

entire Affordable Care Act. To do so would threaten the lives of millions upon millions of Americans, including 130 million Americans with preexisting conditions.

If President Trump and Republicans get what they want and the entire ACA becomes invalidated, then the current cost of healthcare for millions of people will skyrocket.

More than 130 million Americans, more than one-third of our people, live with preexisting conditions, and they would no longer receive protection under Federal law.

Mr. Speaker, the American people deserve a caring President and Congress; they deserve a President who is committed to expanding access to affordable healthcare; they deserve a Congress that is committed to protecting those with preexisting conditions; and they deserve a government willing to stand up to the insurance industry and Big Pharma, whose profits will soar even more if the Affordable Care Act is struck down.

We were elected by the people to work together to strengthen our healthcare system, not destroy it. I thank Representative ALLRED for introducing a resolution condemning the administration's attack on the American healthcare system, and I urge its swift passage through this House and Senate.

□ 1700

#### AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MALINOWSKI). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, as I often do these Special Order hours here on the floor, I want to start by stating the fundamental reason I am here and my Democratic colleagues are here. I harken back to a very famous American, Franklin Delano Roosevelt. This is actually etched in stone down at his memorial on the other end of the plaza here. He said: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

That "we provide enough for those who have too little," a fundamental value, a fundamental statement of purpose, a fundamental statement of why we seek elective office, not to provide more for those who have much, but, rather, for those who have too little.

In that regard, Mr. Speaker, I do not understand why a man who says he has much would purposely set out to harm those who have too little.

Why, Mr. Speaker, would the President of the United States put in place a policy to take healthcare away from Americans? Obviously, he has much, or at least he says he does. But millions

of Americans rely upon the Affordable Care Act for their insurance, for their health insurance, literally for their ability to stay alive.

Why would the President of the United States ask the court to repeal, to find unconstitutional, the Affordable Care Act that has provided insurance coverage to more than 20 million Americans and healthcare benefits to millions upon millions more?

Why would our colleagues on the Republican side of this aisle fall in lockstep to support the President's effort to take away healthcare from Americans?

I do not understand this. Where is the compassion? Where is the empathy? Where is the concern for Americans, not one or two, but millions upon millions of Americans who have come to rely upon the Affordable Care Act to give them their basic insurance?

More than 20 million Americans found insurance coverage through the expansion of the Medicaid program, not in every State, because there were State Governors who were willing to go along with the President and the Republicans and not institute the Medicaid expansion. But there are still 20 million more Americans who have comprehensive healthcare coverage today.

Why? We must ask the question of the President and any of his sympathizers: Why would you do that?

It is not just those people who have been able to get coverage in the Affordable Care Act, but it is every senior who is on Medicare who will lose coverage. Every senior on Medicare has an annual visit to a doctor to determine if they have any medical problems, a free annual check-up. That, too, would disappear.

For seniors who had hundreds of dollars, if not thousands of dollars, in annual expenses for drugs because of the Medicare drug doughnut hole—yes, the infamous doughnut hole that was created in the expansion of the Medicare program in 2003—that doughnut hole is literally closed as a result of the Affordable Care Act.

Eliminate the Affordable Care Act, Mr. President, and seniors who rely upon expensive drugs are going to, once again, pay billions of dollars of additional costs right out of their pocket.

Here it is: "Whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

Think of seniors who are in nursing homes. Most of the Medicaid dollars are for nursing home care. The expansion will affect them, if it is repealed.

Remember the bad old days when your insurance policy had a cap, a \$50,000 lifetime cap, maybe a \$100,000 lifetime cap? If you had a bad car accident, you would blow right through that. If you had cancer, guaranteed within the first month of treatment, you would blow through that cap, and it would come right out of your pocket.

Remember the bad old days when the great majority of personal bankruptcies were a direct result of medical expenses?

Mr. Speaker, does the President remember those days, that now he wants to eliminate the Affordable Care Act? Is that where we are in this country? How mean-spirited.

Maybe his test of progress is whether we add more to those who have much.

Look at this. The Affordable Care Act actually raised taxes on the superwealthy. Maybe that is what the President wants, to, once again, give a massive tax cut to the superwealthy. If the Affordable Care Act is repealed, the average tax cut for the superwealthy, the top one-tenth of 1 percent of Americans, will be nearly \$200,000 a year. Is that what our President wants?

