

NO DISCRIMINATION IN HEALTH CARE

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Mr. Speaker, today, much of the conversation is about the health care system. It's a very personal matter to me, as it is to every man, woman and child in American. I have a daughter with epilepsy. She is not insurable. We have a system in place today that denies her coverage, that excludes her from coverage. That's wrong, and it's probably unconstitutional under the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution.

There should not be discrimination in health care. There shouldn't be denial of coverage because of a pre-existing condition. We need to change the system that exists so that there is coverage for all Americans with chronic illness and the like.

The bill that we have in Congress will change that coverage, ladies and gentlemen, and I urge its passage.

□ 1015

SOCIAL SECURITY EXECS HAVE FUN AT THE BILTMORE HOTEL

(Mr. POE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, Social Security Administration executives recently enjoyed a luxury retreat at the expense of the American taxpayer. They flew 700 of their managers to the picture perfect, swanky Arizona Biltmore Hotel for what they called "organizational training."

It cost the taxpayers \$750,000. These bureaucrats enjoyed golf, musical entertainment, dancing, skits, catered food, cocktails and even a casino night. Sounds like a vacation for the rich and famous.

Meanwhile, seniors are worried about even getting their monthly Social Security checks.

There was a near riot when taxpayers found out AIG spent half that amount for their luxury retreat by using taxpayer bailout money. But the Social Security spokesman, Peter Spencer dismissed the comparison with AIG by saying, Well, it's different taxpayer money. I'm glad he cleared that up for us.

The arrogance of the Social Security execs to be jet-setting around the country, going to a luxury spa, and then making people paying into Social Security pick up the \$750,000 tab is disgraceful. I guess the spendacrats never heard of teleconferencing or even the Motel 6.

And that's just the way it is.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH INSURANCE OPTION—CONTROLLING SKYROCKETING HEALTH CARE COSTS

(Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, yesterday we had the historic introduction of our health reform act. This bill is going to fundamentally improve care for Americans, for people that have insurance but also for people that don't.

Importantly, this legislation includes a robust public health insurance option. The cost of health care insurance is just too high for people that have it and businesses that are paying for it, and the public health insurance option is going to be one of our most effective ways to bring the cost of insurance down.

Don't take my word for it. Take a study by the Commonwealth Fund that shows that premiums for individuals can be reduced by 25 percent by the pressure put on private insurers by a public health insurance option. That's why studies show that 70 percent to 80 percent of Americans want the option to purchase a public insurance option because it will lower their costs, both as individuals and as employees of businesses throughout this country who are paying far too much for health care.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage us to take a serious look at a very, very important health care bill that's been introduced before us.

DEMOCRAT HEALTH REFORM

(Mr. GINGREY of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, yesterday House Democratic leadership held a press conference to introduce their health care reform legislation. As a physician who has practiced medicine for more than 30 years, I have major concerns that this plan will ultimately put a government bureaucrat in between patients and their doctors and eventually lead to a one-size-fits-all health care system where the government decide what treatments are necessary for patients. When money gets tight, this leads to rationing of care and long waiting lists for patients. We've already seen the pilot of this program. It's called TennCare. Just ask the Democratic governor of Tennessee what it's done to the budget in their State.

I want to read just a sentence of testimony from a Canadian doctor who has seen firsthand the consequences of a single-payer system on his patients.

"What we have in Canada is access to a government state-mandated wait list. And the wait lists are long, the patients are languishing and suffering on wait lists. Our own Supreme Court of Canada has stated that patients are actually dying as they wait for care in Canada."

Mr. Speaker, this is not the sort of health care reform that the American people want or need.

MENTAL HEALTH PARITY IN HEALTH CARE REFORM

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, anyone ever heard the expression, "the proof is in the pudding"? Well, when the private health insurance companies found out that there may not be a government option, you know what happened to the health insurance stocks on Wall Street? They went through the roof. Profits skyrocketed because, you know why? The health insurance companies make money off of the consumers when they don't have competition, when they're able to cut your health care and make profits out of denying you health insurance. That's how the private marketplace makes money, by denying you health care. They only want to cover the healthy and well.

We have the government option, the public option, to guarantee the American people that they get the health care that they paid for. * * *

We're on the side of the American people. We want to protect the people so that they can get their health care, irrespective of a preexisting health care condition.

I'm proud that this health care plan covers all preexisting conditions, including mental health parity as covered by the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act that was passed and signed by President Bush.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, the words were just said that the Republicans, pointing over here, are bought and paid for. I would ask that those words be taken down.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members will suspend. The gentleman from Rhode Island has taken a seat.

The Clerk will report the words.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, I did not mean to impugn the reputation of any individual Member. I was merely speaking about the party that was representing the insurance companies.

I ask unanimous consent to withdraw the words.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Rhode Island?

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my request that the words be taken down since they are withdrawn and I appreciate my friend doing so.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the words are withdrawn.

There was no objection.

DON'T HURT LOW-WAGE EARNERS

(Mr. GOHMERT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. GOHMERT. I know we have disagreements on some of these issues and I know what the intent is of the Democratic-proposed health care bill. And I know the intent is not to hurt the lower-wage earner. But this bill that's

being proposed is going to hammer employers with an 8 percent penalty if they don't provide health care.

