

Our children and grandchildren won't remember how fast we reformed health care. They will remember how well we fixed it.

HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

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

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, health insurance is not something we can take for granted. Every day, 14,000 Americans lose their coverage. A recent Treasury Department report noted that approximately half of all Americans under the age of 65 will lose their coverage at some point in the next 10 years.

Thousands are denied coverage because of preexisting conditions, like asthma, pregnancy, arthritis or diabetes. Millions more have no health insurance at all.

In Hawaii, public and private health insurance covers an estimated 92 percent of our population. That means that most of us have health insurance and, because of our Prepaid Health Care Act, our coverage is among the best in the country.

At the same time, Hawaii's economy has been hard hit, and our unemployment rate reached a 31-year high this past May, nearly doubling what it was just last year. Other States are similarly situated. H.R. 3200 will provide affordable health care coverage for those who lose it or never had it.

I urge my colleagues' support for health care reform now.

TAX INCREASE ON MIDDLE-INCOME WORKING AMERICANS

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

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, as we debate the issue of health care, the administration late last Friday night did something that was 180 degrees from what was promised in last year's campaign. I am referring to a tax increase on middle-income working Americans.

Yes, last Friday night, the administration announced that there will be a 35 percent tariff on inexpensive tires coming in from China. The interesting thing is this was done in response to a petition from the steelworkers union without a single U.S. tire manufacturer signing on in support of this. In fact, they have even gone on so far as to say that if this 35 percent tax is imposed, they will not go into the business of actually manufacturing inexpensive tires.

So what does that mean, Mr. Speaker? It means that we will see not only a 35 percent tax increase on working Americans, but we will not see a single job created here in the United States of America.

We need to realize we also create the potential for great retaliation in a wide range of other areas. This decision is

bad for the American worker and bad for the U.S. economy.

HEALTH CARE PREMIUM INCREASES

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks, I have heard stories from businesses, nonprofits, individuals, and even health care providers in my district who have received health care premium increases up to 39 percent. These increases are unfair, unsustainable and crippling our economy.

These drastic increases are likely to continue as long as private insurers are allowed to regulate themselves. That's why we must vote soon on a comprehensive plan to improve health care, a plan that will reduce costs for the middle class, end insurance company abuses, and increase stable, quality care and access for all Americans.

We need to get reform done but get it right. We must keep listening and engaging with our constituents to ensure that reform will benefit all Americans. With health care premiums growing three times faster than wages, we can't afford to wait.

AMERICAN JOBS HURT BY PROPOSED HEALTH CARE LEGISLATION

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, the American health care system is in need of reform, but the current proposals are not the solution the American public is looking for. The House health care plan will create a surtax on small business, the lifeblood of our economy, to help pay for the \$1.5 trillion reform.

My constituent, Donald Dickey, is a small business owner and is already being forced to cut his workforce by more than 70 percent because of the current economy. Under the proposed health care reform bill, Donald says he will be forced to close his business because of the combination of the new surtax and requirements for employers to provide health coverage for all workers.

We need to work on commonsense solutions that encourage job growth, expand access to affordable health care, and give Americans the ability to choose a plan that fits their needs. I am willing to work with my colleagues to achieve those goals in a final bill.

STATE OF OUR ECONOMY

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

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, on a day after the President addressed this

country on the need for regulatory reform in the financial sector, I stand before you to discuss the state of the economy. Unfortunately, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle fail to comprehend the inextricable connection between the economy and the need for comprehensive health care reform.

We must remember that the extraordinary rise in health care costs and insurance premiums has affected several segments of our economy. Surging health care costs slow the rate of job growth by making it more expensive for companies to add new workers.

As health care costs rise, corporate operating margins are cut, which reduces the capacity of firms to grow by investing in research, plant and equipment. Furthermore, high and escalating out-of-pocket costs are forcing families to delay mortgage payments on their homes.

Since enactment of the Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we have prevented the layoff of tens of thousands of teachers, police officers, and other essential public servants, and we have put people to work renovating schools and hospitals without one vote from the other side.

TORT REFORM WILL REDUCE HEALTH CARE COSTS

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

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last week President Obama called for the administration to establish demonstration projects to measure the effectiveness of tort reform. But we don't need to demonstrate that tort reform works; we have already proved that in States where it has been enacted.

In my home State of Texas, for example, health care premiums fell by 30 percent. That means Texans pay less to have better health care and more options. According to a study by the Harvard School of Public Health, 40 percent of medical malpractice suits filed in the U.S. are without merit, 40 percent.

A Department of Health and Human Services study found that unlimited excessive damages add \$70 billion to \$126 billion annually to health care costs. These costs are then passed along to the patient in the price of health care.

Tort reform will reduce health care costs by tens of billions of dollars. We don't need to test tort reform; we need to enact it.

PEOPLE LIKE HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. INSLEE. Mr. Speaker, at my townhall meetings, I was amazed at

how much consensus there was about health care reform. People liked health care reform.

What they didn't like were things that are not actually in the bill. Because of the massive disinformation campaign on this bill, people didn't like things that weren't there.

