

bravery by volunteering for hard deployments and dangerous missions. He also says Sergeant Robinson had the ability to handle combat in a very deliberate way, yet remain compassionate for people and the unintended consequences that war thrusts upon human beings.

He is survived by his wife, Tamara, and their children, Savannah and Patrick. Sergeant Robinson devoted his life to the safety of our Nation. He will always be remembered for his service and deep love for friends and family and this country.

The first sentence of the NCO creed states: "No one is more professional than I." The level of competence and professionalism that Sergeant Robinson maintained throughout his life, in and out of uniform, shows that he lived by that creed every day of his life.

As a Special Forces Green Beret soldier, Sergeant First Class Robinson was truly the best of the best.

#### BRAIN RESEARCH IS CRITICAL

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

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of Federal investment into brain research.

Congress' commitment to fund basic brain-related research and scientific discovery is critical to developing our capabilities to treat over 1,000 diseases and disorders that directly or indirectly affect 100 million Americans every year. Estimates put the economic burden of these diseases at over \$760 billion a year. Addiction, traumatic brain injury, Alzheimer's, and other afflictions can only be overcome through increasing our understanding of how the brain works.

Basic science is the foundation upon which all health advances are built. Federal agencies, such as the NIH, NSF, and DOD, are essential in advancement of brain research, as well as for so many scientific endeavors. Congress enacted the 21st Century Cures Act that provided support for a wide range of biomedical research efforts.

I call upon my colleagues to stand with me in support of brain research into the new Congress. I also beseech my Republican colleagues to withdraw this terrible bill and work across the aisle to find a healthcare plan that will serve all Americans.

#### USDA FOOD PROGRAMS ARE CRITICAL

(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, this week, the House Committee on Agriculture's Subcommittee on Nutrition hosted a hearing to examine USDA's three commodity distribution programs: the

Emergency Food Assistance Program, the Commodity Supplemental Food program, and the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations.

Committee members heard from a panel of witnesses representing each of these programs who explained how the programs differ, interact, and work together to meet the nutrition needs of America's most vulnerable citizens.

Mr. Speaker, as chairman of this subcommittee, I know Federal nutrition programs are vital to ensuring that all Americans have healthy foods within reach, whether low-income populations, the elderly, or those living in areas with strained access to nutritious foods. Along with SNAP, these programs support agriculture and lessen the effects of poverty on our most vulnerable citizens.

As we begin to work on the next farm bill, we will continue to identify ways to work alongside State and local organizations to help provide safe, nutritious food for those who need it most. I thank our witnesses for sharing their time and their expertise to help strengthen these programs.

#### REJECT TRUMPCARE

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

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, our first duty here is to the American people. I rise to call on my colleagues to fulfill that duty and reject TrumpCare.

President Trump made big promises on health care during his campaign. TrumpCare proves those promises were empty. He promised a plan that would cover everyone. TrumpCare would cover even fewer people than were covered before the Affordable Care Act.

He promised better coverage. TrumpCare guts basic healthcare standards. Many TrumpCare plans won't be worth the paper they are printed on.

He promised cheaper coverage. TrumpCare breaks that promise, driving up premiums, deductibles, and out-of-pocket costs for everyone. It also hits our Nation's seniors with a devastating age tax or perhaps a senior tax that will literally price many seniors out of the healthcare market.

Mr. Speaker, TrumpCare is a tax break for millionaires parading as a healthcare plan. It will do unimaginable harm to our rural hospitals and our economy. The bill was written in secret. It was rushed through this Chamber. And it represents a big-time broken promise. I urge my colleagues to reject TrumpCare.

#### HONORING SECOND LIEUTENANT MAAX CURTIS HAMMER, JR.

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

Mr. BOST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a southern Illinois native who

flew planes in Southeast Asia more than 75 years ago. This hero finally returned home this week for burial.

Second Lieutenant Maax Curtis Hammer, Jr., died when his plane crashed in what was then Burma in 1941. Hammer was part of the Flying Tigers, a group of volunteer pilots who helped the British and Chinese defend against Imperial Japan.

His remains returned to Carbondale, Illinois, this week, via dignified transport from Hawaii, where he had been buried for 67 years in a grave marked "Unknown."

Maax, it has been a long time. With heavy heart, we welcome you home to southern Illinois, and we thank you for your service.

#### THE AMERICAN PEOPLE ARE WATCHING

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

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, today House Republicans are preparing to vote to rip away health care from 24 million Americans, 2.7 million of them in New York. In my district, 122,000 people will lose coverage, including 12,700 children. Those who do retain coverage will pay more for less, with deductibles and premiums skyrocketing.

This is what House Republicans plan to put on the floor today. It is a plan that benefits the healthy and the wealthy while hurting everyone else. If you have a preexisting condition and your coverage lapses, under TrumpCare, get ready to pay more.

Are you a senior? Good luck affording medical coverage if TrumpCare becomes law. You are going to pay the insurance company five times more than younger people.

Mr. Speaker, the American people see this for what it is, a direct assault on the vulnerable in order to give a tax cut to the wealthy and the healthy. Reject TrumpCare.

#### THINK ABOUT YOUR CONSTITUENTS

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, the GOP health repeal bill rips coverage from 24 million Americans.

So I ask my colleagues: Can you imagine what it is like to gasp for air, your chest tightening and your lungs burning from asthma, worrying that you might black out because you cannot get enough oxygen?

This week a constituent of mine from Fort Lauderdale told me: Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, I am finally able to breathe.

The ACA dropped her asthma medicine costs from \$600 per month to \$10. Without the ACA, she cannot afford to breathe.

Can you imagine your medication within reach but you can't afford to use it? If you take your medicine when you need it, if you help yourself breathe now, you can't afford it next month.

