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LIABILITY REFORM IS NECESSARY

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

Mr. FLEMING. Madam Speaker, as we debate health care reform, little attention has been paid to the impact that our Nation's broken medical liability system has on rising medical costs.

There are 125,000 lawsuits against physicians at any given time; 75 percent of the suits are closed without payment to the plaintiff, and in 83 percent of the cases going to trial, physicians are cleared. This means there is very little correlation between lawsuits and actual malpractice. More than that, the current system pushes doctors to overtest and overtreat to avoid being hauled into the courtroom, costing Americans billions of dollars in taxes and higher premiums. In a few cases in which there is a judgment, much of the money goes to pay lawyers, not the aggrieved patient.

Furthermore, the current system is driving physicians out of needed specialties. Recent studies show that one in seven obstetricians no longer delivers babies, and 49 percent of American counties don't even have an OB, largely because of high malpractice costs.

If the President and Democrats are serious about controlling high health care costs, they must call on trial lawyers to share in the sacrifice and to reform the medical liability system.

AN INCENTIVE FOR HEALTHY LIVING

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

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Madam Speaker, I rise today out of concern that the health care reform legislation this body is considering lacks an important component: an incentive for healthy living. Encouraging a healthy population is one of the best ways we can reduce our Nation's health care costs over time and can improve our country's livelihood and prosperity.

A healthy lifestyle makes workers more productive; it helps people live longer; it helps people make smart choices about diet, exercise and tobacco use; it helps prevent and not just treat chronic diseases.

Madam Speaker, successful health care reform must include an incentive for Americans to live healthy lives. It is the surest way to decrease our consumption of health care over time, thus, lowering costs.

My legislation, H.R. 3472, will do just that. My bill provides for health insurance coverage premium discounts up to 20 percent for healthy behavior and for improvements toward healthy behavior. This means that Americans would have a tangible incentive to maintain healthy cholesterol levels, heart rates

and body mass indexes, which are vital indicators of a person's overall health and wellness.

Madam Speaker, it is good public policy to help Americans live well. It is good public policy to create positive incentives for wellness and to help people make healthy decisions in their everyday lives. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3472 and to create health care reform that actually encourages wellness.

CLEAR ACT

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

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Madam Speaker, the Natural Resources Committee has the responsibility not only to take steps to encourage more nuclear, solar, hydropower, and wind energy but also to increase the production of domestic oil and gas. Such an all-of-the-above approach will lead to lower energy costs and to more jobs for American citizens while also serving to make our country safer.

Later today, the Natural Resources Committee will be holding a hearing on H.R. 3534, a bill which will simply erect more obstacles to job creation and energy production. This bill creates new levels of bureaucracy, which inevitably will slow new development of American sources of energy. Now is not the time to further delay the advancement of American energy.

Madam Speaker, it is simple: more roadblocks to energy development mean less energy for Americans.

RECOGNIZING THE STATE OF MAINE FOR ITS IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOVERY ACT FUNDING

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

Mr. MICHAUD. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the State of Maine for its efficient implementation of the Recovery Act funding for transportation infrastructure projects.

We in Maine have worked together to accomplish what this bill was intended to do—to create jobs and to put Americans back to work. A recent report on the Recovery Act shows that Maine is ranked number six in the country, having put 100 percent of the highway and bridge recovery projects out to bid. According to the State of Maine, 1,926 Mainers are now working and will be put back to work because of this Recovery Act funding.

While we still have a long way to go, I would like to thank those in Maine who continue to contribute to our State's economy.

DEFUND ACORN

(Mr. BILIRAKIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to share my outrage about corruption at ACORN. Illegal activities at the ACORN offices in Baltimore, in Washington, D.C. and in Miami show that corruption is not isolated. Already under suspicion for disturbing activities such as voter fraud in the 2008 elections, ACORN employers encourage prostitution, tax fraud and human trafficking. This culture of corruption must stop.

Madam Speaker, I, for one, will not sit idle and allow my taxpayer constituents to be swindled by an organization that receives millions in Federal funds.

Yesterday, I signed a letter to President Obama, asking him to disclose and terminate all taxpayer funding of ACORN. In addition, I have cosponsored a bill which will stop the Federal funding of this reprehensible enterprise. I call on Speaker PELOSI to bring this legislation to the floor for a vote so that we can stop subsidizing this outrageous and illegal activity. We owe it to our constituents.

ENACT REAL HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Ms. EDWARDS of Maryland. Madam Speaker, I rise today to urge my colleagues to continue our hard work in enacting real health care reform and to not bow to the powerful insurance lobby, to the loud voices of opposition, or to the claims of the misinformed.

While we're aware of the work in the other body, that is not the work of this House. We know what our choices are; and as President Obama has said, it's time to make them. If we do nothing, health care costs for employers will rise 166 percent over the next decade.

A recent Kaiser Family Foundation survey showed that an estimated 8 percent of employers will drop their coverage altogether if the current trend continues. We need real reform with a robust public option based on the existing Medicare provider network and payment system, not illusory proposals meant to appease those who have no real intention of changing the status quo or in voting for reform. Let's hold to our goals of lower cost, competition, and accountability.

HOW OUR INVESTMENT IN NASA HAS BENEFITED AMERICA

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

Mr. OLSON. Madam Speaker, yesterday we heard from Norm Augustine, the chairman of the Review of U.S. Human Spaceflight Plans Committee on the recently released options they