There were more hallucinations about this from opponents of this bill than there were when Timothy Leary was doing business in Haight-Ashbury in the late 1960s. Take this hallucination that this bill is going to insure illegal immigrants. You look at page 132, it says, "For purposes of this division, the term 'affordable credit individual' means, subject to subsection (b), an individual who is lawfully present in a State in the United States."

Look at page 143, "Nothing in this subtitle shall allow Federal payments for affordability credits on behalf of individuals who are not lawfully present in the United States."

Now, the President was challenged during his joint address to the U.S. Congress. I will tell you what, if there was a deception, it wasn't by the President of the United States.

And it is time for us to call out those people who spread hallucinations, phantoms, boogeymen. People want health care and this reform. We are going to pass it.

SKYROCKETING NATIONAL DEFICIT

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, the President has claimed that his policies are going to reduce the skyrocketing national deficit, but I would like to spend just a moment to debunk this myth.

Rather than reducing the deficit, the President's budget calls for a \$9 trillion deficit over the next 10 years, 6 trillion higher than the CBO predicted just in January when he took office. Even according to the White House, the national debt will more than double in 10 years. The President's own numbers showed that the national debt will be 107 percent of GDP by 2019.

In the month of August, there were 14.92 million unemployed individuals looking for work, the highest number in history. Since February, when the Democrats passed their stimulus, 2.46 million people have lost their jobs.

And while the President promised that billions of dollars would go into shovel-ready construction projects that would help rebuild infrastructure and employ hundreds of thousands, transportation spending from the stimulus has only trickled out at a snail's pace.

Given this administration's track record, why wouldn't the American people be skeptical about \$1.6 trillion for health care reform?

REFORMING HEALTH INSURANCE

(Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, reforming health insurance must be our focus for now. The vast majority of Americans already have health insurance.

The question is, what does our health care reform bill mean to them? Just three things. It means an insurance company can no longer decide to deny any coverage or jack up your rates because of preexisting conditions. It means it will be against the law for insurance companies to drop your coverage when you get sick or water it down when you need it most. It also means insurance companies will no longer be able to place some arbitrary cap on the amount of coverage that you receive each year.

Mr. Speaker, it is time for the insurance companies to come to the table, spend the millions on corrective measures instead of spending millions to pass out these mistruths and falsehoods, and try to work this problem out. The American people deserve everyone working together to get decent health care reform for the people of this Nation, and they don't deserve all the misinformation that's going around out there.

□ 1230

HONORING THE LIFE OF PATROLMAN JERRY ALAN JONES

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

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Jerry Alan Jones, a police officer in my hometown of Charleston, West Virginia, who died tragically in the line of duty while chasing a suspect early Sunday morning. At just 27, Patrolman Jones truly exemplified what it meant to serve both his local community and as a citizen of our Nation. Before becoming a patrolman with the Charleston Police Department, he was a sergeant with the United States Marine Corps and helped to secure the Kandahar Airport when the U.S. military first went to Afghanistan after September 11. Back at home, he was active in his local church, where he met his wife, Samantha. The couple recently celebrated their first anniversary together. Today the city of Charleston mourns the loss of one of its finest. Patrolman Jones led a life to which we should all aspire. We mourn with his wife, Samantha, with his family, and we offer our prayers of comfort and remembrance.

I urge my colleagues to join me today in recognition of Patrolman Jerry Alan Jones, our friend, protector and hero, for his fearless courage in serving the citizens of Charleston and the entire State of West Virginia.

REMEMBERING MAESTRO ERICH KUNZEL

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

Mr. DRIEHAUS. Mr. Speaker, on September 1, we lost an artist who helped shape a generation of music in this country. For more than 40 years, Erich Kunzel shared his remarkable talent and passion with music lovers across greater Cincinnati and around the world. His tireless leadership and enthusiasm helped build the Cincinnati Pops into a musical organization without peer. Their many recordings over the years brought classical and contemporary masterpieces into the homes of countless Americans. Whether directing from his podium at Riverbend Music Center or leading the National Symphony Orchestra, as he did here in Washington every year on Memorial Day and the Fourth of July, Maestro Kunzel was a source of pride for Cincinnati and a mainstay of our Nation's musical community. He will be dearly missed by all of us whose lives were enriched by his boundless creativity.

AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE BILL

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

Mr. WELCH. Mr. Speaker, all of us had the opportunity to spend 5 weeks at home, listening to our constituents. And in Vermont, when I arrived home, such as with many of you, people were very fearful about a health care bill, a health care bill that was going to establish death panels, a health care bill where the government was going to select your doctor, a health care bill that would have as its primary beneficiaries illegal immigrants.

Of course, that is not a health care bill that anyone in this body is considering. But as we proceeded and pushed back on the misinformation, it became increasingly clear that the health care bill President Obama has outlined, which has been passed by three committees in this House to regulate insurance companies so that they offer real insurance, to extend coverage to 37 million Americans—something good for them but also for those of us with insurance, to reduce our cost shift premium of \$1,100, and a public option to provide competition and choice—that is a health care bill that Americans support, and we must pass.

WE MUST ENSURE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE ENERGY REVOLUTION

(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, I rise today to continue to remind my colleagues about the energy crisis we are