Apparently, he took the first half of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's statement about values and said: Oh, yes, we want more for the wealthy.

That is precisely what will happen if the Affordable Care Act is repealed, to the tune of more than \$197,000 for the top one-tenth of 1 percent of America's wealthy.

What in the world? What is going on here in America that the President of the United States, in league with many of our Republican colleagues, would rip out of the hands of Americans a healthcare program that is working?

That is not where we are on the Democratic side of this aisle. We have fought this fight for 8, 9, 10 years. The Affordable Care Act passed in 2009 and 2010, and here we are. Our Republican colleagues gained control of this House and the Senate, and we fought the fight over those years to stop the repeal.

Now, the President, once again, is going around Congress, this time to the courts, asking the Supreme Court of the United States to rip out of the hands of Americans the healthcare that they have come to rely upon.

We will continue this fight. Not only will we continue this fight, but we are stepping up to improve the Affordable Care Act, and we intend to do it with a piece of legislation. We call it the Protecting Pre-Existing Conditions and Making Health Care More Affordable Act of 2019, H.R. 1884, protecting pre-existing conditions.

You heard my colleague, just before I stood up here, talking about pre-existing conditions. 130 million Americans have pre-existing conditions: high blood pressure, being a woman who might get pregnant, you name it. We all, at least 130 million of us, have pre-existing conditions.

Here is what we intend to do: improve the Affordable Care Act and reduce premium costs for consumers by expanding the eligibility for the premium tax credit, expanding affordability for working families, protecting comprehensive coverage for small businesses and workers, and eliminating junk insurance policies.

I was the insurance commissioner in California for 8 years, and I can talk for hours and hours about insurance companies that sold junk to people. They worked until they had an illness, and then it failed to work. We would

make those junk insurance policies unavailable in America.

We would ensure that there would be comprehensive benefits, like maternity care. If you talk about family values, you better talk about maternity care.

We would make sure that the programs to make people aware that they can get insurance would be in place.

We would help the States as they carry out their coverages. We would make sure that the exchanges were not eliminated, that they would be strong. Unlike the President who would eliminate the exchanges, we would strengthen them.

We have work to do. We are here to make things better for America, for the people, and we intend to do so.

Joining me tonight are a couple of my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), a fellow who has worked on this for years.

Mr. CLYBURN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, back in 1966, at a healthcare conference, the late Martin Luther King, Jr., said: "Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane."

I often think of the debate back in 2009 and 2010 when we were trying to pass the Affordable Care Act. I remember one day I was conducting a call-in program on the local radio station. A gentleman called in and said to me: I want you to keep your hands off of my health insurance. I like what I have got, and I don't want you and President Obama messing with it.

□ 1715

I assured the gentleman that we were going to do nothing to interrupt his relationship with his insurance company or his policy.

But then a little while later, a lady called in, and she said, Congressman, I don't have a question, but I would like to say something to the gentleman who just called in. I want to say to him that I had insurance for 30 years, and I thought I liked it, until I tried to use it. When I went for my second treatment for breast cancer, I got a notice, she said, from the insurance company that I had used up my lifetime of benefits.

And then she said, I would like to say to that gentleman, Maybe he likes what he has because he has never tried to use it.

And that is what you have reference to here when you talk about junk policies. What we did with the Affordable Care Act was to make healthcare accessible and affordable for all American citizens.

We created the possibilities of States expanding Medicaid so that low-income people could have access to healthcare.

And if you want to know a little bit about what can be done if we were to, in some way, get rid of the Affordable Care Act, just look at the States that

have refused to expand Medicaid; the number of low-income people today who still do not have access to healthcare.

Think about those middle-income families who had a family member get sick and find out that they are in bankruptcy because they are trying to pay the bills.

The Affordable Care Act is an attempt, like everything else ought to be here.

If we are talking about education, it ought to be accessible and affordable.

If you are talking about housing, it should be accessible and affordable.

Healthcare; accessible and affordable.

And we all know that until we passed the Affordable Care Act, healthcare was not accessible and affordable for all Americans.

