

exert their will on the American people than they are responsible Members of Congress. It states, "Democrats have dumped any presence of genuine bipartisanship and moved into the realm of pure power politics."

Clearly, the Wall Street Journal understands the ramifications that this legislation has for the American people. Quite frankly, I agree with that paper's characterization of H.R. 3962 that, "In a rational political world, this 1,990-page runaway train would have been derailed months ago."

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, in the case of this legislation, it seems to me like we live in Boss Hogg's Hazzard County, instead of a rationally based society. I urge my colleagues to look beyond the rhetoric that Speaker PELOSI and the Democrats use to promote "The Worst Bill Ever" and look at the numbers associated with this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, Boss Hogg went off the air in 1985. Unfortunately, this legislation is real and poses a real threat to the foundation of our health care system. Tomorrow, or whenever we vote on H.R. 3962, I hope all of my colleagues have the sense to defeat this irrational legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PASCRELL) is recognized for 5 minutes. (Mr. PASCRELL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday of this week I was here in this Chamber with my freshmen Republican colleagues, and we were preparing to do Special Orders about all the concerns we have with the 1,990-page Pelosi health care bill, and I had this bill with me, and it was in this bag. I was sitting in a chair and I was standing in the row next to it.

I was approached by one of the fine, dedicated public servants we have, employees here in this Chamber that are dedicated to our safety and security. They came up to me because somebody had observed this rather large unidentified object from the gallery and wanted to make sure that it wasn't something left there intentionally, a hazard. I assured him this was not a hazard to the Members here, that this was a 1,990-page Pelosi health care bill. Though, on second thought, it was a hazard, a hazard to anyone carrying it around, being as heavy as it is but a hazard to our health care system here in the country.

Mr. Speaker, my background is health care. Twenty-eight years I worked on rehabilitation services serv-

ing older adults, mostly, licensed as a nursing home administrator, dedicated to make a difference in the lives of individuals facing life-changing disease and disability. I am here with tremendous concerns on behalf of our seniors tonight on what this bill does to them.

Let me talk a little bit about Medicare. My Democratic colleagues must consider that Medicare is overfunded. I can tell you that it is not. Medicare today pays on the average of only 80 to 90 cents for every dollar of costs that a hospital or a doctor has, 80 to 90 cents. From the time that entitlement program was created, it was systematically underfunded.

This is a primary reason, actually, that commercial insurance is so expensive because of the underfunding of Medicare. Yet my Democratic colleagues consider Medicare overfunded. Well, how do I know this? Because the bill, this bill in front of me, has over a half a trillion dollars in Medicare cuts.

It must be overfunded in their minds if they can make half a trillion dollars in Medicare cuts. Where do those cuts fall at and where will they impact seniors? Well, it is going to impact seniors that go into hospitals, Medicare part A, significant cuts there, \$175 billion, a minimum of that. That's cuts to those hospitals, and I know hospitals in my district are lucky to make a 1 to 3 percent margin annually. Out of that, they hopefully give cost-of-living increases and invest in new life-saving technology.

But they don't stop there. The Democrats go on to cut Medicare in terms of skilled nursing facilities. Now that's an area where I was licensed as a nursing home administrator. People who go into nursing homes today are the sickest of sick. That's the only alternative they have when they need that high level of skilled care. To cut services there, that's just unacceptable.

Let's move on to Medicare part B. Those are physician services. They are also outpatient services like rehabilitation. When an older adult, a senior citizen, has a disease or disability and they need rehabilitation, well, that's funded by Medicare part B. But Medicare part B, also, under the Democratic plan is scheduled and slated for significant cuts.

Another one that is under Medicare part B is hospice services. Mr. Speaker, hospice services, that's a service that reaches out and provides services to people that are in their end days, people who are in the process of dying. Hospice service allows people to die with compassion and surrounded by friends and pain management. Yet the Democrats feel that Medicare is so overfunded that we can actually make cuts to hospice services.

Medicare part D. Pharmaceuticals. Well, I never heard anybody say that our seniors actually have more than enough resources coming into pharmaceuticals, but that's one of the lines within this.

Then there are wheelchair taxes, medical devices, medical devices that

are innovations that help people live with dignity, help people live with independence, to live outside of institutional settings, which are certainly more cost-effective places. Medical devices allow people an opportunity to be able to age in place for seniors.

Now, I assume my Democratic colleagues will assume that the people they tax, that will just come out of their pockets, but we know how that works. Taxes get passed on. And this will be passed on to the people on fixed incomes in this country, and that's unacceptable.

I want to talk briefly about the flawed math that went into this. One of my Democratic freshman colleagues, a Democrat that's on the Rules Committee, I heard him make a statement about how this bill is so much less expensive than the previous version we saw back in July. I have to tell you that's flawed math.

This bill was based on the fact that the Medicare growth rate would be at 4 percent. The average growth rate is 7 to 8 percent. In 2008, Medicare grew at 9 percent.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. HIGGINS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HIGGINS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WOLF addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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A TANGLED WEB OF DECEIT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOHMERT. You know, I thought about a little limerick Sir Walter Scott wrote. He was around back during those years during and after the American Revolution. But he penned an interesting line that went, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive." I have heard that all my life, growing up as a kid. "Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive."

