

from securing quality medical insurance. It is about women who have, time and again, faced gender discrimination in the insurance market.

Just this past Saturday, New Yorkers in my district rallied together to oppose Republican plans to roll back the ACA and make America sick again. We heard from our local hospitals and healthcare providers who talked about how they will be affected by a dramatic surge in charity care. Nationally, healthcare providers could get stuck with \$88 billion in 2019 alone and \$1.1 trillion from 2019 to 2028 in uncompensated care. This will strain resources and make it harder for them to provide care to all their patients.

And we heard from ordinary working people who have benefited from the ACA, people like Juana Alvarez, who was able, for the first time, to secure coverage for herself and her family through this law. We heard from Susan Maples, who told us she would not have been able to start her own business without the health benefits afforded under ACA. These are the people Republicans are planning to harm with their irresponsible, chaotic, and destructive attack on our health system.

Now, let me also note this: The Republican slogan “repeal and replace” is a sham.

What are they going to replace the ACA with?

They have never—not once—put together a realistic, defensible plan to replace the ACA. The Republican plan is not repeal and replace. It should be called “repeal and displace” because it will mean displacing millions of Americans from their health coverage.

So let’s be clear. If you are voting to take away the ACA, you are voting to take away health care from millions. And for those who do retain their employer-based coverage, you are voting to increase their premiums, as millions of healthy Americans are taken out of the insurance pool. This is a recipe for disaster. It is a plan to make America sick again, and it cannot stand.

I urge my colleagues to think about what you are doing. Think about going home and looking in the eyes of your constituents and telling them you voted to take away their health coverage. Enough playing politics with health care.

TIME TO GET SERIOUS ABOUT A BALANCED BUDGET AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Mr. Speaker, in the last 8 years, our Nation’s debt has doubled. That means that the Obama administration has borrowed as much in just 8 years as our government borrowed in the 220 years between the first day of the George Washington administration and the last day of the George W. Bush administration.

Our interest costs are now eating us alive. Last year the Congressional

Budget Office warned that within 6 years on our current trajectory, interest payments on the debt will exceed what we now spend for our entire defense budget.

Before we can provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare, we have to be able to pay for it, and our massive debt directly threatens our ability to do so. History warns us that nations that bankrupt themselves aren’t around very long.

I am confident that the new administration clearly understands the peril this poses to our country. The nomination of MICK MULVANEY to head the Office of Management and Budget is a powerful signal that this danger will soon be addressed aggressively and effectively.

This debt is our generation’s doing. It is our generation’s responsibility to set right. When we do so, we will need to leave behind the mechanisms to assure that reckless borrowing never threatens our government again. For this reason, last week I introduced a proposal for a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, H.J. Res. 12.

The beauty of the American Constitution is in its simplicity and its humility. The American Founders recognized Cicero’s wisdom that the best laws are the simplest ones, and they humbly realized they couldn’t possibly foresee the circumstances and conditions that might confront future generations. They resisted the temptation to micromanage every decision that might be made in the centuries to come. Instead, they set forth general principles of governance and erected a structure in which human nature itself would naturally guide future decisions to comport with these principles.

In crafting a balanced budget amendment, we need to maintain these qualities. We should not attempt to tell future generations specifically how they should manage their revenues and expenditures in times that we cannot foresee or comprehend. The experience of many States that operate under their own balanced budget amendments tells us that the more complicated and convoluted such strictures become, the more they are circumvented and manipulated.

In 1798, Thomas Jefferson wrote this observation to John Taylor: “I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our Constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the genuine principles of its Constitution; I mean an additional article taking from the federal government the power of borrowing.”

What is a balanced budget? It is simply a budget that doesn’t require us to borrow. So why don’t we just say so, as Jefferson did?

Instead of trying to define fiscal years, outlays, expenditures, revenues, emergencies, contingencies, triggers, sequestrations, and on and on, I would hope we would consider 27 simple words: “The United States Government

may not increase its debt except for a specific purpose by law adopted by three-fourths of the membership of both Houses of Congress.” That is it.