We hear the slogan that takes place throughout this country. We don't need to Make America Great Again. America is great. It has always been great. That is not our challenge.

Our challenge, it seems to me, is to make the greatness of America accessible and affordable to all Americans; apply it fairly and equitably.

That, to me, is what this country is all about.

So I want to thank you, my friend from California, Mr. GARAMENDI, I want to thank you for all the work that you are doing on H.R. 1884, because I think before we go home this week, we are going to pass a resolution, a resolution to condemn this administration for attempting to legally take away healthcare from so many citizens.

And I want to close with this: You talk about preexisting conditions. I think that people tend to think about preexisting conditions in a way that deals with people that they know or can relate to. I want all of our listeners, and those looking on, to just think of what you are doing.

If you say to a child born with diabetes, a child who didn't ask to come here, and even if that child could ask to come, they certainly wouldn't ask to come sick. Diabetes; born with it.

And then the insurance company says that it is a preexisting condition and you cannot come on to your family's insurance policies.

If we cannot see the wrongness in that, I am not too sure anything anybody says about anything can be ever wrong in your eyesight.

So I want to thank you so much for the work that you are doing here. I want to thank the American people for keeping our focus on making healthcare accessible and affordable for all Americans.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman (Mr. CLYBURN) so very much. He has been working for those qualities and values all of his life, and I really appreciate his coming to us and bringing us the awareness of what Dr. Martin Luther King said about America and about where the role of healthcare fits into justice in America.

I see Mr. CICILLINE from Rhode Island here, the chairman of the Democratic Policy and Communication Group.

Would you like to communicate with us?

Mr. CICILLINE. I would be honored to. I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI), my friend, for organizing this Special Order hour and for giving us an opportunity to speak more about what seems to be a recurring fight here in Congress between Democrats who are committed to preserving access to high quality, affordable healthcare and to our Republican friends who are committed to undoing the progress we have made.

I know the gentleman will remember this. In the last Congress, I think, we were confronted with 50 or 60 votes to repeal the Affordable Care Act in its entirety. And we were able to defeat each of those efforts.

Then President Trump was elected, that effort continued, and the administration began to administratively sabotage the Affordable Care Act, and even proposed TrumpCare, which would have cost 23 million Americans their healthcare in its entirety.

So now having lost that battle, Democrats ran an agenda for the people of this country.

The first item on that agenda was driving down healthcare costs, driving down the cost of prescription drugs, and preserving coverage for preexisting conditions.

We won the election. We were put into the majority, in part because the American people rejected the Republican's relentless effort to destroy healthcare in this country and wanted Democrats to come to Congress in control to build on the success of the Affordable Care Act and make sure that we continue to protect access to quality, affordable healthcare.

Having lost in this body on this issue, now what do the Republicans do? They take the battle to the courts. Let's use the courts to strike down the Affordable Care Act.

And we should be very clear, as I know the gentleman from California knows, President Trump has claimed over and over again that he wants to protect access to healthcare.

In fact, just in the last couple of days, he now claims he has a secret plan. It is so good he is going to share it with the American people after the 2020 election.

But what we know is, unfortunately, what the President says and what he does aren't always the same. Because the truth is, the President has asked his Justice Department to go to court and fight to eliminate every single protection and benefit that the Affordable Care Act has provided.

So that means if President Trump gets his way and our Republican colleagues, there will no longer be caps on out-of-pocket expenses, there will no longer be savings by closing the donut hole, so prescription drug costs are reduced for our seniors. Medicaid expansion will end. The limits that prevent

insurance companies from limiting the total coverage over your lifetime, that ban will no longer exist. You will be able to deny access to healthcare for people with preexisting conditions. And the insurance company will be free to sell junk plans that offer little or no real coverage at all.

And so we are back to the same fight. Democrats have legislation that has already been introduced to build on the success of the Affordable Care Act:

To drive down premiums; to expand access for more working men and women; to drive down the costs of prescription drugs.

But we are back at it where our Republican friends are now joining this Republican President in an effort to use the courts to undo all the progress we have made on the Affordable Care Act.

This is going in exactly the wrong direction. We remain committed to make sure that we do everything we can to protect access to care and drive down costs, because we believe healthcare is a right.

It is not a privilege for a small group of people. It is a right of every single citizen of this country.

