

abortions for which the expenditure of Federal funds appropriated for the Department of Health and Human Services is permitted.

Then it goes on and says, Based on the laws in effect of the date that is 6 months before the beginning of the plan year involved—yeah, right—no money there will be used for abortions, and then there it is in black and white.

We were told that if you liked your plan, you're going to get to keep it. And yet you could go over here—actually, that's an easy section to find. You're not going to be keeping it because it says here—and this is on page 91. This says, Protecting the Choice to Keep Current Coverage. The number one limitation on keeping your insurance, the individual health insurance issuer offering such coverage does not enroll any individual in such coverage. The second limitation is the issuer does not change any of its terms or conditions. Good grief. You're going to add beneficiaries to every policy, you're going to change terms and conditions. It turns out that wasn't true either.

It is time to be true and faithful in this job to the American people and the job for which they sent us here. It is time to honor the Constitution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. MCHENRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. MCHENRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SESTAK) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SESTAK addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. KAPTUR addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. ROSLEHTINEN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. CHU) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. CHU addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gen-

tleman from Georgia (Mr. DEAL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEAL of Georgia addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Montana (Mr. REHBERG) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. REHBERG addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ABORTION AND THE DEMOCRAT HEALTH CARE BILL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, even though reputable polls consistently show that public funding of abortion is opposed by a supermajority of Americans, some 67 percent, the multibillion-dollar abortion industry, its lobbyists and friends in Congress are today demanding that the two massive new government programs created by the Democratic leadership's so-called "health care reform" bill force Americans to facilitate and fund the killing of unborn children by abortion.

Anyone who tells you otherwise—and I appreciate the gentleman from Texas pointing out the text. It clearly states it. Anyone who tells you otherwise that public funding for abortion on demand is not in the pending legislation is either seriously misinformed or simply not telling the truth.

Americans do want to know up front what's in this bill. No games. No brinksmanship. Americans want and the public deserves total transparency and truth in legislating.

Madam Speaker, despite the fact that in 2009 we know more and understand more about the magnificent world of unborn children than ever before—the fact that these babies move inside the womb and stretch and do somersaults and kick, they wake and sleep, believe it or not—and it is true, they have a waking and sleeping cycle. The fact that beneficial prenatal health care interventions, including microsurgery, can be performed in utero, inside the womb, the fact that these children can feel excruciating physical pain before birth, including the pain deliberately inflicted by abortionists—I would note, parenthetically, that I authored the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, which got 250 votes in a bipartisan vote a couple of years ago. And we know for a fact that at least at 20 weeks gestation, unborn children feel excruciating pain up to four times what everyone else after birth feels because the pain receptors are very close to the skin. And we do believe that these children

feel pain even earlier than the 20th week. Despite all of this, President Obama and the Democratic leadership are on a fast track to compel, force, mandate, and coerce public funding for abortions.

Madam Speaker, pro-life Americans want no role or complicity in this assault on the weakest and the most vulnerable. Frankly, Madam Speaker, it is time to face an inconvenient truth—abortion is violence against children, and it exploits and harms women.

There has been study after study that shows that women who procure abortions experience immediate relief followed by very serious psychological and deleterious consequences to them. And the younger they are, it appears, based on the empirical data, the more egregious the pain and suffering and the agony endured by these young women.

New Zealand did a study in 2006, a very comprehensive study, and found that 78.6 percent of the 15- to 18-year-old girls who had abortions displayed symptoms of major depression compared to 31 percent of their peers. Twenty-seven percent of the 21- to 25-year-old women who had abortions had suicidal idealization compared to 8 percent of those who did not have abortions. Abortion hurts women.

I would remind my colleagues that organizations like the Silent No More Campaign, run so admirably and courageously by people like Dr. Alveda King, the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, a woman who had two abortions and had profound, profound psychological problems from that but now knows reconciliation and hope again, Silent No More is made up exclusively of women who have had abortions. Dr. King has said that her uncle's dream, how does it survive if we murder the children? And then she went on to say the other victim is and always will be the woman.

Time magazine, and others, has finally reported on another little known fact—abortion adversely affects subsequent children born to women who abort. Recent studies have indicated that the risks of preterm birth goes up 36 percent after one abortion, and a staggering 93 percent after two or more abortions. Similarly, the risk of subsequent children being born with low birth weight increases by 36 percent after one abortion and 72 percent after two or more.

The health consequences to subsequent children born to women who abort is deeply troubling and largely unrecognized and underreported upon. Thus, abortion not only kills babies and wounds women, it directly injures subsequent children. And as we all know, prematurity is one of the leading causes of disabilities in children.

As you know better than I, Madam Speaker, Congress will vote as early as Saturday on the health care restructuring bill, H.R. 3962, and it includes highly deceptive policy language that will massively increase the number of

children killed and mothers wounded by abortion. Let's be clear and unambiguous, both the public option and the program establishing affordability credits authorize public funding and facilitation of abortion on demand, which means, of course, that the number of children who will be forced to suffer unspeakable agony of abortion methods including dismemberment, decapitation, starvation—people say, How does RU46 work? First it starves the baby to death, and then the other chemical in RU46 just simply causes that dead baby to be expelled from the uterus. Then there are also chemicals that are providing for or forcing early expulsion from the womb and other types of chemical poisoning. All of this will skyrocket.