Now, we had the President of the United States come into this Chamber right here and speak from that podium there, and he made the statement that there would be no abortion funded in the health care bill.

Apparently, there are other ways that this will be done or can be done. On page 110 of the health care bill we are supposed to vote on tomorrow, Subsection B is entitled "Abortions for

which public funding is allowed: The services described in this subparagraph are abortions for which the expenditure of Federal funds appropriated for the Department of Health and Human Services is permitted."

Now, we are hearing that tonight we are being held over here, which is fine. I don't mind going all weekend, going the rest of the week, the month, whatever. It is the job. It is fine by me. I think America is safer when we are not in session. But that is fine.

But we are hearing that supposedly we are in session because you have people browbeating Democratic Members who have taken the staunch position, and I think the wonderful position, a very moral position, that funds taken from the hands of law-abiding Americans who believe it is murder to kill a baby who is unborn should not go to fund abortion, and they are taking that wonderful, principled position. Now they are being told that they need to buy into this bill and do the right thing and vote for it.

We have others who have taken the position that if funding is not in this bill for abortion, they are not going to vote for it. So those who are trying to twist arms and get people to vote for this massive, terrible thing for America, this health care monstrosity, this power grab, as it is, are saying that they need to do the right thing for America and vote for this bill.

You have got some who believe what the President said at that podium right there, that there would be no funding in here for illegal aliens to have health insurance. And yet anybody that knows anything about the law knows that if there is no requirement to check the identity of someone who is being furnished free health insurance, then illegal aliens will be provided free health insurance.

So there are those friends across the aisle, Democrats who are principled, saying we need language in here so the President will be able to keep his word and he won't look like a liar. We need the language in there so illegal aliens will not be getting free health care, just like the President promised.

We have also been told by the President repeatedly, if you make less than \$250,000, there will not be any tax of any kind levied on you. Yet we find Section 501, among many taxes in this bill that people are being forced and arms twisted to vote for, it is entitled "tax on individuals without acceptable health care coverage." It turns out the provision basically says if you make too much money to be given free health insurance but you don't make enough to be able to afford to buy health insurance, then this Obama-Pelosi plan will tax you.

Oh, what a tangled web we weave, when first we practice to deceive. And that is exactly what has happened. This monstrosity of a web has been woven, and now it is catching so many in it as we approach this monstrosity of a health care plan.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WESTMORELAND addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. WAMP) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. WAMP addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PROVIDING MEANINGFUL, STABLE AND SECURE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives is poised for a very historic milestone this evening. We are on the cusp of beginning debate on the Affordable Healthcare for America Act, and Democrats are going to deliver what American families and businesses have been asking for when it comes to their health: one, meaningful, stable, and secure health insurance; two, improved Medicare for our seniors; and, three, vital consumer protections.

For families with health insurance, health reform will provide coverage

you can count on. All Americans will have affordable options, even if they change their jobs or if their employer does not offer health insurance. We are going to get into a few of the important consumer protections tonight with a few of my colleagues.

Under this revised bill, families will not have to worry about insurance companies canceling their coverage because someone in the family gets sick or is diagnosed with cancer or another illness. Health insurance companies will no longer be able to bar you from health insurance just because you have cancer that is in remission or you have had a heart ailment. We are going to ensure that our neighbors are not forced to go bankrupt when a serious illness strikes.

What is insurance for, after all? It must be meaningful for American families. You have to admit, American families have been doing everything right. They have been paying their copayments, they have been paying their premiums, even as the cost has risen astronomically. What our health reform bill says is, in return, these American families must have coverage that is meaningful, stable, and secure.

Now, we reached this historic milestone reflecting back upon other important milestones in American history. It was January, 1935, when President Roosevelt sent his economic security bill to Capitol Hill. At that time, the Congress took that economic security bill and renamed it the Social Security Act; and, after many months of heated debate, in April of 1935 the Congress adopted the Social Security Act. President Roosevelt signed that bill into law at a ceremony in the White House Cabinet Room.

After President Roosevelt, it was President Truman who sought to build upon Social Security and provide that important stability and security to American families by launching the health care initiative. Unfortunately, it stalled under President Truman; and we have been in that stalling pattern for decades after, with the exception of 1965, with the adoption of Medicare.

In 1965, the House took up consideration of the Medicare bill; and President Johnson signed that bill into law at a special ceremony in Independence, Missouri, in 1965. President Johnson at that time, over the objections of some aides, insisted that the ceremony happen in Independence, Missouri, and that President Truman, who launched the national health care debate, be in attendance.

At that signing, President Johnson said, "No longer will older Americans be denied the healing miracle of modern medicine. No longer will illness crush and destroy savings that they have so carefully put away over a lifetime so that they may enjoy dignity in their later years."

Mr. Speaker, with our corresponding health reform act that follows upon Social Security and Medicare, no longer will illness crush and destroy American