And I thank the gentleman for convening this Special Order hour, because amidst the noise, people should know there is one party here in Washington, the Democrats, who are fighting to protect and expand access to healthcare and drive down costs. There is another party that is continuing their effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act in its entirety, to take away coverage for preexisting conditions, to drive up the cost of prescription drugs. And the American people have the right to know who is fighting for them and who is not.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman (Mr. CICILLINE).

It is extremely important that we continue this fight we fought successfully for 8 years, 9 years. And here we are once again.

The general public, keep in mind, Protecting Preexisting Conditions and Making Healthcare More Affordable Act of 2019, H.R. 1884.

I turn to the gentleman from the State of New York (Mr. MORELLE). If you would like to join us and tell us how all of this affects your constituency in New York.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) for his eloquence and his leadership on this critically important issue.

I rise to express my strong opposition to the Trump administration's efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and pull the rug out from millions of Americans who rely on the ACA for essential health coverage.

Quality, affordable healthcare should be a right for every American, and we should make it easier, not harder, for individuals and families to get the insurance they deserve.

The House majority made a promise to always offer protections for individ-

uals with preexisting conditions and fight back against those who seek to dismantle their fundamental protections.

That is why I am proud to cosponsor a resolution to reverse the administration's cruel attempts to sabotage care for Americans in need, and I thank Mr. GARAMENDI for his leadership with House Resolution 1884.

We will not allow people with preexisting conditions to go back to the days where they were denied coverage when they needed it the most. And I might also say, parenthetically—and I appreciate very much the gentleman from California's leadership as the superintendent of insurance in the State of the California—I had the privilege of working on legislation in New York back in the early nineties as a new member that introduced community rating in the State of New York and offered protections for preexisting conditions.

Subsequent to that, I had an opportunity to serve as the chair of the Insurance Committee in the New York State Assembly.

In that role, I was responsible for helping to implement the Affordable Care Act in the State of New York.

Many of the protections in the Affordable Care Act were already part of New York law. I am very, very proud of that; and continued to work on that as majority leader of the State Assembly.

But the protections which we, I think, rely on in New York are not available to all Americans, and to those plans which we are not able, as a state, to regulate, self-regulated plans and other plans protected by ERISA, don't have those protections.

So I think it is critically important as we continue to move forward that we work tirelessly. And I will work with my colleagues to protect and expand the Affordable Care Act, to lower costs and ensure hardworking families everywhere in America have healthcare that they can rely on.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman could stand by for a few seconds.

I knew that he had been in the New York legislature as a leader in the assembly there. And I had some recollection of the work he did on insurance matters.

If he could just talk about the experiences he had when he tried to protect people with preexisting conditions, and those issues that he dealt with in the early nineties, some of the work that was done and the experiences that he had there.

Mr. MORELLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague and friend from California.

You know you understand how it is for many of us who are blessed to have either employer-offered health insurance or are in a situation where you don't think as much about the costs or the issues that involve health insurance. But what you find from talking to people, as many people are not as

privileged as I might be, and really faced critical decisions about whether they could have medicine to treat chronic illnesses or had to make the decision between that and rent.

Or for people who had—as I have said on this floor before, I, unfortunately, lost my daughter to cancer, breast cancer, about a year and-a-half ago.

Lauren had good health insurance, but during her illness, I often thought about men and women in her circumstance, what challenges they would face, even if they are able to defeat the illness, whether or not those preexisting conditions would cause their insurance premiums to be so high and so unattainable that the idea of having quality, affordable healthcare would simply not be within their reach.

□ 1730

This affects millions of Americans. Whether it is women who plan on beginning a family, starting a family; whether it is the elderly who have chronic conditions—you mentioned hypertension; or whether you have diabetes, there are a whole host of conditions. Most Americans have some form of preexisting condition.

For us to allow the underwriting to be done with those preexisting conditions in mind would simply put healthcare out of the reach of most Americans, quality, affordable healthcare. That is why I think this is so important.

I might also add that the Department of Justice is charged with defending the laws duly enacted by this Congress and by the President of the United States. That is the job of the Department of Justice. I find it reprehensible that this Department of Justice under this administration would take the view that they will join in a lawsuit against a law fully enacted that is the law of the land of the United States and seek to overturn it. It is virtually without precedent.