□ 1030

Such an amendment, taking effect 10 years from ratification, would give the government time to put its affairs in order and thereafter, naturally, require future Congresses to maintain both a balanced budget and a prudent reserve to accommodate fluctuations of revenues and routine contingencies.

It trusts that three-fourths of Congress will be able to recognize a genuine emergency when it sees one and that one-fourth of Congress will be strong enough to resist borrowing for trivial reasons. The States’ experience warns us that a two-thirds vote is insufficient to protect against profligacy.

Some advocate going much farther and establishing limitations on spending and taxation as well, but prohibiting borrowing sets a natural limit to the limits of the people to tolerate taxation and, therefore, spending. The real danger is when runaway spending is accommodated by borrowing—a hidden future tax. The best and most effective way to invoke that natural limit is a simple prohibition.

In drafting an amendment to guide not only this generation but all those to follow, I would hope that we would do as the Constitutional Convention would have done if it had the benefit of Jefferson’s wise counsel: set down the general principle only and allow future generations, with their own insight into their own challenges, to put it to practical effect.

HONORING FNS UNDERSECRETARY KEVIN CONCANNON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the incredible work of Kevin Concannon, Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services at the United States Department of Agriculture.

Kevin’s dedication to public service is admirable. Throughout his distinguished career, Kevin has not only served in Federal Government, but he also led Health and Human Services departments in his home State of Maine and in Oregon and in Iowa. Kevin also helped to advance our knowledge of social policy as a graduate professor at several universities across our country.

Since 2009, Kevin has capably led FNS, the division of USDA responsible for administering and overseeing SNAP, the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, the Summer Food Service Program, WIC, The Emergency Food Assistance Program, and several other nutrition programs.

Under Kevin’s leadership, we have made significant progress in ensuring our most vulnerable neighbors have

healthy options to feed their families. He helped to spur a dramatic increase in the number of farmers markets accepting EBT cards, thereby allowing SNAP recipients greater access to fruits and vegetables while also supporting local farmers. He also oversaw the creation of USDA's Farm to School Program, an effort focused on incorporating local foods in our school meal programs.

During his tenure, we enacted the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, legislation that, for the first time in over 30 years, made much-needed improvements and increased access to our school meal programs.

Kevin oversaw our Nation's premier antihunger program, SNAP, as it provided millions of our neighbors with food assistance during the height of the Great Recession and the recovery that followed, and he has been a fearless advocate for the food and nutrition programs he oversees. When it comes to the nuances of SNAP or WIC or school meals, Kevin's knowledge and expertise is simply unmatched. He knows the issues impacting vulnerable families, and he is passionate about addressing hunger in this country.

Mr. Speaker, during the past several years, I have had the privilege to collaborate with and learn from Kevin as we worked to address hunger and food insecurity in the United States. I am particularly appreciative of the time he took away from his office in Washington to join me on two summer meal tours in my home State of Massachusetts. Together, we visited a number of schools, parks, camps, and community centers supported by USDA's Summer Food Service Program that ensures children and teens in low-income areas have access to healthy meals during the summer months.

I was always impressed by how he connected with my constituents and his passion for the work he does. He is, truly, a remarkable public servant, and he has made a real difference in the lives of millions and millions of people in this country.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for Under Secretary Concannon's efforts on so many levels, but I especially appreciate all he has done to try to end hunger in our country. There are too many people in the United States of America, the richest country in the history of the world, who are hungry; and, quite frankly, we could all do more in this Chamber.

Sadly, Congress too often in the past has voted in ways and advocated for policies that have actually made hunger worse in this country. In all candor, I am concerned about the future of some of these programs that provide food and nutrition to vulnerable citizens. I am concerned based on the rhetoric of leaders in this House of Representatives, and I am concerned by the rhetoric of the President-elect and his potential Cabinet. Time and time again, we have heard them talk about those in poverty with disdain and con-

tempt. We have heard them denigrate the plight of those struggling in this country. We have heard them belittle their struggle. Quite frankly, that is unacceptable.

I urge my colleagues to learn from Kevin Concannon, to be inspired by his example, and to do what we can all do together to try to end hunger now.

I ask all of my colleagues to join me in recognizing his incredible accomplishments. We wish him well in his next chapter, but we will certainly miss his expertise and passion at FNS.

