

We will come together to support our family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues; we will come together to celebrate the advancement of LGBTQ rights in our country; and we will come together to celebrate the second anniversary of the landmark Supreme Court decision that reaffirmed our commitment to the principle of marriage equality in this country.

But this year, we also come together to acknowledge that we have seen a spike in hate crimes, an increasing coarseness of public discourse, and greater fear-mongering for political gain. We have a lot of work to do.

We intend to protect every advancement that has been made and continue demanding progress toward full protections in employment and housing, safety for our transgender brothers and sisters, and equitable access to healthcare and other services.

There is a lot to celebrate, but much more to do to ensure the promise of equality for all in our Nation. That is what this month has been about, and we celebrate it.

LET'S WORK IN A BIPARTISAN WAY TO IMPROVE OUR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM FOR EVERY AMERICAN

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

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to the Republicans' ongoing plans to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act. Senate leadership unveiled their plan this morning and plans a vote as soon as next week.

This bill was drafted in secrecy and will have massive consequences for the healthcare of every American. It will affect more than one-sixth of our economy. Yet for all its impact, it was written behind closed doors, with absolutely zero bipartisan input.

I have heard from more constituents on this issue than any other—more than 5,000 letters, emails, and telephone calls: people like the cancer survivor in Lake Bluff who is worried whether she will be unable to find affordable insurance without the ACA's preexisting condition protections; or my constituent in Grayslake, who says he could only start his business because of the individual coverage he bought on the exchange.

I urge my colleagues to listen to the great majority of the American people. It is time to end this ill-considered charade to repeal ObamaCare and work together in a bipartisan way to improve our healthcare system for every American.

SENATE VERSION OF AMERICAN HEALTH CARE ACT RELEASE

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

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, we have a copy of the Senate bill to repeal ObamaCare, and it is no wonder they didn't want us to see it.

Like the mean-spirited bill passed by the House, it rips insurance away from millions of Americans, rolls back key protections to patients with pre-existing conditions, and allows insurers to charge older people five times more than others.

Despite the promises that the Senate bill will moderate the coverage cuts in the House-passed bill, the Senate is not only retaining the House bill's fundamental restructuring of the Medicaid program to a per capita cap on Federal funding, but it is deepening the cuts on Medicaid after a few years. This will inevitably lead to the rationing of healthcare for 70 million Americans who are beneficiaries of Medicaid: pregnant women, people in nursing homes, children, and people with disabilities.

It is not even clear what policy goal this bill is trying to solve, except for making insurance more expensive or unavailable for people who really need it the most. It is almost hard to call this a healthcare bill at all.

There were no hearings, no public debate, and after weeks of backroom deals and operating in secrecy, we now have this terrible product that the Senate plans to vote on next week.

I think the American people deserve better.

SENATE HEALTHCARE BILL

(Ms. KAPTUR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose the healthcare bill that has emerged from secret Republican-only negotiations in the other body.

Mr. Speaker, 900,000 people—nearly 1 million—gained health insurance just in Ohio through the Affordable Care Act. But this lopsided Republican bill is even more cruel than their House version. It will rip away care from millions, including very sick people who are suffering from mental illness and opioid addiction.

We all know amazing families, many of whom have come to our offices telling their stories, families who care for the sick and for those who will never be able to realize the dreams due to illness and disability. To put them on the chopping block is un-American and it is anti-life.

The Republican bill slashes Medicaid, which is a lifeline to working people, and puts more crushing costs on millions of seniors dependent on Medicaid for nursing home care.

The Republican bill is anti-life. The Republican proposal makes healthcare unaffordable for many Americans, and basically gives a tax cut to those who make millions and billions of dollars. How cruel is that?

Caring for the most dependent and ill among us cannot be left to chance.

Americans should rise up in protest from coast to coast and oppose this anti-life Republican bill.

LET'S FIGHT TO SAVE THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, healthcare should not be partisan.

I have on my jacket a sign that says "Restore the Vote" to give opportunities to Americans to vote because Republicans have decided that TrumpCare and healthcare is partisan. We need to be able to ensure that everyone has the right to vote.

Today, they issued a mean healthcare bill that is meaner than the House bill. Trillions of dollars are cut from Medicaid, from children and senior citizens. Subsidies are not given to all of those given under the Affordable Care Act. Hospitals will crumble; federally qualified clinics will close; and emergency room doctors, of whom I had the chance to speak to just a few hours ago, indicated 140 million Americans go to emergency rooms, or have gone, for their healthcare. The Affordable Care Act eased that.

But, now with this monstrosity of a bill that undermines and throws Americans off healthcare—23 million and growing—then it really does say that elections do matter and that this is a sinister Republican plan to undermine the American people.

It is time for us to come together, not partisan, but nonpartisan, to fight for our lives and fight for our children and fight to save the Affordable Care Act.

Let's do it now.

□ 1700

IMMIGRANT HERITAGE MONTH

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

Mr. VEASEY. Mr. Speaker, I am fortunate to represent the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex, where a blend of cultures has shaped our community, from the food that we eat to the traditions that we celebrate. The north Texas area has benefited from immigrants that now call the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex home. In fact, over one-third of the district I serve was born outside of the United States.

It is the rich diversity found in Texas and across the country that have helped make our country great. Immigrants bring their skills and cultures and a belief in the American Dream that benefits each and every one of us. They work alongside us, teach our children, worship in parishes, and contribute to the innovation that has kept America on the cutting edge for decades.

In honor of Immigrant Heritage Month, I remind my colleagues of our

country's legacy as a nation of immigrants. I urge each of you to keep these ideas in mind as the month ends and as we promote policies that directly impact our immigrant communities.

