

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. QUIGLEY. Mr. Speaker, today I have introduced a resolution of inquiry requesting that the President and Attorney General provide the House with any evidence in their possession relating to President Trump's claims that President Obama illegally ordered the wiretapping of Trump Tower, a task not welcomed but necessitated by the President's seemingly baseless accusations that the Obama administration wiretapped Trump Tower during the Presidential campaign. These accusations should be taken literally and seriously.

As a member of the Intelligence Committee, I have seen absolutely no evidence that supports the President's claims. President Trump and the Department of Justice have a responsibility to completely clarify the President's statement on Twitter.

If the White House and Department of Justice are unable to produce this evidence, as I suspect will be the case, the President owes the American people a thorough and immediate explanation and apology.

LET'S TAKE CARE OF OUR VETERANS

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

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in support of the VA Accountability First Act. This legislation provides the VA's Secretary with increased ability to remove, demote, or suspend any VA employee for poor performance or misconduct.

Why it takes legislation to enforce common sense is beyond me. Just like in the business world, the VA and its employees must be held accountable for their actions.

Three weeks ago, I hosted a veterans townhall in Swainsboro, Georgia. Many of the complaints and concerns shared with me were about wait times. One thing no one has enough of is time, especially our veterans. For far too long, veterans have waited for care at their own expense. This is unacceptable.

It is our responsibility to not only take care of, but provide the best possible care to our servicemen and -women. Getting rid of bad and incompetent actors is a great place to start.

I encourage my colleagues to support this legislation. It is truly the least we can do for those who have done so much for us.

WHAT WILL AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT MEAN?

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

Mr. RUIZ. Mr. Speaker, the American Health Care Act, known as TrumpCare, will cause 24 million more people to go without health insurance over the next decade.

As an emergency physician, I know that everyone, even healthy young people, are vulnerable to car accidents or diseases that require critical care. Whether they have insurance or not, people get sick and get injured.

I have never treated a patient who said they were uninsured because they preferred to be uninsured. They simply couldn't afford it.

So what does 24 million more uninsured people mean?

It means more pain, suffering, and shorter life spans for people who go without care.

It means more ER visits and a longer wait to see a doctor in the emergency rooms for everyone.

It means financial ruin for young families or those ready to retire.

It means that hospitals and providers might lay off workers or even go out of business due to rising uncompensated care. It means they will charge more to make ends meet, which will raise premiums and out-of-pocket costs for everyone. Everyone will have to pay more.

I urge everyone to vote "no."

HOUSE REPUBLICANS FULFILL PROMISE

(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, an editorial last week in the Post and Courier of Charleston cites "GOP health bill a start," which provided accurate insight into how the American Health Care Act is the first step in a three-step approach on how to put patients back in control of health care.

The editorial states: "Any flaws notwithstanding, it's an important step forward for the GOP to put a fully fleshed-out healthcare bill on the table. . . . But there is certainly cause for optimism that a tweaked . . . healthcare bill can at least bandage and begin to cure some of the festering wounds left by ObamaCare. . . ."

"Republicans have a chance to make things right. They have a chance to help more Americans afford health care in a sustainable and responsible way. They have the chance to place more healthcare decisions in the hands of patients and doctors and fewer in the hands of government."

"The bill introduced on Tuesday is a first step in the right direction. . . ."

I appreciate the positive vision of Speaker PAUL RYAN with President Donald Trump and his team of OMB Director Mick Mulvaney and HHS Secretary Tom Price.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism to defeat Islamic extremist terrorists.

DEFEAT TRUMPCARE

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, 24 million Americans will lose their health insurance. They will become uninsured. We call it TrumpCare, as it should be called.

For 7 years, Republicans have said they have a better alternative to the Affordable Care Act. President Trump promised on the campaign trail that Republicans would put forward a plan that would have insurance for everybody which would be far less expensive and far better for the American people.

We now know the Congressional Budget Office report says that 24 million people will lose their health insurance, including 7 million who will lose their insurance they currently have through their employers.

Older Americans waiting to get on Medicare would be charged five times what they pay now. It reduces the Medicare trust fund, and it cuts 25 percent in Medicaid, a program that provides care for children and senior citizens.

Mr. Speaker, this plan is both heartless and financially unsound. This repeal bill does not lower premiums or out-of-pocket costs nor does it expand access to care, and it provides a huge tax cut poorly disguised as a healthcare bill.

We need to defeat this bill.

THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF CRIMEA

(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, this week marks 3 years since Russia violated Ukraine's territorial integrity and illegally stole Crimea.

In 2014, the people of Ukraine peacefully decided to move closer to the European Union and away from the Russian sphere of influence. However, the Napoleon of Siberia would have none of it. Russian troops invaded the Crimean Peninsula of Ukraine. Little green men then invaded two more regions in eastern Ukraine.

The Russian invasions have cost 10,000 Ukrainian lives, but Russia has not stopped. Troops are pursuing a slow strategy to take more and more territory in eastern Ukraine.

Russia has invaded a sovereign country and taken over its lands. Mr. Speaker, what country is next?

The American people must stand with Ukraine and against the tyranny of the Russian bear. It is time to stand up to Putin. He must pay a price for his aggression. Sanctions against and isolation of the bear are good places to start.

And that is just the way it is.

