

Austin, we have over 300 rural areas in Texas with cities such as Rollingwood and Hamilton.

Our rural health care providers are scheduled to receive steep cuts in Medicare reimbursement rates on July 1 unless we take action now. Such cuts are catastrophic in rural America, where a disproportionate number of elderly Americans live. These seniors are, per capita, older, poorer and sicker (with greater chronic illnesses) than their urban counterparts. Additionally, recruitment and retention of providers to much of rural America is often daunting. Provider shortages are rampant throughout many rural and most frontier regions.

Additionally, H.R. 6331 also includes several other critical provisions for rural providers which, cumulatively, create a rural package that will help protect both the rural health safety net and the health of tens of millions of seniors who call rural America home.

H.R. 6331 focuses on strengthening primary care and takes significant strides in protecting rural seniors' access to care by correcting certain long-standing inequities between rural and urban providers.

Thank you both for your continued concern for the health of rural Americans. So many enduring inequities in health care must be faced by rural patients and providers daily. H.R. 6331 offers critical assistance and will go far to improving the health of millions of rural Medicare beneficiaries.

Quality measures must continue to be adequately funded in order to promote quality, cost-effective health care for consumers and employers. The uncertainty of Medicare payments makes it increasingly difficult for surgeons and their practices to plan for the expenses that they will incur as they serve their patients.

The provisions included in H.R. 6331 would enable surgeons and surgical practices to plan for the rising costs that they will continue to face over the next year and a half.

By addressing payment levels through 2009, Chairman RANGEL has given us more time to study the payment issues surrounding Medicare and allow us to look at the systemic reforms needed to preserve access to quality surgical care and other physician services.

As a longtime advocate for universal health care, I believe we must continue to support our essential medical providers so that they can focus on patient care. We need more physicians as we seek to expand health care for all Americans. Yet, how can we expect to grow that workforce when we continue to cut their reimbursement levels? We must support our physicians so that they may support and care for their patients. We have to continue to look at how we can save Medicare and expand it to care for those who need it most. Finally, with the recent passing of Dr. Michael E. Debakey, I hope his life and legacy will inspire the Congress to continue to build up the system of the health in America for all Americans.

I urge my colleagues to join me in overriding the President's veto of this very important legislation.

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of overriding the President's veto of this Medicare bill. I may not sit on the Ways and Means Committee but I have followed the progress of this bill minute-by-minute, it seems. The seniors in my community need this bill. The doctors in my community need this bill. If this country wants to assure afford-

able health care for its elderly, this country needs this bill.

The President's veto of this bill was a poorly cloaked nod to the insurance industry. While the rest of us are trying to find a way to reform the Medicare system, the White House is trying to find a way to privatize it. Whereas government has the charge of making sure the program delivers health care efficiently, private insurance has the charge of making sure the program brings a profit to shareholders. Taxpayer dollars should not be making insurance companies rich.

I urge all my colleagues to vote to override. Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of overriding the President's veto of the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008.

It is very unfortunate that the President has sided with the interests of certain big insurance companies against the health care needs of seniors. There are a number of important provisions in this legislation that will benefit more than forty-four million Medicare beneficiaries by preserving patient access to physicians, enhancing preventive and mental health benefits in the Medicare program, extending expiring provisions for rural and other providers, and improving assistance for low-income seniors. Unlike the President, Congress has put aside party politics and is protecting and preserving the health care that seniors depend on.

Madam Speaker, this is an issue that affects all Americans. I strongly urge my House colleagues to override the President's veto on this bipartisan legislation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is, Will the House, on reconsideration, pass the bill, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?

Under the Constitution, the vote must be by the yeas and nays.

Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order: motion to suspend on House Resolution 1259; motion to suspend on House Resolution 1323; and passing H.R. 6331, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

CONGRATULATING THE HAMILTON COLLEGE CONTINENTALS ON WINNING THE NCAA DIVISION III WOMEN'S LACROSSE CHAMPIONSHIP

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the mo-

tion to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1259, as amended, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. BISHOP) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1259, as amended.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 423, nays 0, not voting 11, as follows:

[Roll No. 489]
YEAS—423

Abercrombie	Conaway	Green, Al
Ackerman	Conyers	Green, Gene
Aderholt	Cooper	Grijalva
Akin	Costa	Gutierrez
Alexander	Costello	Hall (NY)
Allen	Courtney	Hall (TX)
Altmire	Cramer	Hare
Andrews	Crenshaw	Harman
Arcuri	Crowley	Hastings (FL)
Baca	Cuellar	Hastings (WA)
Bachmann	Culberson	Hayes
Bachus	Cummings	Heller
Baird	Davis (AL)	Hensarling
Baldwin	Davis (CA)	Herger
Barrett (SC)	Davis (IL)	Herseth Sandlin
Bartlett (MD)	Davis (KY)	Higgins
Barton (TX)	Davis, David	Hill
Bean	Davis, Lincoln	Hinchee
Becerra	Davis, Tom	Hinojosa
Berkley	Deal (GA)	Hirono
Berman	DeFazio	Hobson
Berry	DeGette	Hodes
Biggert	Delahunt	Hoekstra
Bilbray	DeLauro	Holden
Billirakis	Dent	Holt
Bishop (GA)	Diaz-Balart, L.	Honda
Bishop (NY)	Diaz-Balart, M.	Hooley
Bishop (UT)	Dicks	Hoyer
Blackburn	Dingell	Hulshof
Blumenauer	Doggett	Hunter
Blunt	Donnelly	Inglis (SC)
Boehner	Doolittle	Inslee
Bono Mack	Doyle	Israel
Boozman	Drake	Issa
Boren	Dreier	Jackson (IL)
Boucher	Duncan	Jackson-Lee
Boustany	Edwards (MD)	(TX)
Boyd (FL)	Edwards (TX)	Jefferson
Boyd (KS)	Ehlers	Johnson (GA)
Brady (PA)	Ellison	Johnson (IL)
Brady (TX)	Ellsworth	Johnson, E. B.
Braley (IA)	Emanuel	Johnson, Sam
Brown (SC)	Emerson	Jones (NC)
Brown, Corrine	Engel	Jones (OH)
Brown-Waite,	English (PA)	Jordan
Ginny	Eshoo	Kagen
Buchanan	Etheridge	Kanjorski
Burgess	Everett	Kaptur
Burton (IN)	Fallin	Keller
Butterfield	Farr	Kennedy
Buyer	Fattah	Kildee
Calvert	Feeney	Kilpatrick
Camp (MI)	Ferguson	Kind
Campbell (CA)	Filner	King (IA)
Cannon	Flake	King (NY)
Cantor	Forbes	Kingston
Capito	Fortenberry	Kirk
Capps	Fossella	Klein (FL)
Capuano	Foster	Kline (MN)
Cardoza	Fox	Knollenberg
Carnahan	Frank (MA)	Kucinich
Carney	Franks (AZ)	Kuhl (NY)
Carson	Frelinghuysen	LaHood
Carter	Gallely	Lamborn
Castle	Garrett (NJ)	Lampson
Castor	Gerlach	Langevin
Cazayoux	Giffords	Larsen (WA)
Chabot	Gilchrest	Larson (CT)
Chandler	Gillibrand	Latham
Childers	Gingrey	LaTourette
Clarke	Gohmert	Latta
Clay	Gonzalez	Lee
Cleaver	Goode	Levin
Clyburn	Goodlatte	Lewis (CA)
Coble	Gordon	Lewis (KY)
Cohen	Granger	Linder
Cole (OK)	Graves	Lipinski