URGING MEMBERS TO REMEMBER THE COMMITMENT THEY MADE TO ONE ANOTHER

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

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak after my friend from Texas. He is absolutely right. We have an incredibly vibrant fabric of folks across this country. My district looks very much like his district. I appreciate him recognizing those things that unite us and bring us together.

You know, it hasn't been much over a week, Mr. Speaker, since we committed ourselves to changing the discourse here, and just in the last 5 minutes of listening to speakers on this floor, I have heard sinister accusations of what our healthcare bill will do, of mean bills and meander bills, of cruel bills.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a man or woman in this Chamber who doesn't work every day to serve their constituents better than they did yesterday. There is not a man or woman in this Chamber who doesn't want to do better for America tomorrow than we did yesterday. And I promise you that that pathway is not paved with accusations of "sinister," "cruel," and "mean." It is paved with confessions of common ground, common goals, and common opportunity. I urge my colleagues to remember our commitment that we made to one another last week.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF SENATOR JIM BUNNING

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KUSTOFF of Tennessee). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the topic of my Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Kentucky?

There was no objection.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, we are here tonight to honor the memory of a legendary Kentucky statesman, a baseball Hall of Famer, a man of this House, and a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Senator Jim Bunning, who recently passed away at the age of 85.

The Members who are joining us tonight, many of them who hail from Senator Bunning's home in the Com-

monwealth of Kentucky, extend our deepest sympathy to his beloved wife, Mary, who was his best friend for many years; his nine children; his 35 grandchildren; and his 21 great-grandchildren.

Those who met Senator Jim Bunning walked away with an impression, and that impression was: That has to be the most competitive person I have ever met.

In a recent op-ed in the Lexington Herald-Leader, providing a great tribute to Senator Jim Bunning, one of his very best friends, sports marketing executive Jim Host, wrote that Jim Bunning was "full of integrity" and, "the straightest arrow I ever met."

In that op-ed, he recounted a story where a reporter of the Louisville Courier-Journal wrote that former U.S. Senator Jim Bunning was "one of a kind," and Jim Host, in remembering his friend, said, "I agree, but more than that, he was an original. No one in politics in Kentucky or, for that matter, nationwide has been or ever will be like him."

Mr. Speaker, I yield to Congressman HAL ROGERS, the dean of the Kentucky delegation.

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise, like most of the delegation here, in memory of our longtime friend and colleague, the late Jim Bunning, who was an indomitable force on the pitcher's mound, a stalwart champion for the Commonwealth, and the proud patriarch of a remarkable family.

Jim Bunning is the type of guy you always wanted in your starting lineup. With his multilayered talent, Jim valued strategic offense as much as staunch defense not only on the pitcher's mound, but in the Halls of Congress, where he fervently stood for conservative values.

Jim once said: "I have been booed by 60,000 fans at Yankee Stadium standing alone at the pitcher's mound, so I have never really cared if I stood alone here in Congress as long as I stood for my beliefs and my values."

Jim was bold and headstrong, but also fiercely loyal, a combination that made him effective in every endeavor he undertook. He lived a courageous life that was highlighted by his Hall of Fame record and commitment to public service. Jim left an indelible mark on our State, on our Nation, and his legacy will endure for generations.

My wife, Cynthia, and I extend our heartfelt sympathy to Mary and the entire Bunning family. We are forever grateful for Jim's courage of conviction to faithfully serve the people of the Commonwealth.

I had the pleasure of serving with Jim in the House before he was elected to the U.S. Senate, and many times we would be on this floor when Jim's indomitable spirit would surface. He held strong beliefs and he had strong opinions, but, as Jim Host has said, you have never met a straighter arrow than Jim Bunning.

We are going to miss you, Big Right-Hander.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to JOHN YARMUTH, my friend from Louisville in the Third Congressional District of Kentucky and a good Kentuckian who will demonstrate that Jim Bunning's appeal crossed party lines.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, my neighbor from just down I-64, for organizing this Special Order honoring the life of Senator Bunning this evening.

This is the first time in my 11 years serving in Congress that I have spoken from this side of the aisle, and it is a fitting occasion that I do that. I am proud to join my Republican colleagues and friends this evening.

During his baseball career, Jim Bunning was once asked what his proudest accomplishment was, and he recalled the fact that he went nearly 11 years without ever missing a start. "They wrote my name down, and I went to the post," he said.

I can't help but think that is a fitting way of also describing his political career and his love of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Kentuckians wrote his name down time after time again, and he went to work for them, no questions asked.

Jim and I obviously didn't see eye to eye politically all the time, and as amazed as I was by the curve balls that he threw on the field, I sometimes found myself equally amazed by some of the curve balls he threw off the field, but that was Jim. When so much of what happens in Congress is political theater, you can't deny that he was always real and that every word he spoke, he genuinely believed.

I am sure Jim's family takes great pride in that fact. I join with my colleagues in offering them my thoughts and prayers as they continue to grieve their loss. I hope they find comfort in the lifetime of memories they share together.

It is reported that Daniel Boone once said: "Heaven must be a Kentucky kind of place."

I sure hope that is true.

As I said at the time of his passing, Jim Bunning can now throw no-hitters forever on his field of dreams.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I yield to Congressman BRETT GUTHRIE, my friend from the Second Congressional District of Kentucky.

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

Mr. Speaker, I just want to talk about my good friend, Senator Bunning, a mentor to me. I first came across Senator Bunning when I was a young boy watching baseball and watching him pitch for the Detroit Tigers and for the Philadelphia Phillies. But I really got to know them—and when I say "them," it is because most of us from Kentucky cannot talk about Jim Bunning without saying Jim and Mary. It is just Jim and Mary. They were grammar school sweethearts. I think the only people they ever dated were each other.