

weeks, almost 5 months, for “medically necessary” treatments and procedures.

Britain’s National Health Service data reveals that almost 25 percent of cancer patients don’t start treatment on time, despite urgent referrals from their primary care doctors. Britain’s politicians whitewash this deadly statistic by claiming treatment is “on time,” if it is given within 62 days of referral—2 months of referral.

Such long wait periods for cancer treatment can be, and are, deadly. For example, 81 percent of British breast cancer patients live 5 years after diagnosis compared to 89 percent for American breast cancer patients. Stated differently, 8 of every 100 breast cancer patients who live in America would die in Britain’s socialized medicine system.

Americans with prostate cancer have a 97 percent 5-year survival rate. In Britain, it drops to 83 percent. Stated differently, 14 of every 100 prostate cancer patients who live in America would die in Britain’s socialized medicine system.

It is irresponsible and dangerous for America to copy socialized medicine, yet that is exactly what socialist Democrats want us to do.

The House soon votes on a socialist drug cost plan that gives the government control over drug pricing while suppressing the invention of lifesaving drugs. For example, the Congressional Budget Office warns this legislation results in 15 fewer drugs in the next 10 years. That is 15 drugs that help Americans live longer or more comfortably, gone, because of socialist Democrat wishful thinking.

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Mr. Speaker, socialized medicine is not the answer. Government price controls are not the answer.

The answer is more free enterprise competition that forces healthcare providers and drug companies to provide their best products at their lowest prices or go out of business.

I urge the American people to not fall prey to socialists who promise taxpayer-funded government healthcare.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this socialist drug pricing scheme.

Most importantly, I urge America to be wary of propaganda that claims socialized medicine lowers healthcare costs or saves lives. Socialized medicine does neither.

Remember that promise that ObamaCare will cut your health insurance premiums by \$2,500 per year? That was false propaganda.

Remember the promise that, under ObamaCare you can keep your doctor and health insurance plans if you want them? That was more false propaganda.

America, do your homework. Don’t fall for the lies again. Demand solutions that both lower costs and save lives.

Why? Because your very life is at risk.

THE TIME TO ACT IS NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL) for 5 minutes.

Ms. MUCARSEL-POWELL. Mr. Speaker, the number one concern that I continue to hear from my constituents is the high cost of healthcare, especially the skyrocketing prices of prescription drugs.

From Kendall to Key West, I have heard stories of patients that are forced to choose between putting food on the table or paying for lifesaving drugs. Meanwhile, Big Pharma continues to collect hundreds of billions of dollars in profits each year.

This cannot continue. We must pass H.R. 3, the Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act of 2019, which will save Floridians thousands in drug costs each year.

This bill would cut Medicare spending by over \$400 billion, and reinvest these savings to combat the opioid epidemic, fund research for new groundbreaking cures; it would expand Medicare benefits, and it would also be used to strengthen community health centers.

As the past Dean of the Medical School at Florida International University, I have worked directly with these centers and I have seen firsthand the impact that they have had on our community.

In my district, Community Health of South Florida, or CHI, plays a crucial role in providing care to the uninsured and underinsured.

In 2018 alone, CHI provided care for over 82,000 patients, including primary care services, behavioral health, OB/GYN procedures, and free HIV screenings.

These health centers serve everyone in the community, regardless of their ability to pay. They expand quality, affordable healthcare for everyone.

The time to act is now. We have to pass H.R. 3 to lower prescription drug prices and strengthen the healthcare centers that thousands in my district depend on for care.

LOWER PRESCRIPTION DRUG PRICES NOW

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

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, every day I hear from my constituents in Pennsylvania’s Ninth Congressional District about the skyrocketing costs of prescription drugs. Families should not have to dedicate such a high percentage of their disposable income on prescription drugs, and families should certainly not be forced to choose between buying medication or putting food on their table.

Over 70 percent of Americans think that lowering prescription drugs prices should be a top priority for Congress.

Delivering for the American people will require a bipartisan approach with proposals that can actually pass the House and the Senate and be signed into law.

