

something while paying little or nothing. This undercuts the public's willingness to tax itself for the benefits it wants.

This myth of shared responsibility makes any reform that removes employers from health care much more difficult to enact. If workers and their families continue to believe that they can get a substantial fringe benefit like health insurance at no cost to themselves, they are less likely to consider alternatives. Unless this myth is dispelled, the centerpiece of reform is likely to be an employer mandate. This is regrettable and perpetuates the widely recognized historical mistake of tying health care coverage to employment. Furthermore, an employer mandate is an economically inefficient mechanism to finance health care. Keeping employers in health care, with their varied interests and competencies, impedes major changes necessary for insurance portability, cost control, efficient insurance exchanges, value-based coverage, delivery system reform, and many other essential reforms. Employers should be removed from health care except for enacting wellness programs that directly help maintain productivity and reduce absenteeism. Politicians' rhetoric about shared responsibility reinforces rather than rejects this misconception and inhibits rather than facilitates true health care reform.

Not only does third-party payment attenuate the incentive to compare costs and value, but the notion that someone else is paying for the insurance further reduces the incentive for cost control. Getting Americans invested in cost control will require that they realize they pay the price, not just for the deductibles and co-payments, but for the full insurance premiums too.

Sustainable increases in wages require less explosive growth in health care costs. Only then will increases in productivity show up in higher wages and lower prices, giving a boost to real incomes. Similarly, the only way for states to provide more support for education, environment, and infrastructure is for health care costs to be restrained. Unless the growth in Medicaid and SCHIP are limited to—or close to—revenue increases, they will continue to siphon money that could be spent elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Discussions of health care financing in the United States are distorted by the widely embraced myth of shared responsibility. The common claim that employers, government, and households all pay for health care is false. Employers do not share fiscal responsibility and employers do not pay for health care—they pass it on in the form of lower wages or higher prices. It is essential for Americans to understand that while it looks like they can have a free lunch—having someone else pay for their health insurance—they cannot. The money comes from their own pockets. Understanding this is essential for any sustainable health care reform.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

CONGRATULATING MRS. HOLLY COLLINSWORTH

• Mr. BUNNING. Madam President, I wish to congratulate Mrs. Holly Collinsworth of Ft. Thomas, KY, for being named one of the Cincinnati Enquirer's Women of the Year for her dedication and service to our community. This outstanding award is given annually to 10 women in the northern

Kentucky and Greater Cincinnati area for their hard work and commitment to making our communities a better place to live.

Mrs. Collinsworth, mother of four children, has begun a task never before imagined to help improve Fort Thomas schools. She is currently leading a fundraising campaign that has collected millions of dollars in private money to help renovate the 71-year-old Highlands High School, her alma mater. The school has not been refurbished since the 1960s. With her leadership, over \$7.4 million in private donations, State matching funds and grants has been raised to help with the repairs.

Mrs. Collinsworth's contributions to the Commonwealth do not stop there. She and husband Cris Collinsworth, former Cincinnati Bengal and current NFL broadcaster, are among the founders of UGive, a nonprofit that matches area students fulfilling their school community service requirements with charities in need of volunteers. The UGive program was started this year and will be up and running by August.

Mrs. Collinsworth also serves on the board of the Cris Collinsworth ProScan Fund and cochairs its Pink Ribbon Luncheons which have raised more than \$1 million for programs such as breast cancer education and mammograms for low-income uninsured women.

I thank Mrs. Collinsworth for her dedication and commitment to the community. She has made a tremendous impact on individuals across northern Kentucky and the Greater Cincinnati area. I appreciate all that she has done and will continue to do in the future. Mrs. Collinsworth is truly an inspiration to all Kentuckians.●

RECOGNIZING THE TOWN OF HEBRON

• Mr. DODD. Madam President, today I wish to recognize a significant milestone for one of the towns in my home State of Connecticut. This year, the town of Hebron is celebrating the 300th anniversary of its founding.

As recently as 1930, Hebron's population stood at only 879 people. Today, with an estimated population of 8,600 persons, Hebron continues to exemplify Connecticut's rich heritage. Throughout its history, it has been able to retain its small-town, rural charm that existed when it was first founded on May 26, 1708.

With its wide-open fields, mixture of colonial and contemporary architecture, and the annual Harvest Fair, Hebron provides an idyllic New England setting. Gay City State Park, the town's most widely known attraction, offers a glimpse into Connecticut's industrial roots with the opportunity to explore the ruins of an extinct mill town that existed until the time of the Civil War.

The residents of Hebron are rightfully proud of the town's rich cultural

and agricultural heritage and have scheduled a year's worth of activities to celebrate this momentous occasion. I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating my many friends among the good people of Hebron as they gather this year to celebrate their town's three centuries of history.●

TRIBUTE TO BARBARA J. EASTERLING

• Mr. LAUTENBERG. Madam President, I pay tribute to Barbara J. Easterling for her tireless dedication to workers' rights. Barbara is a true leader, and her commitment to the Communication Workers of America, CWA, is more than worthy of recognition.

Barbara is the first woman ever to serve as CWA's secretary-treasurer—its second-highest office—and she has held the position for the past 16 years. She supervises the budget, finances, and strategic planning of the organization, and is responsible for the union's retiree program. The 700,000 men and women of the CWA have consistently reelected Barbara by acclamation, most recently in 2005.

In addition, Barbara has worked to advance the rights of women in the workplace. She serves on the board of the Union Network International, UNI, a 17-million member labor organization, and is president of the UNI World Women's Committee. For her accomplishments, Barbara has received the Women's Equity Action League Award, the International Women's Democracy Center Global Democracy Award, the Midwest Labor Press Association's Eugene V. Debs Award, and the Ellis Island American Legend Award.

While Barbara has displayed impressive achievements as secretary-treasurer of CWA, she has also found time to contribute to several other worthy organizations. She is cochair of the National Alliance to End Homelessness, a member of the Spinal Bifida Foundation and the Elizabeth Glaser Pediatric AIDS Foundation, and serves on the board of directors of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the Faith and Politics Institute. Barbara has displayed a commendable ability to advance the goals of each of these organizations and increase their impact.

Throughout her long and distinguished career, Barbara has worked to shatter the glass ceiling at the local, national, and international level. I am proud that she was honored last month before a record gathering of union women at the Women in Leadership Development Conference in East Brunswick, NJ. Whether striving to advance the rights of workers, serving as an advocate for women, or volunteering her time on behalf of countless organizations, Barbara has been a strong and effective leader. Barbara embodies the best of the union spirit and I thank her for her service and commitment to the CWA and workers across the country.●