Well, so they're going to turn around and provide health care because the people I know are saying, We're just hanging on. We've got these good workers. We don't want to lose them. So if I'm going to be penalized 8 percent, I'll have to provide health care; but I'm going to have to reduce their wages by the amount the health care costs. It may be \$5,000 or \$6,000.

And I'm begging my friends on the other side—this is my plea, Mr. Speaker—don't take \$5,000 or \$6,000 of wages from the lowest-wage earners right now. Don't force small businesses—and I know there is an exemption at the low end—but smaller businesses are still going to have to either lay people off, pay an 8 percent penalty, or take wages away.

Don't hurt our lower-wage workers.

HEALTH CARE IN AMERICA

(Mr. WEINER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WEINER. You know, I would say to the American people who are watching the oncoming debate about health care that in many ways we already know what the two sides are—the Republican Party, the party that opposed the Medicare Act, opposed Social Security, opposed Medicaid. The Republican Party has made it very clear they're not only the Party of No; they're the party of ignoring the problems of the middle class and those struggling to make it.

The Democratic Party, the party that is producing this legislation, is the party that has again and again said, We're going to step up to the challenges facing this country.

Now, if you believe that we are spending just the right amount, that we're not spending too much money on health care, you're alone, because I think we're spending trillions upon trillions of dollars more than we need to. If you think that the hundreds of billions of dollars people are paying for out-of-pocket is just right, then you probably want the Republican Party's plan, which is to do nothing.

But the Democratic Party under the leadership of FRANK PALLONE and Barack Obama and others are saying, We're going to try to solve this problem. You know why? Because that's what we do. That's what Democrats do.

Now the Republican Party doesn't do that. They say, No, no, no. But we have a problem. If you want choice, if you want affordability, and if you want health care for your family, you're going to get it with the Democratic Party, not with the Republican Party.

SPEND, SPEND, SPEND

(Mr. WESTMORELAND asked and was given permission to address the

House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WESTMORELAND. The last speaker just talked about what the Republicans want to do. Well, what the Democrats want to do is spend, spend, spend. And I gave a little math lesson yesterday, and I'd like to revisit that today, Mr. Speaker.

You know, we talk about millions of dollars and we talk about billions of dollars and we talk about trillions of dollars. The more you hear those words, they just become words, and you don't realize how much money that is.

A million seconds equals a little over 11 days. A billion seconds is 31 years and 8 months. A trillion seconds is 31,710 years. If I gave you \$1,000 a second, it would take me 31.7 years to give you \$1 trillion at \$1,000 a second.

We're not the Party of No. We're the party of doing what we can afford. The Democrats are the party of throwing money at any problem that comes about, with no regard to what it's costing the American taxpayer.

TAKING CONTROL OF SKYROCKETING COSTS

(Mrs. DAHLKEMPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. DAHLKEMPER. Mr. Speaker, any meaningful attempts to create long-term, sustainable health care reform must begin by taking control of our skyrocketing costs. That means we must get serious about combating obesity, a preventable disease that costs this country \$117 billion. To that end, I have introduced two pieces of legislation.

The first bill is called the Obesity Treatment and Wellness Act of 2009, which addresses the fact that half the costs associated with obesity are paid through Medicare and Medicaid. My legislation directs Medicaid to pay for nutrition counseling, which can effectively treat this disease.

My second bill, the Healthy Communities Act of 2009, sets up a 5-year public-private community grant program to encourage a community approach to promoting wellness and fighting obesity.

Mr. Speaker, only when we make wellness a major component of our reform efforts can we expect to get control of costs. I urge my colleagues to join me in this effort to ensure quality, affordable health care that works for all Americans.

HIGH-QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE CHOICES

(Mr. YARMUTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, opponents of health care reform have tried for months to attack our efforts to bring high-quality, affordable care to all Americans. Their favorite scare tac-

tic has been to allege that a public option will somehow lead to a "government takeover" of health care. This could not be further from the truth.

Under the plan we introduced yesterday, the CBO projects that just 3 percent of Americans will be enrolled in the public plan once it is fully implemented, hardly a government takeover. In fact, the CBO estimates that employer-provided plans will have millions of new enrollees under the legislation and that most of those Americans using the health care exchange will choose private insurance for their coverage.

This is a uniquely American solution that combines the best of the public and private sectors to bring some much-needed competition to the health care marketplace, giving American families the peace of mind of knowing they will always have high-quality, affordable health care choices.

AMERICAN SOLUTIONS FOR AMERICAN HEALTH

(Ms. WATSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, we urgently need to fix the health care system for American families. Every day, Americans worry not simply about getting well, but whether they can afford to get the kind of health care they need. For American businesses, soaring health care costs put American companies at a competitive disadvantage in a global economy. For our fiscal future we have the most expensive health care system in the world.

We're emphasizing cost, choice, security, and quality. We want a policy that costs less, covers more, and is quality. Your choice. You have it. If you like it, you keep it. For security and peace of mind, for quality patient-centered care, we want American solutions for American health.

MOTION TO ADJOURN

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion to adjourn.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 23, nays 361, not voting 48, as follows:

[Roll No. 537]

YEAS—23

Bartlett	Gingrey (GA)	Shadegg
Barton (TX)	Gohmert	Souder
Blackburn	Hensarling	Spratt
Broun (GA)	Johnson (IL)	Thornberry
Campbell	King (IA)	Tiahrt
Chaffetz	Olson	Westmoreland
Flake	Pence	Young (AK)
Garrett (NJ)	Price (GA)	