BRINGING DOWN HEALTH CARE COSTS

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

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, critics of the Affordable Health Care for America Act have said we're not doing enough to control costs. In fact, a great deal of what we have done in this legislation is aimed at reducing costs in the system—not just costs to Medicare and Medicaid, but also to the private system as well.

For instance, one of the things we do is move toward standardized forms, standardized billing forms. One estimate is that this could save the system $30 billion a year. That's just one of the things that we put into motion to try and change the cost structure of health care in this country.

As my colleague from Minnesota mentioned, we're talking about changing the way we pay physicians so that we pay for the quality of care and not the quantity of care. In addition, we move to reduce readmissions to hospitals, because this is one of the greatest factors in high medical care costs.

Time after time in this bill, from comparative effectiveness research to investments in health care information technology, we do things that will bring costs down in health care, and that is our commitment to the American people. We will bring down costs and make health care affordable for every American.

GREAT LAKES GITMO?

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

Mr. KIRK. Recently, the administration announced it may move up to 215 al Qaeda terrorists to Illinois. This proposal imposes an unnecessary new risk. We should slow it down and answer some basic questions.

The facility is only 22 miles from a nuclear reactor. What precautions are being taken? Commissions will be held in Illinois. How do we protect the families of jurors and prosecutors?

Since the facility will replicate Gitmo's military administration, how will Great Lakes Gitmo improve American PR?

Yesterday, we learned that two-thirds of the jobs claimed to be created will be active duty military. The Bureau of Prisons will hire no one over 37 years old and will hire nationwide, not just in Illinois.

It's ironic that the administration promised $200 million to Palau to accept six terrorists—$33 million a terrorist. But for 215 terrorists, Illinois would only get $120 million—$500,000 a terrorist. That's 66 times less than the rate paid to Palau.

The people of Illinois deserve to know a lot more about this proposal and how it would affect our safety.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR SMALL BUSINESSES?

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

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I am so proud of this House for getting the health reform bill out. And what is in it for small business? No entity fares better under reform than small business. That's because the current health insurance system is rigged against small business, which now faces fewer choices, higher costs and, as a consequence, less stable coverage for their workers.

Health insurance reform will level the playing field and provide more stability and security to small business. Small business then will be able to cover all of their employees. It's all about jobs, and the reform will lead towards jobs.

ADMINISTRATION DITHERS ON AFGHANISTAN

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Back in March, the President made it clear we need a comprehensive approach to secure stability in Afghanistan. He stated that the safety of people around the world is at stake. I issued a statement in support. General McChrystal has requested more troops and resources in Afghanistan to do just that, but this administration continues to dither.

Several weeks ago, former Vice President Dick Cheney used the term ''dithering'' to describe the President's indecision. I agreed with the former Vice President because ''dithering'' means to hesitate and waste time.

In the Los Angeles Times on Saturday, Doyle McManus highlighted that now some of the President's own supporters are beginning to wonder whether Cheney was right. For the sake of American families at home, Congress and the President should not dither, but listen to the commanders in the field.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th in the global war on terrorism.

SUCCESSFUL HEALTH CARE PROGRAM

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

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, AARP, an organization of 40 million Americans over the age of 50, announced the results of a poll regarding the Affordable Health Care for America Act. It found that by a two-to-one margin AARP supports this bill. And what's not to support?

This is a bill, for those who care about Medicare, which will close the doughnut hole, the infamous 100 percent deductible for seniors who are paying for the part D benefit that doesn't pay benefits after hitting $2,300 in care. It eliminates copayments for preventive services, cancer screenings. But, most importantly, the actuaries for the Center for Medicare Services found on Friday that it extends the solvency of the Medicare trust fund by 5 years. So instead of going in a negative direction, we are strengthening the Medicare trust fund, which will ensure that Americans will have one of the most successful health programs ever created—Medicare for themselves, their children, and their grandchildren.

AARP, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society all support this bill, and the Senate should do the same and pass this measure and send it to President Obama for his signature.

CMS REPORT

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, just a week after the House passed Speaker PELOSI's health care reform bill, we've received a report from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services showing what this bill will do to health care in America. If this bill were to become law, health care costs would increase by $289 billion over the next 10 years. Rising costs are devastating families and businesses, but this trillion-dollar health care bill does nothing to stem the flood.

The same CMS report shows that proposed cuts to Medicare would reduce benefits for seniors. The $571 billion in cuts could cause many doctors and hospitals to stop taking Medicare patients, leading to lines for service and degraded care. Further cuts to the program mean a greater burden on private insurance, a higher rate for businesses and individuals, higher costs, more government control, more taxes, and less competition.

Here we have more evidence that Speaker PELOSI's bill is the wrong kind of health care reform.

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HOLDING WALL STREET ACCOUNTABLE

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

Mr. CARNAHAN. Policies of poor regulation and lax oversight of our financial system came to a head 1 year ago, greatly contributing to the worst financial crisis this country has experienced since the Great Depression. Over the past year, we have made tough choices and taken firm steps to bring