RESTORE THE PROMISES OF HIGH QUALITY OF CARE, LOWER PRICES, AND DOCTOR OF CHOICE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. OLSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, Texans know the difference between right and wrong, between truth and lie.

The Democrats promised four things when they passed ObamaCare: number one, you can keep your insurance; number two, you can keep your doctor; number three, you have a better quality of care; and number four, that care will come at a lower cost. Within weeks, we found out that all four promises were being broken; all four were lies.

But don't take my word for it. Take the word of the constituent from Texas 22, my boss Andrea Kulberg. Andrea writes:

I am a 42-year-old, legally blind, single parent in Sugar Land, self-employed, working very hard to rear two great kids, ages 15 and 13.

I have a master's degree in education and work extremely hard to provide a stable, comfortable life for my kids. In doing so, I have invested time and dollars into my own health care because the kids need me to be healthy.

I lost my right eye a few years ago to complications from ROP, too much oxygen at birth, and my left eye is severely impaired with potential for complications that would need immediate specialized care. I have different specialist doctors for different issues related to each eye.

Additionally, I am a cancer survivor, renal cancer, RCC, which also requires specialist follow-up. For these reasons and others, I have spent time and efforts to get drivers to take me to specialists for these specific positions.

Over the years, I have paid high healthcare premiums for this, usually around \$500 per month—that is crazy in itself—for a PPO to allow me freedom to keep my existing doctor. I paid these fees and sacrificed other luxuries in life so I could get the care I needed with the doctors I wanted. They are the best doctors in their respective fields, and my trust in them is important with this type of care.

I don't have the PPO option now for my health care in 2016 through the ACA. The HMOs and EPOs being offered are not being accepted by my doctors.

I am certain you have heard this as well, but I am writing to you anyway because it has to be said that among these needs of many others in similar situations as my own, my remaining eyesight and renal function should never be less important than

anything in politics. And while I know that there were many, many people in this same boat, for today, while I write this letter, it is about my kids getting to keep their mom and about me keeping the ability to see them grow up.

I know PPOs won't suddenly appear on healthcare.gov because I sent this email. I know this can't be immediately fixed. But I write because it needs to be said; it needs to be heard; it needs to be acted on.

I don't know the right actions that need to happen. I will leave that to your area of expertise. But I know the way it is now doesn't work.

In the past, I paid a lot and had my share of insurance issues, but at least I could still choose my own doctor. At least in a crisis, which I have had, I went straight to the doctor who knew me and my history and could resolve it without a referral and delay after delay.

HMOs might work for some, but not for those who don't want one. Letters to a Congressman are supposed to be more formal, but seriously, what country are we in?

I am not asking for a handout. I am asking for a reasonable choice of a basic PPO, which I have paid for in the past and am asking to have the option to pay for now.

I am not just writing to vent. I am asking for some sort of solution through this train wreck of healthcare options or lack thereof.

If President Obama thinks this is actually working, then he is more blind than me. And that is as nice as I can be now.

Thanks for hearing me out and for looking for solutions that impact real lives.

Respectfully, Andrea Kulberg.

Mr. Speaker, I don't care if you are a Democrat or Republican. Hear Andrea's words—act. Let's rescue Andrea from ObamaCare and restore the promises of quality of care, high quality of care, lower price, doctor of choice.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT REPEAL AND REPLACE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. BROWNLEY) for 5 minutes.

Ms. BROWNLEY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning to share the story of Judith and her daughter KC.

Like all mothers, Judith only wants the best for her children—to live a full and purposeful life, the ability to pursue their dreams and reach their utmost potential. However, at a very young age of 11, KC was formally diagnosed with bipolar disorder. This health condition causes KC to have uncontrollable mood swings, to perceive reality differently, to see and hear things that aren't there, and to sometimes even become disconnected with reality altogether.

It has taken an enormous emotional and physical toll on KC and her family.

As a mom of two kids, I cannot imagine the difficulties that Judith has faced. Some nights, Judith had to hold her daughter tightly all night long to help her through her psychosis and her panic, not to mention the emergency hospitalizations.

Living with this condition has been a lifelong struggle for KC and for her