Unfortunately, Speaker PELOSI’s prescription drug pricing proposal, H.R. 3, was crafted without any Republican input and will be dead on arrival in the Senate.

A key component of H.R. 3 involves the Federal Government mandating pricing for prescription drugs. While supporters of H.R. 3 describe this as “voluntary negotiation,” manufacturers who decline to participate in the process are taxed up to 95 percent of the medicine’s gross sales. That is 95 percent of the gross sales price.

This is not a negotiation. This is a heavyhanded government at its worst. It is ridiculous. It is take this price or else. It is, figuratively and literally, a poison pill provision to this bill.

Government, command central price setting is not only un-American, it is ineffective. When we look at countries with heavyhanded approaches to price controls, we find they have significantly less access to lifesaving medications and treatments.

Of the 270 new medicines available in the United States, only 41 percent are available in Australia; 52 percent in Canada; 53 percent in France; 67 percent in Germany; 48 percent in Japan; 64 percent in the United Kingdom.

Imagine, in our country, a lifesaving drug being available in another country but not available here. We can’t imagine that.

Fortunately, House Republicans have found a solution to lowering prescription drug prices without sacrificing American innovation or harming access to lifesaving medications.

H.R. 19, the Lower Costs, More Cures Act, is a package of over 40 bipartisan provisions to lower out-of-pocket spending, strengthen transparency, and spur competition.

H.R. 19 protects seniors by placing an annual cap on out-of-pocket drug costs and establishing a “smoothing” mechanism to allow them to distribute their prescription drug spending throughout the year. Rather than heavyhanded government overreach, H.R. 19 stimulates free market forces to spur innovation and lower costs by streamlining FDA approval pipelines, increasing availability of over-the-counter products, and prohibiting anticompetitive practices that prevent access to generics.

H.R. 19 makes insulin more affordable—so important—by capping the costs at \$50 a month after a Medicare beneficiary has met their deductible. Under H.R. 19, doctors would know what a patient will have to pay for a drug, allowing them to prescribe medication that addresses the patient’s needs and fits their budget.

Again, every single provision in H.R. 19 is bipartisan and could actually become law. President Trump has made it abundantly clear that lowering prescription drug prices is a top priority,

and H.R. 19 achieves this goal without harming innovation or access.

I am a cosponsor to this vitally important legislation, and I do urge my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to work with the House Republicans on delivering lower drug costs for the American people.

MR. PRESIDENT, WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO HIDE?

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

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, Russian dictator Vladimir Putin must have been consumed with delight. President Trump chose to invite to the White House Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, the right arm of Vladimir Putin.

The American people should be on red alert, asking themselves what the President has to discuss with a senior leader of an adversary, in a meeting closed to the press and closed to the American people.

Mr. President, what do you have to hide?

Importantly, Mr. Lavrov is the individual that first concocted the Ukraine false narrative on December 1, 2016, that hid Russia's involvement in our elections, blaming it on Ukraine.

It seems that this meeting is a part of a pattern of President Trump's disturbing behavior to cozy up to dictator Putin and his oligarch cronies, many of whom have invested heavily in Trump properties.

Astoundingly, President Trump welcomed Russia's intervention in our 2016 elections, and then he invited Russia back to the Group of Seven.

He shamelessly kowtowed to Putin at the Helsinki Summit.

And additionally, President Trump withheld critical military assistance and a White House meeting from the President of Ukraine, Volodymyr Zelensky, urging him to investigate false conspiracy theories about President Trump's political opponents here at home.

Meanwhile, the President publicly and continuously derides our closest allies, and questions the value of NATO, for heaven's sake, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the bulwark of our security as free people. And he embraces dictators from around the world.

Yet, again, need I remind the President that Russia seeks to destroy liberty. Putin seeks to destroy critical democratic alliances, forged at great sacrifice, such as NATO, that have brought unprecedented peace, security, and prosperity to the free world, which includes us.

In 2019, Russia illegally invaded the independent nation of Ukraine, leading to already over 14,000 deaths and the displacement of millions. Ukraine is the scrimmage line for liberty in the Transatlantic Alliance. Russia has been working hard to destroy that alliance, which is freedom's bulwark.