A CALL FOR HEARINGS TO DETERMINE ROOT CAUSE OF WAVE OF HATE CRIMES

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

Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY. Mr. Speaker, over the last few months, we have seen a surge of hate-driven violence, vandalism, and threats against numerous communities. As a member of the Oversight Committee, I am calling for hearings to determine the root cause of this wave of hate crimes and how we can combat it.

While our government must show its commitment to answering these attacks, the American people already have. Desecrations of Jewish cemeteries were met with waves of volunteers assisting in their restoration. Mosque burnings were met with contributions from Americans of all faiths to help the rebuilding. And when two Indian men in Kansas were shot and one murdered, a Caucasian third man was wounded when he heroically sought to intervene.

These actions speak to the resilience of our people, the highest principles of our Nation, and why we are proud to be Americans. America is, indeed, an exceptional nation.

I hope Chairman CHAFFETZ will heed my call and hold hearings on this wave of hate-inspired attacks to help America remain exceptional.

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IMPROVING VETERANS' ACCESS TO CARE

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

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the House this week is taking action to bring much-needed accountability and improvement to the VA.

Two and a half years ago, in the wake of the veterans waitlist scandal, Congress rightfully passed legislation giving the VA Secretary greater authority to fire senior managers responsible for those failures. I was glad to support the bill. In fact, the director of our own scandal-ridden central Alabama VA became the first fired under the new law.

But, Mr. Speaker, we all know that law did not go far enough. Responsibility for failures at the VA doesn't just lie with senior managers. We need to provide the VA Secretary increased authority to swiftly remove, demote, or suspend any VA employee for poor performance or misconduct. That is why I urge my colleagues to support the VA Accountability First Act.

The problems at the VA may have left the front page for now, but the problems are still very present. The work of improving veterans' access to care is far from over, and I will not stop until it is done.

WAR IS BEING DECLARED ON THE GREAT LAKES

(Mrs. DINGELL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because war is being declared on the Great Lakes. Those of us who live in the Great Lakes region recognize that the current times are anything but useful.

The Great Lakes account for 21 percent of the world's freshwater supply and are a major thoroughfare for transportation, commerce, trade, as well as recreation and tourism. Critical investments over the last decade have helped clean up and protect these waters, and that work is now in danger. Much is preventable and it must be stopped.

President Trump's budget released today virtually eliminates funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, which will cause significant harm to our communities, to jobs, and to our way of life. This jeopardizes our ability to fight back against invasive species that threaten the region's biodiversity, including the Asian carp. It also impacts vital cleanup projects that ensure our water is safe to drink. And there are those who want to store nuclear waste in the Great Lakes as well. It is not a partisan issue; it is an American issue.

RESUSCITATE OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

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

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to support resuscitating our healthcare system.

ObamaCare is being crushed under its own weight and the American Health Care Act will deliver a better way for health care. One of the greatest failures of ObamaCare is that it forces Americans into coverage that they do not want and that they cannot afford.

Our plan, instead, is designed to empower patients to access quality, affordable, and patient-centered health care. The American Health Care Act will put the free market back into health care, giving Americans the freedom of choice. Instead of Washington controlling the decisions of patients, we will empower them to make their own choices.

Americans deserve to have access to quality, affordable, and patient-centered health care, and this is how we intend to make this a reality. Remember, this is the first phase of this mission to rescue our country's health care, and I am committed to making sure that it is not the last.

Phase two is underway with administrative actions from our friend, Secretary of Health and Human Services, Dr. Tom Price. Leader McCARTHY has begun to lay out additional legislation that we could not include in reconciliation. We will waste no time on this and we will begin consideration next week.

The battle does not end with the American Health Care Act, but it is a crucial first step to a better tomorrow.

CBO ANALYSIS ESPECIALLY BAD NEWS FOR WOMEN

(Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, today the House Budget Committee passed the Republican healthcare plan.

We all know by now that the recent CBO analysis has some very bad news for millions of Americans, but it has some especially bad news for women. The GOP plan makes Planned Parenthood ineligible for any reimbursement from Medicaid or Medicare for one entire year. More than half of Planned Parenthood facilities are in rural or medically underserved areas. Even in my district in New York, women are lined up outside the building and down the block, often waiting for Planned Parenthood services.

Yet, the CBO says that if the GOP plan becomes law, more than 15 percent of low-income women in our country will be without any access to health care—no cancer screenings and no tests and treatments for STDs. Women's lives and well-being should have greater value than this, but they just don't seem to count in the cruel math of this merciless law.

PUT HEALTH CARE BACK IN THE HANDS OF AMERICANS

(Mr. RICE of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, 4 percent of the people of South Carolina have individual policies under ObamaCare. I submit to you that if you have a health insurance policy that pays nothing, with a deductible so high that you can't use it, regardless of the fact that statistics may say you are covered, you are not covered.

Sadly, that is what many of my constituents back home in South Carolina are dealing with under ObamaCare. I have statement after statement from folks in South Carolina that are being horribly damaged by this law. They are faced with rising premiums, high deductibles, and limited choice.

In my State, premiums went up nearly 30 percent last year. At one time, South Carolina had five different providers. Now there is only one, and they are threatening to pull out.

What happens then?

By now it is clear that this law is not helping South Carolinians the way it was intended. But what I also want to make clear is Republicans have a plan to fix it. Our plan does a blanket repeal of harmful ObamaCare taxes, like the individual and employer mandates. It preserves patient protections so people won't be denied for preexisting conditions. It gives individuals and families