 10, 2017, TO TUESDAY,
MARCH 14, 2017

Mr. MCCARTHY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet on Tuesday, March 14, 2017, when it shall convene at noon for morning-hour debate and 2 p.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BERGMAN). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

SNAP INTEGRITY

(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, I rise to continue the discussion on the Agriculture Committee's findings from hearings conducted to ensure that SNAP—or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program—is meeting the needs of those it is intended to serve. After individual resources, family support, and community programs, SNAP is critical to supporting nutritional needs.

The program integrity within SNAP is critical for both the functioning and the long-term sustainability of the program. Jessica Shahin of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service emphasized in testimony:

“As vital as the program is to so many, and as well as it operates, we can all agree that it can do even better. And it is up to all of us—the Federal Government, the States, and the local providers—to work together to improve it by holding ourselves accountable. FNS is committed to continually improving the integrity of SNAP.”

Mr. Speaker, opportunities for SNAP program integrity improvements includes defining clear program goals and metrics that generate program improvement and reduce SNAP fraud rates through innovative State and Federal strategies and technologies.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE NOT UNIVERSAL CHAOS

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

Mr. LARSEN of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the American Health Care Act.

Over the past several weeks, I have held six townhalls where I have discussed health care with more than 800 of my constituents. Thousands more have called or contacted my office.

Erica, from my hometown of Arlington, told me that, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, her family can now keep their house and pay their mortgage.

Nancy from Bellingham told me she works with families who rely on Medicaid to avoid bankruptcy due to extra medical costs that come with caring for babies with disabilities.

So many Washingtonians support the Affordable Care Act and benefit from it. And of my constituents who oppose the Affordable Care Act, none of them have asked me to support legislation that would cover fewer people. None of my constituents have asked Congress to make poor people pay more for insurance. And not one of my constituents have asked Congress to give the rich a massive tax break, but that is