What is so troubling about it is that this will leave millions of Americans without coverage and without health insurance at a time when we should be doing everything we can to ensure that more Americans have access to quality, affordable care.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MORELLE so much. Actually, I didn't know that the gentleman had lost his daughter. That tragic illness is an example of why the Affordable Care Act is so important, because people will have coverage. There are no lifetime limits.

Although your daughter was unsuccessful in the treatment, many thousands upon thousands of Americans are able to get treatment and survive cancer or some other debilitating illness.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman so much for his experience, and I thank him for being here and bringing all those years of knowledge and experience to this House and helping us fight this fight.

Let me now turn to my colleague from New Jersey who often is here with

me on the floor, Mr. PAYNE. He and I talk about a lot of different subjects. Here, we are talking about one that affects every American. I thank the gentleman for joining us.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE).

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. GARAMENDI for once again setting aside time to talk about the issues that affect the lives of people across this country.

I want to start by saying that the contrast between Republicans and Democrats on this issue of healthcare could not be any clearer.

As the gentleman has described in his discussion of the ongoing legal case down south, Republicans and the Trump administration want to make Americans sick again. They want to eliminate protections for people with preexisting conditions.

Let me just stop there. This Nation was built on a morality that we held very deeply in this country. But, to me, it feels like it has been torn apart, is falling apart, that we do not care about people who find themselves in circumstances that they did not create on their own, that they should alone be left, because of a preexisting condition, not to be afforded healthcare.

That is unconscionable. That is profiting at its worst. It deeply upsets me that we find ourselves turning our backs on our brothers and our sisters, our mothers and our fathers, and our aunts and our uncles in this country to say, no, because you have an illness, we cannot protect you and give you insurance. It is unconscionable.

They want to take the United States backward, and they are weaponizing the courts to do what they failed to do in Congress: repeal the Affordable Care Act.

I arrived here in 2012, and the Affordable Care Act was already the law of the land. But what I witnessed in my time here was the over 50 times, close to 60 times, that the Republicans attempted to repeal the Affordable Care Act but could never do it. They could never do it. With the White House, with the Senate, and with the House, they still could not do it, because it was too popular with a lot of Americans in this country. They did not listen to the people. They did not want the Affordable Care Act repealed.

Now they are trying to go the court and the executive route and do what they could not do in this body, which is the body that determines those matters.

Democrats, on the other hand, want to make America healthy. We want to expand healthcare access. We want to strengthen the Affordable Care Act. We want to make sure that people with preexisting conditions are not denied insurance coverage.

Now the Trump administration is fighting to bring healthcare discrimination back. Well, there is no going back. More than 200,000 people in my State of New Jersey who purchased

their insurance through the Affordable Care Act marketplace have preexisting conditions.

President Trump wants to make it easier for insurers to deny coverage. He is playing politics with their lives.

What my constituents want and need is for the Affordable Care Act to be strengthened. The 200,000 New Jerseyans who purchased their insurance through the Affordable Care Act should not have their insurance coverage put to risk because of politics. New Jerseyans and all Americans deserve protection, not discrimination.

Let me be clear: The Trump administration wants to put lives at risk by undermining people's access to healthcare across this country. The Trump administration is sabotaging the Affordable Care Act, and Americans are paying the price.

The Trump administration has made it more difficult to enroll in the Affordable Care Act by increasing website downtime during open enrollment and cutting the budget for healthcare navigators, the people who help Americans determine and figure out what they need in terms of coverage. They cut that.

The Trump administration has stopped finding cost-share reductions, which lower people's out-of-pocket expenses.

The Trump administration has launched a full-scale legal attack on the Affordable Care Act.

In light of those attacks, let me be clear about one thing: Democrats will keep fighting to ensure that all Americans' healthcare is protected. We will fight in the House. We will fight in the Senate. We will fight in the courts.

Once again, I thank the gentleman for his true leadership on the issues that are facing the American people.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. PAYNE for his consistent work here on the floor on multiple issues.

Healthcare issues have always been at the front of his agenda for him and his constituents, and he has fought fiercely since 2012 to see to it that the Affordable Care Act remains in place.