Russia has sided with the barbarous Assad regime in Syria, and Russia conducts constant cyberattacks and misinformation campaigns to meddle in democratic processes, including here in our 2016 presidential election; and she is intent to do it again next year.

Simply put, the enemy of liberty will stop at nothing to weaken the United States and our allies.

When the American people elect their President, they expect a leader to champion liberty on the world stage.

The world is watching, and so are our children. How should they interpret the United States rolling out the White House red carpet for corrupt Russian leaders, while freedom-seeking Ukrainian President Zelensky is still waiting for his invitation to the White House?

Indeed, this Lavrov meeting is rather sinister. It comes at a very sensitive time, domestically and internationally. On the eve of the meeting with Mr. Lavrov, Mr. Trump continues to deride our own national security institutions, such as the FBI, whose investigation clearly proved Russia interfered with our 2016 election, and she is on task to do it again.

Mr. Lavrov, himself, invented and directed the totally false narrative that Ukraine interfered in our election, a conspiracy theory spun up by the enemy of democracy himself. By siding with Russia, our President's behavior encourages Russia's malign behavior, while hurting our allies.

Interestingly, this secretive meeting in the Oval Office comes right after the Normandy Format talks in France between Ukraine, Germany, France, and Russia, when President Zelensky successfully withstood Russian pressure. He did not cross any red lines that could suggest capitulation of Ukraine in front of Russian aggression.

And during the Normandy meetings, thousands of freedom-loving Ukrainians showed up on the streets of Kyiv to show their support for President Zelensky and their readiness to defend their beloved motherland.

So, our conclusion is what Russia couldn't achieve through the open channel of diplomacy, it tries to do through the channels behind closed doors here in our own backyard.

Congress must demand full access to the transcript of the meeting between the President of our country and the Foreign Minister of Russia Lavrov.

Free people deserve it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to address their remarks to the Chair.

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INCENTIVIZE BUSINESS TO HIRE VETERANS

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

Mr. WRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to introduce the Veterans Back to Work Act of 2019.

It is not hard to see that our economy is booming. We have the lowest unemployment rate in 50 years, and hourly wages continue to rise.

Despite the record-breaking economic numbers we continue to see every month, 326,000 veterans remain unemployed around the country. We should be doing everything we can to facilitate veterans' transitions back into the civilian workforce to help fill the over 7 million open jobs we have here in the United States.

The Veterans Back to Work Act would make the work opportunity tax credit, which is set to expire at the end of the year, permanent. This tax credit is issued to businesses and nonprofits that hire individuals who consistently face significant barriers that prevent them from obtaining employment.

Making the work opportunity tax credit permanent is a great way to ensure our veterans are set up for success. There is no reason not to incentivize businesses to fill jobs with the men and women who have served and sacrificed so much for our Nation.

I urge my colleagues from both sides of the aisle to come together and support this critical legislation.

RECOGNIZING BILL ZEDLER

Mr. WRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, a lion of the Legislature in Texas is serving his last term in office.

Since 2003, State Representative Bill Zedler has been a champion of liberty, a champion of free enterprise, a champion of religious freedom, a champion for life. He has been a champion like few others in the Texas Legislature.

Whether the issue was taxes, education, healthcare, veterans benefits, whatever it was, his was a voice to which others listened because that voice has always been a voice of truth and wisdom. That voice will be greatly missed.

All of us in public office at the end of our time of service have to answer the question, did we leave things better than we found them? For my friend Bill Zedler, that answer is a resounding yes because Texas today is better because State Representative Bill Zedler served in the Texas Legislature.

At the end of the movie "Troy," Odysseus is commenting about how history will be written. He says that he lived among giants, that he wanted it to be said that he lived in the time of Hector, that he lived in the time of Achilles. Well, members of the Texas Legislature can be proud that they served in the time of Bill Zedler.

I thank Bill for all of his magnificent service to the Texas Legislature.

COMMEMORATING LIFE OF REVEREND CLAY EVANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. KAPTUR). The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate and commemorate the life of the prescient priest and prophetic pastor that was the Reverend Clay Evans.