

memory because tens of thousands of Americans are losing their health insurance. There is a headline in the paper every day, Mr. Speaker.

All we are asking is for the Senate to sit down with us and let's try to solve real problems that real American families are really having today. For all the knowledge that my colleagues have of these citizens in their districts losing their health insurance, they've professed nothing, nothing.

We have an opportunity, Mr. Speaker, right now before it gets any worse to do better. We should seize that opportunity. We should come together as our constituents expect us to. We have offered that hand to the Senate, Mr. Speaker. I hope they will take it.

UNINTERRUPTED PAY FOR THE MILITARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to reassure our Nation's military members—both Active Duty and Reserve in Active Duty status and their families—your pay and benefits will continue uninterrupted during this partial government shutdown.

Anticipating your needs, yesterday House Republicans introduced—and Members of both parties and both Chambers agreed—to pass this bill to ensure you will not face any economic hardship during this time of uncertainty in Washington. The President has signed this bill into law.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA trauma counseling services and hotlines will remain open for business. Also, all VA medical facilities and clinics, including vet centers, will remain fully open and operational.

Additionally, yesterday, I introduced a separate bill that expands on our commitment to our military and national defense. My bill would provide uninterrupted pay and benefits to Guard and Reserve members, Department of Defense civilians, and designated defense contractors.

My bill would also provide the President with the ability to carry out other vital national security priorities, which could include funding for military operations or other national security priorities such as intelligence and homeland security.

Our greatest duty as a Nation is to our men and women in uniform. We are grateful for your sacrifice, and we will do all we can to ensure you are treated with the respect you have earned and that you deserve.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, a government shutdown—

no matter the duration—is a failure on a part of this institution to fulfill its most basic function.

The House has voted to fully fund the government and prevent this shutdown. The Senate dragged its feet and refused to pass anything for days.

We have also used every opportunity to protect Americans from the health care law's most harmful provisions. The Senate leader has been unwilling to allow an up-or-down vote on even the most reasonable change.

The law's medical device tax that is costing jobs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is supported by both Senators CASEY and TOOMEY and previously passed the Senate by a bipartisan vote of 79–20. This was part of the House bill. It was rejected by Senator REID.

Each and every day I hear from my constituents about how the health care law is either harming their economic situation or impeding access to quality and affordable care.

There is an appropriate way to conduct budget negotiations and that is through a normal procedure of appointing a conference committee to work out the difference. The House did that last night. We appointed our conferees. The Senate rejected even that measure earlier today.

The American people deserve better. It is time for the Senate leaders to lead.

GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today because I just met some of my constituents who had been to a wedding and decided to drive to their Capital, the Capital of the United States of America. It was good to see them, good to welcome them, good to see their smiling faces and their faith in this Nation.

I think it is important to lay out the real facts, for some of us who had the honor of serving in this House and have seen the previous shutdown for the debate over the last 72 hours might give the impression that in actuality there has been no attempt at compromise by the Democrats or by the President of the United States.

Let me disabuse you of those horrible myths. First of all, there are many Democrats who voted for an ugly term by the name of "sequester," which means that it was a "compromise" to Republicans to not shut down the government 2 years ago, to take an ugly number that has hurt families across America, that has closed Head Start seats, that has underfunded major infrastructure projects when cities and counties across America in States have been crying out and begging for the fixing of the national highway system long overdue, airports long overdue. But we accepted this ugly word called "sequester" because the original team

of Members again could not find a compromise—Republicans and Democrats—because, again, Republicans were listening to the far right voices and did not want the government to operate, simply did not want a Federal Government.

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So the American people should know that, right now, we are operating under sequester—our staffs are furloughed; we are operating with shortened staffs when lines of cases are in our offices; our staffs are being penalized, and their jobs are to serve the American people, to answer those phones—the desperate calls from around the world of constituents who are stranded, of families who need help for their soldier sons and daughters or husbands and wives, or of seniors who need to be helped or to be straightened out in the confusion of the Medicare and Social Security system sometimes.

That is the work that we do. We make the government work. But yet, right now, we are operating under furloughs. The government, itself, is operating under furloughs, and that's an ugly term for some people. "Well, let the government fall." I don't view it as a government; I view it as people.

So, last night, it looked as if there were no compromise, but you have to understand that the last ditch effort of the Republican Conference was a save face, knowing full well that they had every opportunity to stop the shutting down of the government by supporting something called a "CR." There are all of these acronyms. So, for our constituents who ask, "What is that? What the heck is it?" it simply means we would keep the doors open until November 15, and reasonable men and women—reasonable minds, constituents—could have input, and discussions could be entered into about what are the pros and cons of running this government, about what is the value of the government, about how do we meet the Founding Fathers' values and the Constitution that said, We formed this Union to make it more perfect so that all men—and women, I might add—would have the right for the great values of this Nation. But each time over the weekend, there was one obstacle after another. One Republican Member put up a silly amendment about denying women preventative health care when dealing with their gynecological health needs.

I think it is important to be able to know the truth. They say that the truth will set you free, and the truth is that we now have a sense of rebels who really don't have a cause, because the cause should be the American people.

I note that, in my own community, a base of services of the National Guard was shut down immediately at midnight last evening, or early this morning. These are the consequences—veteran service centers, Mr. Speaker, senior citizens not getting Medicare processed.