As you jog up the Capitol steps for this vote today, as you take for granted every easy breath you take today, think about your constituents who rely on their health care for their next breath and vote "no."

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CONCERN ABOUT THE  
HEALTHCARE BILL

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

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Republican healthcare bill.

There is concern with the would-be effects of this legislation, and rightfully so. But if anyone wants to see a real-life example of the detrimental impact of block granting Medicaid, look no further than across the water to the U.S. Virgin Islands, or any of the territories. It is a grim outlook because we experience it every day.

Caps on Medicaid have proven to be a fiscal disaster for our budget. Unlike States in the mainland, where Federal Medicaid spending is open-ended, to Virgin Islanders, we can only access Federal dollars up to an annual ceiling because we were not included in the ACA mandate.

Cuts to Medicaid affect all of you, every individual.

As a result of what has happened in the Virgin Islands, 30 percent of our population is uninsured and hospitals have been left to pick up the bill. If you or your child is ill, you go to the hospital, whether you can take care of the bill or not. This situation places a tremendous burden on our hospitals, creating uncompensated care costs in the tens of millions of dollars.

We have to make tough choices of removing people from Medicaid, which means loss to elderly and individuals. We ask that you reject this bill.

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WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF  
CLAUSE 6(a) OF RULE XIII WITH  
RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF  
CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS RE-  
PORTED FROM THE COMMITTEE  
ON RULES, AND PROVIDING FOR  
CONSIDERATION OF MOTIONS TO  
SUSPEND THE RULES

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Committee on Rules, I call up House Resolution 221 and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 221

*Resolved*, That the requirement of clause 6(a) of rule XIII for a two-thirds vote to consider a report from the Committee on Rules

on the same day it is presented to the House is waived with respect to any resolution reported through the legislative day of March 27, 2017.

SEC. 2. It shall be in order at any time through the calendar day of March 26, 2017, for the Speaker to entertain motions that the House suspend the rules as though under clause 1 of rule XV. The Speaker or his designee shall consult with the Minority Leader or her designee on the designation of any matter for consideration pursuant to this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of debate only, I yield the customary 30 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. McGOVERN), my dear friend, pending which I yield myself such time as I may consume. During consideration of this resolution, all time yielded is for the purpose of debate only.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the Rules Committee met for some 13 hours, maybe a little bit more, where we were tasked with the opportunity to bring forth from the Republican Conference the new bill that is to replace the Affordable Care Act. That discussion involved us taking testimony from the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, KEVIN BRADY; the chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee, GREG WALDEN; and the chairman of the Budget Committee, Mrs. BLACK. It also involved three other ranking members for those committees. They assembled up in the Rules Committee.

We had a very vigorous and open debate about the bill, about the effects of the bill, about the things which were occurring within the Republican majority dealing with the United States Senate and dealing with the President of the United States. All three are necessary to agree upon a bill if we are to sign it into law.

There was a vigorous demand from Democrats to know more information, and I believe I forthrightly attempted to answer those questions. We did not have all the pieces of the puzzle together. We recognized that by the evening hour. So by 11 p.m. last night, upon my consultation with Ranking Member McGOVERN, I made a decision that we would not stay up during the evening, we would ask that we would come back today. So we did not actually complete our work last night.

I am here today because last night the Rules Committee issued a rule that would be a same-day rule. The issues really don't change. The facts of the case really don't change. Information is necessary for us to make an informed decision. That is a change.

I have told the gentleman, Mr. McGOVERN. I have told the gentlewoman, the former Speaker, the leader of the Democrat Party, Ms. PELOSI. I have told Mr. HOYER in a direct dialogue that we had that I would do my best to make sure that we answer the questions that would be necessary. The gentleman, Mr. McGOVERN, who very

ably represents his party, understood that I did not have all the answers that I needed.

So we are here today with the opportunity to say we are going to do a same-day rule. We are going to try to pass this rule. We are going to try to explain what we are doing. We are going to allow my team, our Republican Conference, to get back together today because they, too, want to know what is the final deal.

That is what my conference is doing right now. They are in this building, several hundred Members of Congress, talking, debating, understanding, listening, compromising, yes, on a way that we can approach a chance to change what we see as one of the most devastating pieces of legislation to the economy, to the healthcare system, and, quite honestly, to the standing of America as the greatest country in the world. We think we have to make changes.

But today we are here right now to say that we don't have all those answers. A complete agreement was not available by the time I chose to end the matter last night in the Rules Committee. So rather than staying up all night, we are here today. We will be back here today. This is not the debate about the bill. More information is needed. An agreement is needed from my party. And when we reach that agreement, I will then come back.

But make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker, my party intends to bring forth an agreed-to bill that we will be able to show to the American people, and we will own it. We are very capable of saying that we believe that market forces, we believe that free right of individuals, we believe that free physicians and opportunities exist and abound, and we will bring that to the floor, and we will openly debate it.

Much is being said about a Congressional Budget Office report that has caused much fear. Unrightly? No, I can't say that. But it is certainly explainable.

Mr. Speaker, I will start right now. The bottom line is that there are some 30 million people who are uninsured in the United States of America, 30 million people who did not find a home or chose not to take a government-provided available system that is called the Affordable Care Act. Even more people included within that are paying a penalty of several thousand dollars rather than taking that healthcare system, that availability. So we believe the right thing to do is not to force anybody, not to have mandates, not to penalize people, but, rather, to make available to them opportunities where it is their decision about what they would do.

The corresponding facts of the case are real simple. The Congressional Budget Office said: Fine, if you don't force people to do it, then some 24 million people won't do it within the next 7 years.