Mr. Speaker, I am going to put up one more chart that I think graphically displays what we have been talking about here. This is 2010, 2011, 2012, and 2013. The Affordable Care Act really took hold in 2013. It took a couple years to set up the administrative systems and the like.

You can see in 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017, the number of uninsured in America went from 44 million down to 27 million, which is just, in large numbers, a clear description of what the Affordable Care Act was able to do in bringing insurance to Americans.

Here we have a President who was unable to get his wall and decided to go around Congress and the Constitution to try to fund the wall by moving money from one military account to another so that he could build his wall.

Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution clearly states that it is the Con-

gress that appropriates money. It says no money shall be appropriated from the Treasury without law. Congress passed a law that said \$1.2 billion was for border security. That is it. Now the President wants \$8 billion, literally going around Congress and the Constitution.

He is doing it once again with the Affordable Care Act. He was unable to get Congress to repeal the law, so now he is going to the court system to try to get the court to repeal the law.

Hopefully, the court won't do that. But if it does, those 20 million Americans who will lose their insurance and those 130 million Americans who have preexisting conditions and will once again be open to insurance discrimination—not able to get insurance, paying vastly more because they have a preexisting condition, like being a woman, or blood pressure, or diabetes, or any number of things—those people will remember that it was the President who went around Congress to the courts to ask the court to strike down the Affordable Care Act.

There is so much at risk. Every senior on Medicare will see the doughnut hole come back, and their drug expenses will skyrocket billions of dollars. The free annual checkup that seniors are able to get now will no longer be available. It goes on and on, all gone.

I am going to end with this before I turn this over to my colleagues.

I don't know that I could ever put this up enough, when FDR said: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

In this case, probably close to 27 million Americans have too little. They didn't have healthcare, and today, they do. Those are the Americans who had too little.

Where do we stand? What are our values? How do we approach this fundamental question of America as we go into the 2020s? Are we for those who have much, like the President? Or are we for those who have too little, like the Americans who were uninsured prior to the Affordable Care Act?

I will tell you where we Democrats stand. We, without any Republican support, created the Affordable Care Act. We fought over the last decade, not only to implement it, but to fight the defensive battle to see that it would continue.

Now we are going to continue that fight. We are not going to give up because our values, our purpose, are with those Americans who now rely upon the Affordable Care Act, and, indeed, with those seniors and with this country so that we can provide for those in need.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

### IMPORTANCE OF JOURNALISM IN THE UNITED STATES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2019, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. DESAULNIER) for 30 minutes.

Mr. DESAULNIER. Mr. Speaker, I thank those watching and my colleagues who will join me in the next half hour to talk about journalism, the importance of journalism in the United States and the importance of journalism to democracy.

Abraham Lincoln once said: Let the people know the facts, and the country will be safe.

The challenge is, how do we get them those facts?

For professional journalists, there is nothing more important. They don't always make us who hold office happy. Sometimes, we disagree with them. Sometimes, we think they are not being fair. But they are extremely important to the success or failure of American democracy.

□ 1745

Neil Postman, in 1985, in his book, "Amusing Ourselves to Death," wrote about his own belief in 1985 that how people got information in journalism was changing too dramatically, and he was just talking about the media in terms of television news. Think about how much that has changed since 1985.

Mr. Postman talked about the Lincoln-Douglas debates and that thousands of people would go and listen to those debates because Douglas and Lincoln took the time to write out what they would say and how they anticipated answering questions. People would listen without speakers and without any kind of amplification of what they were saying—thousands of people—for as long as 6 or 7 hours, with a break for dinner.

Mr. Postman's whole argument was this was cognitively different, that when you read something that was prepared over and over again by people who were really good writers, people responded differently and they accepted factual information in a different way than we were learning to accept facts.

Now, in 2019, with this administration and with social media and 24/7 news, I think Mr. Postman would be horrified about how Americans get their facts, how they cognitively process them, and how they engage as American citizens.

There is nothing more important than, as Lincoln said and I would opine, that Americans get journalism with factual content, with the professional expertise of people, many of whom have gone to school, to journalism schools for undergraduate degrees, often for graduate degrees, who go out to work for not a whole lot of money but to be able to investigate, get to the facts, and then communicate. Too many of us underestimate those talents. Maybe we have become spoiled.

