

let's make sure health care is available and affordable for every American.

I don't want to go back to the days where I would see a patient who may have cancer and I couldn't take care of them because they didn't have that healthcare coverage.

Let's go back to the drawing board. This is a bad bill. You guys know it is a bad bill. Let's do this, and let's come up with a better bill.

SPEAKING IN SUPPORT OF THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I think the American people have seen the scrambling and the unraveling today, the seventh anniversary of the Affordable Care Act which allowed more than 20 million people to achieve opportunities and access to health care that many have never had.

Throughout America, the Affordable Care Act provided hardworking Americans access to wellness care, hospitalization, care that they could not have before because it eliminated the barrier for those who had preexisting disease.

Now, tomorrow we will be debating this fast-moving, thoughtless, and devastating legislation that will see, in 2026, some 52 to 54 million Americans without insurance and undermine the opportunity for those in nursing homes, disabled, the blind, and many others, children, that are in great need of health care eliminated.

So I don't know what the purpose of this bill is tomorrow, but we will be here to debate it and hopefully defeat it, because I believe that the quality of life for all Americans truly is based upon their access to good, strong health care. That is what the Affordable Care Act is, helping rural hospitals, providing hospital resources for uncompensated care.

So, Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will be debating a bill that, hopefully, will be defeated because it will not save lives.

ADDRESSING HEALTHCARE CHALLENGES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MAST). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL) is recognized until 10 p.m. as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your agreeing to be down here with me tonight. I came down to talk about health care, but I actually have a personal story I want to tell before that begins, right there in the middle of the realm of health care, a friend of mine back home in Georgia. His name is Jon Richards.

Mr. Speaker, you have folks like Jon Richards in your district, people who just believe that, if only they work

hard enough and long enough, they can make things better for their entire community. Jon is one of those folks. And what I love most about Jon is he looks for those things that other folks aren't doing.

You know, there are those folks back home. Everybody wants that glamorous job. Everybody wants to do that thing that comes with the perks or the fringe benefits. Jon Richards was attracted to those jobs that he knew would matter, that he knew needed to get done but other folks weren't filling those shoes.

Mr. Speaker, I tell you this about Jon because Jon was diagnosed with liver cancer; and as is always true when you have a friend get diagnosed with cancer, you believe that they are going to be better. I learned this week that Jon has been moved to hospice and isn't getting better.

Mr. Speaker, Jon was one of the first folks to give me even the time of day when I thought about seeking this opportunity to serve. Jon was the first person there every Saturday morning when breakfast was getting started for the Gwinnett County Republican Party, and he was the last one to leave when the Young Republicans down at the University of Georgia were finishing up.

It was young people that were his passion, Mr. Speaker. Jon saw a Republican Party that he worried was going to become more closed. He worked to open it up. Jon saw a Republican Party that was getting grayer. He was working with young people who were our future. Jon saw a Republican Party that had an opportunity to make a difference, and he seized that opportunity every single day.

In 2014, Mr. Speaker, the entire State of Georgia, Georgia Republican Party, named Jon Richards the Volunteer of the Year. Truth be told, he would have won that honor every single year, you just can't give it to somebody over and over again. I think Jon appreciated that.

If you go back and try to look for pictures of Jon so you can put a name with a face, Mr. Speaker, you are likely not to see too many. He was also the guy who had the camera around his neck taking pictures of everybody else, making sure that everybody else had something to remember the day by, making sure that everybody else was involved and appreciated, making sure everybody else was served.

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I have known Jon Richards for a long time. I have never known him to do a single thing to benefit himself. Time and time and time again, he did the things that others wouldn't do. Time and time and time again, he would pull me aside and say: ROB, I know how we can be better together.

There is no replacement for Jon Richards—not in our county, not in our State, not in my life.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't had much experience saying good-bye to folks over

the years. I have been extremely blessed in that way. But I hope that you will join me as you say your prayers tonight in praying for my friend in hospice, Jon Richards, and for his family as he enters what will be a very long weekend for him.

Mr. Speaker, Jon would be the first one to be standing outside these doors pushing us forward on healthcare reform, and he would be doing it because he sees the human condition that is affected by health care. He sees the families that have expectations, families to whom promises have been made, families to whom promises have been broken. And he knows that we can do better.

Mr. Speaker, what he and I would often sit and talk about is that there are challenges in this country that absolutely, positively have to be addressed. I have friends on the right, I have friends on the left, and I often believe that if we could just sit down in a room together, we would solve them if we could agree on what the problem was.

Mr. Speaker, I have a chart here. You can't see it from where you sit, but it shows you where America gets its healthcare coverage. I bring this up because that is the crux of the healthcare debate that we are having here. About 46 percent of Americans, Mr. Speaker, get their coverage from their employer. When the President was pushing the Affordable Care Act in 2009 and 2010, he was talking about the uninsured Americans, and surely we can do more for those families who don't have access to health care. But 46 percent of Americans had access to health care, had it through their employer, were not seeking help or improvement, but in an effort to make a difference for the small percentage of Americans who are uninsured, the President and my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle chose to reregulate all health care across the country.

It wasn't just the lie of the year, as the newspaper PolitiFact called it, Pinocchios—if you like your doctor, you can keep it; if you like your doctor, you can keep it. It wasn't just that that promise was broken; it is that folks who weren't seeking any help at all got caught up in this net of a new Federal regulatory scheme.

Mr. Speaker, about 46 percent of Americans get their health insurance from their employer. About 17 percent of Americans are on Medicare. We have got another 17 percent of Americans that are on Medicaid or CHIP or those safety net programs. Even here today, after the passage of the Affordable Care Act, 8 percent of Americans are uninsured. Now, we have folks who are in the exchanges—they are represented here—that is about 12.4 percent of the population. We have folks who are on Medicaid represented here; that is about 11.3 percent of the population. And we have folks who don't have any insurance at all.

Mr. Speaker, if we would come together to solve the problem for folks