

I urge you to turn words of support for veterans into action, to transform sentiment into financing. Please vote for full funding of the VA.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. MCDERMOTT) having assumed the chair, Mr. POMEROY, Acting Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 99) revising the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2007, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2008, and setting forth appropriate budgetary levels for fiscal years 2009 through 2012, had come to no resolution thereon.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 99 and S. 1002.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

#### APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO MEXICO-UNITED STATES INTER-PARLIAMENTARY GROUP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to 22 U.S.C. 276h, and the order of the House of January 4, 2007, the Chair announces the Speaker's appointment of the following Members of the House to the Mexico-United States Inter-parliamentary Group:

Mr. PASTOR, Arizona, Chairman  
 Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ, California, Vice Chairman  
 Mr. FILNER, California  
 Mr. REYES, Texas  
 Ms. SOLIS, California  
 Mr. RODRIGUEZ, Texas  
 Ms. GIFFORDS, Arizona

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 18, 2007, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Ms. KILPATRICK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KILPATRICK addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### HEALTH CARE: THE BIGGEST DOMESTIC CRISIS FACING AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. MCDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. MCDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, the biggest domestic crisis facing America today is health care. Every 30 seconds, an American files for bankruptcy in the aftermath of a serious health problem. So says a recent study from Harvard University. And that is just one of the chilling new statistics that should compel Congress to act.

Every Band-Aid has been tried and has not solved the problem. Instead, the crisis of health care has been allowed to fester like an open wound. We cannot continue to tinker around the edges.

Today, the health care system is increasingly dysfunctional. America is fast becoming a nation of haves and have-nots, those wealthy enough to afford comprehensive health care coverage and the vast majority of American people struggling to maintain coverage.

It is time to provide universal health care for every American, and the only delivery system that works is a single-payer health care system, which is what I propose in H.R. 1200. We don't need to change the way health care is delivered. We do need to change the way we pay for it.

Today's health care system is pockmarked with inequities, overutilization and uncertainty. We don't get the benefit or the cost-savings of a risk pool that includes every American. Instead, we have wildly different programs, costs and outcomes across this country.

The casualties are mounting and spreading. America's health care crisis is fast becoming America's economic crisis, especially for small business, the backbone of the U.S. economy.

Data compiled by credible organizations reveals the depth of the crisis. We are spending over four times as much on health as we are on national defense, yet 47 million Americans are defenseless because they don't have any health care coverage at all. We are spending over \$2 trillion a year on health, an average of \$6,280 per person, and it is too much.

A Harvard study found that 68 percent of the people filing for bankruptcy had health insurance, and they also had an average of \$12,000 in health-related debt. Unpaid medical expenses play a role in half the bankruptcies in this country.

America is better than that. People don't deserve to fall into financial ruin in the richest nation on Earth because of an illness or an injury.

We tried everything else except the only effective solution, a single-payer system that guarantees every American has a minimum set of health care coverage benefits, decisions made locally in their own town, closest to the

patient, in a universal system that covers every American.

We do this for essential programs and services across America, from national defense to local police and fire. It is a tried and true system that protects everyone by involving everyone working together for the common good.

We have to take the pragmatic approach contained in H.R. 1200 for the good of the American people and the U.S. economy. Big business confronted an 8 percent increase in health expenses last year. Small businesses saw expenses rise by more than 10 percent. The average premium for an employer to provide health insurance to cover a family of four was \$11,500 a year, and employees typically paid \$3,000 of that bill.

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These costs are only going to go higher in the current dysfunctional system.

Uncontrolled business expenses like these are unsustainable. At least one respected business consulting group projects that health expenses will overtake profits in many American businesses next year, 2008. This is not something 40 years down the road, it's next year. More Band-Aids won't stop the bleeding. America's health care system is failing the American people and business.

Affordable health care coverage should be a right, not a privilege, in America; but that's not the way it really is. Those who profit most by the inefficient, bloated and broken system in place today will spend millions of dollars on ads trying to scare you into believing that paying them more and more is in your best interest.

Remember Harry and Louise, that baloney in '93? You're going to see it again. Every American deserves affordable health care coverage. H.R. 1200 will do just that. We have waited too long, and we can't wait any longer.

It is time to act and pass H.R. 1200, universal health care coverage for all Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POMEROY). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### RETURN SOVEREIGNTY BACK TO THE STATES, THE SCHOOL BOARD, AND THE PARENTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, with the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind before us this