

prevent Americans from gaining access to affordable health care.

Let's make the health care law work as well as possible. Let's, together, make our other government services—necessary services—work as well as possible.

REPUBLICAN SHUTDOWN AND ACA

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

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, here we are, day two of the Republican shutdown. The Tea Party extremists are really achieving their goal of dismantling government. Their shutdown is step one.

It's no secret that the Tea Party Republicans came here not as public servants, but to destroy and decimate our government. Now, millions of families, children, seniors, Federal employees, and our economy are paying the price. The Republican refusal to back off their extreme, ideological demands has taken our country down a very dangerous path that will surely push millions more into hunger and poverty.

In my congressional district and throughout the State of California families are already feeling the impact of the Republican government shutdown. The California Women, Infants, and Children program is on the brink of turning away low-income pregnant women and new mothers if this shutdown continues. How ruthless can you get?

The California National Guard, the largest in the Nation, is forced to furlough technicians and aviation mechanics, even as the fire season is still upon us. And throughout the State of California, eighth graders, like my constituents from Oakland who wrote to me yesterday, are cancelling field trips to national parks and monuments which are closed to visitors. What are they going to do now?

To add insult to injury, Republicans have shut down the government because they are obsessed with destroying the Affordable Care Act, which is the law of the land and which the Supreme Court upheld. Most Americans continue to see how senseless and wrong it is to shut down the government because you want to deny health care to millions. Two wrongs don't make a right.

Despite the Republican government shutdown, health care exchanges established under the Affordable Care Act have successfully opened for enrollment, and now millions of uninsured Americans are just 3 months away from having the health care coverage they so desperately need.

California, the first State to commit to establishing its own exchange, launched the Covered California exchange. Covered California's exchange includes health care options for individuals and small businesses. In my congressional district alone, there are nearly 100,000 uninsured constituents,

and the opening of the exchanges means that they are one step closer to health care coverage that can literally—mind you, literally—make the difference between life and death.

Hostage taking really is a deplorable tactic. Members of Congress are elected to make sure our government functions. Time and time again, Democrats have reached across the aisle to try to negotiate a budget plan that is fair and that ensures that the government pays our bills on time. Yet, instead of working together to do our jobs, Republicans continue to double down on the Tea Party plan to destroy and decimate our government.

Instead of working on a serious option to reopen the government, Republicans' latest strategy now—and this is really cynical—is to exploit our veterans and to exploit the people of the District of Columbia by voting on piecemeal bills that will not end impacts of a shutdown that extend across the country.

Mr. Speaker, of course we support our veterans and of course we support our national parks and of course we support the District of Columbia to use its locally raised funds, but let's not use them to score political points to advance an ideological agenda.

How do Republicans vote this week to allow the District to use its discretion on local funds during a shutdown—that they created—yet next week block the same funds being used for saving reproductive health care services or badly needed needle exchange programs to fight HIV and AIDS?

Again, this is so cynical and it is so wrong. The American people deserve a functioning government. This hostage taking must end.

WORKING TO END GOVERNMENT SHUTDOWN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MEADOWS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I come here today just perplexed at what I see unfolding here today. My colleague just said that two wrongs don't make a right; and indeed, she is correct. But today, this fight is really starting to get to be more political and we're not focusing on the people.

Yesterday in this very Chamber, Mr. Speaker, we put forth three different bills, one that would pay our veterans and make sure that those benefits continue to flow. And what did the Democrats say? They said "no." One would open up our parks and monuments to be that economic stimulus once again. And what did the Democrats say? They said "no." Then, even in the District of Columbia, where we looked, Mr. Speaker, at truly putting forth and allowing them to use some of their funds to pay the teachers and do some of the operations—I can tell you, I don't get any votes from the District of Columbia.

For me, that is not a politically expedient thing to do, but it was the right thing to do. So what did we do, Mr. Speaker? We put forth a bill. Yet what did the Democrats say? "No."

I am so troubled that what we are seeing over and over again is this bantering back and forth, and yet we are willing to open up parts of the government and continue to do that every single day until we get everything restored.

This is not about ObamaCare. ObamaCare is mandatory spending. This is about getting the government back open in a responsible way. What we're doing is working very hard, trying to work in a bipartisan way to do that.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to just say that it is time that the Senate comes back to the negotiating table and starts to negotiate on behalf of the American people that they represent. We have a responsibility to our veterans, to those that serve in the Reserves. So today, we will see more opportunities in this very Chamber to fund those things that are precious, near and dear to all of us. I humbly ask my colleagues on the other side to join us, in a bipartisan effort, to start working for the American people and representing them.

THE PRICE OF PARTISAN GAMES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Arizona (Mrs. KIRKPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. KIRKPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, partisan games have serious consequences. One of the many consequences is in my Arizona district where the Grand Canyon National Park is closed and our local economy is taking a direct hit.

Instead of acting responsibly and funding the government with a clean bill, on Monday night the House GOP acted recklessly. The bill that they passed Monday night was so weighted down with partisan baggage that they knew it would lead to a government shutdown, and yet they chose this approach intentionally.

The price of these partisan games is high and the American people are now stuck with the tab. Some estimates have the shutdown costing our Nation about \$300 million every day. In Arizona and across the country, this hurts our working families, small business owners, veterans, and seniors. And this hurts our tribal communities. I have 12 Native American tribes in my district. All of these folks need and deserve to have elected leaders working to help them, not hurt them.

After what happened on Monday, we must now do the urgent work of funding and reopening our government. But instead, the House GOP is stalling with more games, introducing piecemeal bills that pick winners and losers for funding. Last night, they tried to do it with piecemeal bills for veterans and for national parks.