

the American people and say, we're at war, we have to have a war tax, or we have to find a way to pay for the war. No. Soldiers go fight, you know, their families suffer, and we do nothing. So you want to know why we're in debt? That's why we're in debt.

And just for the record, this CLASS Act that we're talking about is not this taxpayer-subsidized, endless government funding type of a program here. I mean, it has to be self-financed by the premiums that people pay who volunteer to get into it. It says in the law that this cannot be funded by the dollars of taxpayers. What this is is a framework, a framework to get us to focus on the issue that we need to address, which is long-term health care in this country.

Now, I'm from Massachusetts, and I may be a little sensitive on this issue because one of my heroes, the late Senator Ted Kennedy, championed this issue. He understood that there was a need out there, and he saw, as we all have seen, what families go through when loved ones can't afford or families can't afford to pay for the long-term care of loved ones. So it took us decades to get here, to get to this point where we have a framework. Yes, it is true: This is not perfect. It needs more work. But we have a framework here. And it's not a framework which calls for endless subsidies by the taxpayers. It says we've got to come up with a program that can self-sustain itself, that is financed by those who want to be enrolled in it. Why would you throw this away? Why would you throw this away?

My friend on the other side of the aisle talks about false promises. Please, give me a break. False promises? You got up over a year ago and said we're repealing this health care reform bill, the Affordable Care Act, and we're going to replace it with something. It's been over a year. Nothing, nothing, not a single thing. You know, it's not like we haven't had time to do it or to talk about these issues or debate these issues. I mean, this has become a place where trivial issues get debated passionately and important ones not at all. National Public Radio funding, we had to debate that on the floor. Reaffirming our national motto "In God We Trust," we had time for that. Issues on abortion and every hot button issue you can think of, including we had a debate on making it easier for unsafe people to bring concealed weapons from State to State to State.

□ 1810

Now, I don't know about Texas or about other countries, but I've got to tell you, people talk to me about a lot of problems and about a lot of things that keep them up at night. Some of the things that you've brought to this House floor never even enter their minds, because what keeps them up at night are things like this:

What happens if I get sick, will I be able to take care of myself? What hap-

pens if my spouse gets sick, seriously ill, will I be able to care for her? Will I be able to care for him? What if it's my child? What if it's my mother, or what if it's my father? Will I be able to take care of them over a long period of time? Those are real-life issues that real people worry about each and every day.

So I would say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, first of all, vote down this rule, because I think it is insulting to bring a rule to the floor on the issue of long-term care and say we're going to cap debate at 3 hours. I think this is too important. This is more important than reaffirming our national motto, number one.

Number two, I would urge my colleagues on this side of the aisle, understand that what this represents is a framework and understand how long it has taken us to get to this point. And I've got to tell you, if we throw this framework away, I doubt very much that at any time in the near future this Congress is going to do anything meaningful on the issue of long-term health care.

So let's get serious about dealing with the real challenges that the American people are faced with. Let's not say that this is going to add to the deficit. It's not going to add to the deficit. In the law, it says it has to be self-sustaining; if not, it doesn't work. It says that we are not going to be subsidizing this program. That's what it says.

If you want to get serious about the deficit, you know what? Then make sure Warren Buffett pays the same tax rate as his secretary. If you want to get serious about the deficit, that's what you can do to help us deal with the issue of the deficit. But going after this with all these smokescreens I think is unfortunate.

So I would urge my colleagues, vote "no" on the rule and vote "no" on the underlying resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I think what we've done today is fair and honorable. We've talked about a problem. We've talked about a potential answer. First of all, an answer is that, since we do not have a workable program without bringing it back to the Congress, we ought to work with the administration. I think we've been responsible. But we have heard feedback from the administration, in a hearing, that said, we can't make that program work; we cannot make that program work.

So I think that what we are doing today is the fiscally responsible thing, to end the program, to end a program that is not going to work and was not designed to work, and then start back over, if we choose to, and put it into a workable mode. But only to have a false hope out there of something that cannot be sustained and something that the managers of the government cannot make work is a bad idea.

We've got another trillion-dollar deficit that is facing this country, another \$1 trillion. We know who that is. That's Pin the Tail on the Donkey, Mr. Speaker. They are the ones responsible. They are the ones that are happy with that, and they are the ones that try to justify that.

Today we are coming together to find the solution to a long-term care issue in this country by talking about it, doing something that cannot be sustained, and then admitting, as Mr. BOUSTANY did, that we need to do something better. And we should not throw the idea away. Today we are going to vote on something that will do no further harm.

I applaud my colleague from Louisiana, Congressman BOUSTANY, for introducing the bill. I appreciate him coming before us. I respect and appreciate my committee, the Rules Committee, and the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) for bringing this debate here in such an open and transparent process. I encourage a "yes" vote on the rule.

I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The previous question was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 16 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 1173, FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY AND RETIREMENT SECURITY ACT OF 2011

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on adoption of the resolution (H. Res. 522) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1173) to repeal the CLASS program, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.