But what has happened is a consequence of many things. The business model has changed. Being from the bay area, Craigslist changed classified ads, and that is a revenue source to print journalism. But now as it moves to digital, a group of us wants to talk about what we can do appropriately in Congress and maybe work with—not maybe, but work with State and local officials to talk about how we can appropriately support professional journalism so we can get back to that point where Americans are engaged in a very deep way in their discussion with government and, specifically, with local government.

Most Americans—and maybe it is because I came from local government—learn about democracy, oftentimes, at the local level. They know the people who are in the city council and on the school board. An issue comes up. Their kids start to go to school, and they take an interest in the governance and superintendent and the superintendent's bosses. They care about the curriculum. Maybe there is a land use decision at their city council, and so they start to learn about democracy in a meaningful way that way.

Heretofore, except in the last 10 years with the demise of local journalism, for a variety of reasons, they don't get that information. They get a lot of information about Congress. They get a lot of information about the President of the United States, and some information still at the statehouse, but not nearly as much, and very little at the local level.

I will say there are heroic people out there who are still doing great local journalism, but because of the business model and because of consolidations, that has become, I am afraid, very ill.

So just in terms of the definition of the problem, in 2017, estimated daily U.S. newspaper circulation—that is print and digital. So when we focus on, "Oh, well, print is gone; forget about it," we realize that the business model has changed.

But there is a digital model here that we can see in The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Boston Globe, Los Angeles Times, San Francisco Chronicle. There is still a model. But their ability to talk about local news is where we have to get more effort, I think, in understanding, as citizens.

Circulation, print and digital, in 2017 was 31 million for weekday and 34 million for Sunday. That is down 11 and 10 percent, respectively, from each previous year. The chart next to me shows the steady decline.

Newspaper consumption—that is digital and print—has been falling every year since 1994. Today most Americans get their news from television and social media, the primary way they get their information.

Fifty-five percent of Americans are regularly tuning into TV to consume that news information. In contrast, only 20 percent of Americans regularly

get their news from a physical newspaper. Only 38 percent of Americans regularly get their news online.

In 2017, advertising revenue for the entire newspaper industry was \$16.5 billion, a 10 percent decrease from 2016.

Then there are consolidations, an issue that I know Mr. CICILLINE will talk about, the consolidation of the print newspaper business in particular.

And I will say this for the bay area where I live and represent, in the bay area, newspapers, at their peak, had about 1,500 journalists. This is for about 7.5, 7.75 million people, in one of the largest metropolitan areas in the country that is very diverse, 1,500 journalists. These aren't support people. These are writers, professional journalists. Now there are less than 300 serving those same 7.5 million people in an area that is growing and has one of the most innovative and fastest growing economies in the world.

It is not just the bay area. Since 2004, 1,800 local papers have been closed or merged. What traditionally happens—and there are two large companies that do this—is they go in and buy the newspaper and then sell the assets. So very rarely now—when you go around to a city or a town where it used to be a prominent building was the headquarters of the local newspaper, those buildings have been sold.

The San Jose Mercury News had a prominent building in downtown San Jose right by city hall. In Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Times still thrives because it has local ownership, fortunately; but that L.A. Times building, a beautiful art deco that was so much a part of the history of Los Angeles, was directly across the street from city hall. There was a reason for that.

The Examiner and the Chronicle in San Francisco were prominent downtown. These were icons. Well, a lot of these consolidations came about, and they sold these iconic buildings where people worked. Then, of course, they sold the print functions because there was less to do and a lot of the distribution. But they also laid off and eliminated a lot of the journalists, and that is where we get our information.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 39,210 people worked as reporters and editors in the newspaper industry in 2017. This is down from 44,000, about 15 percent from 2015, and 71,645 in 2004, about a 45 percent nationwide decrease. About one-third of the large U.S. newspapers have suffered significant layoffs.

Additionally, journalists' wages remained low. In 2017, the median wage for an editor was only \$49,000, while the median wage for a reporter was about \$34,000. If you are in a place like the bay area, Los Angeles, New York, D.C., or Boston, you can imagine what the cost of living does to that kind of income for people whom we rely on to provide us information.