BANKRUPTING THE TREASURY

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

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, no one is angrier than I am that Congress has just voted to bankrupt the Treasury. Fiscally speaking, the health bill that the President just signed is the single most irresponsible act this government has already taken. We already have over $100 trillion in entitlement promises that we can't keep, and Congress just poured gasoline on the fire.

However, violence and threats are not the right way to respond. Some of our colleagues have received threatening phone calls. A brick has been thrown, a window has been smashed. This is not the right way to respond. When the government ignores the will of the people, a high level of frustration is to be expected. But that frustration needs to be channeled into political activity, not threats and violence.

I urge those who oppose this bill to remember that history and fiscal reality will prove them right, and I urge the citizens of this country who are angry to remember that they are on the right side of this debate, and they should act accordingly. In America, that is what elections are for.

COVERAGE FOR PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS

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

Ms. GIFFORDS. Mr. Speaker, many stories have been shared here on the floor of the House of Representatives, but today I rise to share the story of Larry and Naomi, two of my constituents, who will now have health care because we recently passed health insurance reform.

Last year Larry was laid off from his job, and immediately began searching for insurance. He was repeatedly denied because his wife, Naomi, was diagnosed with benign fibroids. This is a condition that occurs in up to 50 percent of all women. The companies barred his wife because she had a pre-existing condition. This is a horrible practice that will end with this new law.

In my district, there are an estimated 10,300 people just like Naomi. Starting in 2014, these people will be able to get health care coverage. The new law establishes high-risk insurance pools for adults with such pre-existing conditions. When the law is fully implemented in 2014, no insurance company will be able to use this excuse to deny this type of coverage.

Between now and then coverage will be available to Naomi and thousands of others. Mr. Speaker, I was proud to vote for this bill.

CIVILITY AND DECORUM IN THE HOUSE

(Mrs. EMERSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today as co-Chair of the Center Aisle Caucus, a bipartisan group of Members of Congress dedicated to the principles of civility and decorum in the House. We believe the House of Representatives should be a respectful place, and we work on behalf of the long traditions set by our Founders and followed by two centuries of Representatives.

It is important for us to have open and honest debate in the people's House, and it is important for Americans to know the House of Representatives is a public place. But it is just as important that the debate, no matter how heated or how passionate, remains respectful and does not degenerate or denigrate others.

I didn't vote for the health care bill, but the threats being directed at Members of Congress who did are deplorable, and they are illegal. They are being perpetrated by Americans who forget that no matter what our differences are, we have to work constructively to solve our problems.

We have a great grassroots movement in my home State that is intense but also observe those important standards of decorous dialogue. I would hope that the very few people who are responsible for these acts against our colleagues will take note and follow the example of impassioned, patriotic Americans who can state their beliefs without threatening Members of Congress and their families.

CONGRATULATING LAVERNE JONES-FERRETTE

(Mrs. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, tonight the Virgin Islands will welcome one of our stars, Laverne Jones-Ferrette, home to St. Croix. I regret that I will not be there to join them, so I rise proudly to offer my congratulations on behalf of this Congress and Virgin Islanders everywhere to Laverne, the current world leader in the 60-meter sprint with a time of 6.97 seconds, the first woman to run that distance in under 7 seconds in over a decade, and the silver medal winner at the International Association of Athletics Federations World Indoor Championships in Doha, Qatar.

The Virgin Islands, with a population of roughly 120,000, has produced legends in every field, and these outstanding men and women have made contributions that have brought worldwide recognition to them, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting again Laverne Jones-Ferrette and her teammates, and wishing them Godspeed as they continue to shine.

CONDEMNING VIOLENCE IN HEALTH CARE DEBATE

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

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, the American people don't want a government takeover of health care. The policy, the backroom deals, and the arrogance have angered millions. But that is no excuse for bigotry, threats, or acts of vandalism, and I condemn such things in the strongest possible terms. People who engage in such acts undermine our cause and should be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

But I also rise to condemn the efforts to smear millions of law-abiding Americans who oppose Obamacare and their principled opposition with these criminal acts. The American people have every right to oppose this government takeover of health care without being lumped in with bigots and vandals by liberals in Congress and in the mainstream press.

I say to my countrymen, end the threats, end the vandalism, and let's also end the smears of law-abiding citizens exercising their First Amendment right to speech and peaceable assembly.

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BORDER VIOLENCE

(Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK of Arizona. Mr. Speaker, for too many years, the southern border has been a gateway for the illegal trafficking of drugs, weapons, money, and people. It is a challenge we, in Arizona, have to live with every day.

On Tuesday, Secretaries Clinton, Gates, and Napolitano led a high-level delegation of defense, law enforcement, and intelligence officials to Mexico City to discuss a new border security plan that builds on the work of the Merida Initiative. This is an important step forward.

I call on them to expand current efforts and to develop a new initiative that takes full advantage of the civilian and military resources of both governments to provide a comprehensive solution that addresses the challenges at the border. We must do whatever it takes to take this fight off our streets and straight to the doorsteps of the cartel leaders.

CONGRATULATIONS TO LOUISIANA STATE REPRESENTATIVE PATRICK WILLIAMS

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

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend Louisiana State Representative Patrick Williams, who is currently making his annual 226-mile walk from Shreveport, Louisiana, to the State capitol in Baton Rouge to raise awareness for autism and childhood obesity.