

Mr. HOYER. I think you sort of asked the question and then I didn't respond to it as to when we may first consider the bill itself; so let me back up from there.

I expect the manager's amendment to be available on Monday, and I expect there to be 72 hours for the body to have notice of that as well as the general public. I would expect, therefore, the earliest votes to be no earlier than Thursday, 72 hours after the manager's amendment is put online. So that may be Thursday at some point in time, but we will meet that 72-hour pledge that we have made.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

Finally, on the issue of this massive bill on health care that we are about to debate next week, I would ask, Madam Speaker, the gentleman whether we can expect the doctor reimbursement bill to be included in this bill or whether it will be coming as a separate bill to the floor.

I yield.

Mr. HOYER. As the gentleman knows, the so-called sustainable growth rate, which as you referred correctly, as we all sort of refer to it as the doc fix or compensation, as the gentleman knows, the Senate tried to pass a freestanding bill on the sustainable growth rate so that doctors do not receive a 21 percent decrease on January 1 in their Medicare reimbursement rates.

On our side of the aisle, we are strongly in favor of making sure that that cut does not occur. We think that will not serve seniors in particular, because medical personnel will be unable to serve with those compensation levels. As a result, we very much expect to have a sustainable growth rate bill pass this House.

As the gentleman knows, we have done that in years past, not related necessarily to any other health reform bill. It is an issue in and of itself that relates to existing Medicare. The health care reform bill deals with the reform and the creation of a system of affordable, accessible, quality health care for all Americans. The sustainable growth rate deals with the present system. We have got to deal with it, and I will tell the gentleman it's my intention that we make sure that we bring to the floor a sustainable growth rate. We've been discussing it with the Senate because the Senate tried to do it and was not successful in passing that. We want to see success. It is absolutely essential that we do that. Whether we do health care reform or not, we will do that. So I tell my friend that we are going to have that probably, probably, as a freestanding piece of legislation.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

I know that, as he discussed the Senate's experience with that bill, obviously the question of a deficit is looming large surrounding that issue, and I would note that, Madam Speaker.

But in closing—

Mr. HOYER. Will my friend yield on that point?

Mr. CANTOR. I yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank my friend for yielding, because I did not mention that. We are and, as the gentleman knows, I am very concerned about the looming deficits that have been caused by the very substantial economic downturn and our necessity to respond to that under the previous administration and under this administration. We need to get a handle on that.

One of the things that we have pledged in our budget to do is to make sure that statutory PAYGO is put in place which will be an extrinsic constraint, if you will, a statutory constraint on the spending, whether it's spending in terms of entitlement spending, whether it's in terms of revenues or in terms of spending. Both have an adverse impact on deficit. So it is my expectation that when we deal with either the sustainable growth rate, the doc fix, or the estate tax or the AMT or middle class income tax reduction, we will include provisions for statutory PAYGO to be sent with that legislation to the Senate, as is consistent with the budget that we passed and that the Senate passed.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman.

And I know that he knows the reported agreement on all of this excludes the doc fix as well as those other items from being paid for, which is of concern to him, I know, as well as many of us when we're considering this health bill and then choose to leave out a significant portion of government expense under Medicare in terms of reimbursing providers under the SGR.

Mr. HOYER. Will my friend yield?

Mr. CANTOR. I yield.

Mr. HOYER. Let me ask my friend, just so I know as we move forward, if we do not consider the health reform bill, is the gentleman in favor of moving a reimbursement for doctors provision notwithstanding that?

Mr. CANTOR. I think the gentleman knows that I, as well as most of my colleagues, Madam Speaker, will be supportive of trying to address the inequities that exist in the current SGR formula, and he has my commitment to want to work to try to fix and right those inequities since the payment formulas that have been established are far from matching the realities of practice expense for our physicians.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman and look forward to his help.

Mr. CANTOR. I thank the gentleman for that.

In closing, Madam Speaker, after we have had this discussion and the colloquy and the gentleman's words as well as mine for some time now, I would just note for the gentleman as well as our colleagues that 41 percent of the American people, according to a recent Gallup Poll, think the economy should be our top priority while only 17 percent think that health care should be Congress's top priority.

In addition to that, Madam Speaker, there was a poll out over the last several weeks by a Democratic pollster,

Jeff Garin, in which was cited that 81 percent of Americans do not think that the majority, do not think the Democrats are doing enough to address the disappearing jobs in our economy.

So, Madam Speaker, I close with that. I thank the gentleman very much for his time.

Mr. HOYER. Before you close, will you yield on that issue?

Mr. CANTOR. I yield.

Mr. HOYER. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Those were interesting polls. Did the gentleman miss the portion of the poll that reflected which party the American public trusted more to deal with either one of those issues? I didn't hear you say it. I happened to have seen those polls and happened to have seen those numbers, and I just wondered if the gentleman had seen those numbers.

Mr. CANTOR. In closing, Madam Speaker, I would respond to the gentleman just by saying I don't think neither he nor I are proud of what the public views as the performance of this body as a whole.

ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2009

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Monday next for morning-hour debate, and further, that when the House adjourns on that day, it adjourn to meet at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, November 3, 2009, for morning-hour debate and 9 a.m. for legislative business.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. PIN-GREE of Maine). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Maryland?

There was no objection.

AUTHORIZING THE SPEAKER TO DECLARE A RECESS ON TUES- DAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2009, FOR THE PURPOSE OF RECEIVING IN JOINT MEETING HER EXCEL- LENCY ANGELA MERKEL, CHAN- CELLOR OF THE FEDERAL RE- PUBLIC OF GERMANY

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it may be in order at any time on Tuesday, November 3, 2009, for the Speaker to declare a recess, subject to the call of the Chair, for the purpose of receiving in joint meeting Her Excellency Angela Merkel, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

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

There was no objection.

□ 1900

H1N1 VACCINATIONS

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