

strengthen it for those seniors that have not yet turned 65.

□ 1445

JUST SAY "NO"

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, one of the interesting debate points that we are listening to today is the assertion that somehow what we need to do is just allow people to sell insurance across State lines, and that's going to solve all our problems. Well, first of all, you can buy insurance today across State lines. What we don't do is allow somebody who incorporates in a State with very weak protections and minimal provisions to go in and undercut the laws of other States that seek to protect their citizens. You can buy insurance as you see fit. It's just that people who are going to play in a market have to play by the rules, and if somebody cheats, then there is an opportunity to use the local insurance commissioner to protect the consumer.

Under the legislation that we're proposing, the only thing that changes is that for the first time, some of the States that haven't protected their consumers will have higher standards. This is a good thing.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, the senior citizens in my district are scared, literally scared. They ask me, What are the Democrats planning to do to my Medicare and Medicaid? And I have to tell them, I really don't know because the Democrats are hiding behind closed doors in the dark and keeping the rest of us out of the picture. So we don't know for sure. Except we do know this: They are planning massive cuts to Medicare, upwards of \$500 billion, and massive cuts to Medicare Advantage that will result in a loss of health care for millions of seniors. According to the Congressional Budget Office, that Advantage cut would be around \$162 billion. As a result, Medicare Advantage plans will drop out of the program, limiting seniors' choices and causing many of them to lose their current health care coverage. Cuts to Medicare Advantage will have an exceptionally harmful effect on seniors in rural areas like mine. I urge us to reject this plan.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, all throughout history, there's been the big lie, and we've got the big lie going here again.

It goes like this: Republicans won't let us have health care reform.

Republicans are the Party of No. Why are Republicans stopping us from reforming health care?

Well, I'm going to tell you something—the Democrats have won the last two elections because we did such a bang-up job. But the fact of the matter is, there are 257 of them. There are only 177 of us, although it looks like a bigger number over here today. We couldn't stop a one-car parade. This health care discussion is a fight between the left and the far left. And sadly for the Democratic majority, they've got people in their party that think that this health care proposal proposed by the far left is wacky. It takes \$500 billion out of Medicare. You do nothing with the lawyers as they file lawsuits and cause doctors to practice defensive medicine.

This is a bad bill. They can't even get their own team to row the boat, but they want to say, Republicans don't want to reform health care.

HEALTH CARE

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

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, health care reform has gripped the Congress for the better part of a year now, and we're finally getting to the core of this debate: cost. Without an affordable system of health care, we'll forever have problems with access. But too many good bipartisan proposals to lower costs have been ignored—eliminating international barriers to market access for U.S. consumers, speeding new generics to market, promoting comparative effectiveness research, and better decision-making tools for doctors and their patients.

You may ask, Why? It's real simple. The administration made an \$80 billion deal with the big drug companies that prevents us from offering our proposals to save consumers money on their medicine. Our constituents who often have trouble paying for their medicines today will continue subsidizing the people from other countries who pay half of what we do for the same drugs. So this \$80 billion deal actually makes more money for big drug companies because it will encourage more people to take brand-name pills instead of generics, increasing the market share and profits of the drug companies. No wonder they were so quick to accept this deal, and what a scam the administration has fallen prey to.

HEALTH CARE

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

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to read the comments in a letter I received from Mr. Bradley Ball, one of my constituents in New Hamp-

shire, because I don't think his voice is being heard on the floor today. He said that he was lucky enough to have insurance, but he had to pay for it himself, almost \$7,000 a year. He said, "So to keep my current health care policy is just less than \$7,000 a year, and my copay for Thalidomide could be as low as \$810 a month. That translates into \$16,620, rounding off, just including that one medication in health care expenses for a year. Of course there are more. My monthly income is \$1,660, \$19,920 a year, through disability and pensions. How can I pay for my other expenses—heat, electricity, food, clothing, shelter, et cetera, on the remaining \$3,300 I will have each year? Do I have some savings? Yes. But very soon I am going to run out of all my possibilities. What will you have me do next?"

Then he goes on to say that he could live if we could get the prescriptions for him and help him pay his health insurance. And then he says, "I don't think that in the United States of America this is what anyone would wish on anyone else. I know you would not want to be in this situation. I don't care whether it's called a right or a privilege, the current system is broken. Please help fix it."

WHEN WILL YOU LISTEN?

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

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, last week I received a call that every Member of Congress fears: a plant with 1,100 jobs in a town of 9,000 residents closed its doors. We want to be there for them, and we will be there for them as the symptoms of a bad economy entangle their lives. But Americans are asking you a larger question today. The question is, When will this government listen to the voice of wisdom, shouting for us to address the causes of a bad economy and not just the symptoms?

As one of 17 Members of Congress who voted against every one of your bailout stimulus bills, I watched you ignore that voice of wisdom as you saddled our grandchildren with a debt that they will wear for decades as a badge of dishonor for your deafness. I watched as you ignored it as you tried to impose your energy agenda, knowing it would stifle America's competitiveness and kill jobs. And I watched as you ignore it while you try to tax our existing jobs into oblivion.

Mr. Speaker, today Americans are asking a simple question: When will you listen?

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I am here representing the families in my congressional district that need health