

solutions and common ground do exist. Let me be clear. We can lower the cost of health care. But a new government-run bureaucracy is not the answer.

The President last week suggested reducing the growing number of frivolous lawsuits against doctors as one way to lower costs. Thus far, the congressional Democrats' plan still fails to mention medical liability reform. Right now, H.R. 3200 fails to meet the President's requirements, and it fails to meet the American people's requirements too.

If the President and congressional Democrats are serious about working together, we need to start over. We need to start over and scrap H.R. 3200. Working together, we can achieve real results to lower the cost of health care and increase access to a doctor for millions of Americans.

SMALL BUSINESSES PROVIDE JOB-CREATION ENGINE

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

Mr. POLIS. Madam Speaker, small businesses are the backbone of our country, providing the job-creation engine that we need to lift us out of this recession. And yet, today, small businesses across our country are at a disadvantage to their larger corporate competitors because of the higher costs of providing health care for their employees, because of smaller risk pools and less purchasing power.

By creating public exchanges, which this health bill proposes, as well as by preventing pricing discrimination based on preexisting conditions, we give small businesses access to low-cost options to provide health care benefits to their employees, increasing the competitiveness of American companies to help lift us out of this recession.

By helping small businesses succeed at what they do best, focusing on their businesses, on innovation, on job growth, and helping to make them more competitive by reducing the cost of their health care insurance, we can lift America out of this recession and make America's small businesses more competitive.

ADMINISTRATION'S PROTECTIONISM

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

Mr. PITTS. Madam Speaker, American dairy farmers are struggling, and expanding markets around the world could help them greatly. The President's placing of a 35 percent tariff on imports of Chinese tires last Friday is likely to start a trade war.

This time of recession is no time to shut down rural trade or spark wider trade wars. Instead, we should look for

opportunities to open up new markets for American products.

We have three free trade agreements currently sitting on the table, South Korea, Colombia and Panama, which the administration has virtually ignored since the President took office. Combined, these agreements represent more than 100 million new customers for American products. New markets could go a long way in increasing demand for American products and saving family farms that have operated for generations.

I believe American agriculture and industry can compete worldwide, but we need to break down barriers, not create new ones.

TIME FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM IS NOW

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

Mr. BRALEY of Iowa. Madam Speaker, now is the time for Americans to rise up and speak truth to fear on health care reform. Now is not the time for silence, now is not the time for doubt, and now is not the time for fear.

Recent Census data shows that the average American family spends over \$13,000 a year for health care coverage. And if we don't change what we are doing right now, in 10 years the average American family will be spending over \$25,000 a year on health care coverage.

That's why the time to act is now, and H.R. 3200 does that by expanding access to quality, affordable, coverage and bringing true health care reform to the American people.

MEDICAL LIABILITY REFORM

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

Mr. BURGESS. Madam Speaker, the President of the United States came to this House last Wednesday night and talked about health care. At the end of his speech, he talked about how perhaps we could consider some, at least a look, at medical liability reform.

And I encouraged the President to do that. I encouraged him to look at my home State of Texas. Look what's happened in Texas since 2003. Texas has become a magnet for doctors.

Since the reforms passed in the State of Texas in 2003, charity care rendered by Texas hospitals has risen 24 percent. Texas has licensed almost 15,000 new physicians, which is a 36 percent increase from pre-reform. Thirty-three rural counties have seen a net gain in emergency room doctors, including 26 counties which previously had no emergency room doctors.

After years of decline, the ranks of medical specialists are growing in Texas. In my field of obstetrics, we had

seen a loss of obstetricians in the 2 years prior to reform.

Since the reform was passed, we have had a net gain of 192 obstetricians in the State of Texas, and 26 counties have added an obstetrician, including 10 counties where none was present before.

We have a great story to tell in Texas. I encourage the President to look at the sensible types of reforms that were enacted in Texas in 2003.

MAJOR STEP FORWARD FOR HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, health care reform in the Congress took a major step forward today with the announcement of the Senate Finance Committee proposal.

There may be differences between that proposal and the bills that we have passed in the House, but the bottom line is that we are moving forward in trying to pass crucial health care reform.

If you look at the Senate Finance proposal, it basically has the health exchange in an effort to provide choice and competition and provide affordability for those Americans who either do not have health insurance now or are afraid that they may lose their health insurance because their costs continue to go up.

The Kaiser Foundation came out yesterday with an analysis that showed that more and more employers now are passing off the cost of health insurance to their employees, either through higher costs that they have to pay or cost-sharing or deductibles or co-pays, so something has to be done. It's not just a question of those who are uninsured; it's also a question of those who have health insurance now who may lose it because their employer will not provide it or their costs continue to climb.

We need to move forward, and we are taking a major step today.

GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. FOXX. Madam Speaker, during a time of high unemployment, Democrats in Washington propose a government takeover of health care that will lead to even more job losses in a weaker economy.

For months, the American people have looked to Washington for policies that will do no harm to our economy and help put workers back to work. Unfortunately, all we have seen from the President and Democrat-led Congress are record spending, record deficits and record debt.

The American people are looking for real solutions to the challenges we