The empirical evidence that public funding of abortions means more abortions is both logical and compelling. Even the Goodmacher Institute, formerly the research arm of Planned Parenthood, says that prohibiting Federal funds under the Hyde Amendment prevents abortions that otherwise would have been procured by a stunning 25 percent. That means that since enactment of the funding ban in the late seventies and early eighties, millions of children who would have otherwise been brutally killed by abortionists if public funding had facilitated their demise today, live and go to school, play sports, perhaps watched the World Series last night. Some of those spared are today raising their own kids, perhaps even serving as staff or Members of Congress. So whether we publicly fund abortion or not literally means life or death for countless individuals, going forward.

The Democratic health bill, Madam Speaker, discriminates against the most vulnerable minority in America today, unborn babies, and is the quintessential example of the politics of exclusion—in this case because of the child's age, condition of dependency, and vulnerability.

There is nothing whatsoever benign, compassionate, or nurturing about abortion. Abortion is a serious lethal violation of human rights. And now we are on the verge of being compelled to massively subsidize this violence against children.

Madam Speaker, no one is really fooled by the multiple attempts to craft language that funds abortions but uses surface appeal text to suggest otherwise. I'm afraid the rule will likely contain self-enacting text that further misleads and obfuscates. Thus, the only policy language that honestly and transparently precludes public funding for abortion is the Stupak-Pitts amendment. The Capps amendment that is already in the bill, as I said, explicitly authorizes Federal funding for abortion in the public option. And again, I urge Members to just read it. With abortion covered under the public option, we will see more abortions. It also allows the government subsidies, the other program, to pay for insur-

ance plans that cover abortion. As a matter of fact, every region will have to have a plan that provides for abortion.

One of the great successes of the Right to Life movement is increasingly calling out to those so-called providers, abortionists, and inviting them to leave that grizzly business. And most of the hospitals in the country and most of the counties in the country no longer have abortionists. This legislation provides economic incentives and the force of law to ensure that every one of these localities has abortionists and abortions provided in a plan.

Madam Speaker, I urge Members to vote for the Bart Stupak-Joe Pitts amendment if it is given an opportunity to be voted on. And if not, this whole bill—because you know what Hippocrates said, "Do no harm." What did the great leaders and nurturers and health care leaders say in the past? Never do harm to an innocent. This is not health care. Abortion is not health care. It is the deliberate and willful killing of an unborn child, the wounding of their mothers, and the hurting, the serious destruction in terms of disabilities and the like to subsequent children.

I would like to yield Congresswoman SCHMIDT such time as she might consume. And I want to thank her for her leadership on behalf of the unborn through these many years in service to Congress and before that.

□ 1915

Mrs. SCHMIDT. Thank you so much, my good friend from New Jersey. I'm having a display brought up.

I would like to talk a minute about something that happened to me over the weekend, and I would like to go back 35 years ago because, well, in the exact same environment, a similar situation occurred.

I'm Catholic and I go to mass. Every weekend, I go to mass. In fact, I go everyday, but 35 years ago when I went to mass, it was right before election, and I remember my Catholic priest, Francis Buttlemyer, said something that really shocked me.

He said, when we went to the polls that Tuesday, we had a choice to make for a Member of Congress—and yeah, we had a Catholic running and we had a non-Catholic running, but the Catholic was pro-choice and the non-Catholic was pro-life. He said that you have to vote for the person who will protect the unborn. I remember coming home and saying to my mother how surprised I was that this priest had been so bold.

Well, last Saturday night, I didn't go to my Catholic church. I went to a different one in my community. During our litany of prayers, they mentioned the fact that Congress would be voting on a bill, the health care bill, and that, in the bill, there were some issues that the Catholic church had with it—abortion, our elderly and the conscience clause for our health care professionals—and that we must pray that

they resolve these before we vote on this legislation. I was blown away by that, but what came next stunned me more.

The priest stood up and said, Look, I've got to talk about this for a minute. He did. Then he said, There will be an insert in the bulletin. This was the insert: "Health care reform is about saving lives, not destroying them." The second part of it is a letter from the Catholic conference of bishops: "Tell Congress: Remove abortion funding and mandates from needed health care reform."

So they're in favor of health care reform but not of this health care reform. In fact, I want to put these two things into the public record. I was stunned because I hadn't in 35 years heard from the pulpit this strong of a message.

So, when I got in the car, I started to make some phone calls to some of my relatives around the city. What had they heard? The same thing. The priest had said something, and yes, it was in the bulletin. In my own home parish, yep, our priest said something, and yep, it was in the bulletin. It made me think that, if this moved the Catholic church after 35 years in my district to speak again publicly about abortion, this is something that is truly serious because, Madam Speaker, it is a game changer.

So, today, when I read the Roll Call, Madam Speaker, I read: Activists gear up for fight.

I thought, Ooh, what's this about? I'd like to read it.

It reads: Lately, Donna Crane hasn't been making it home early. The policy director of NARAL Pro-Choice America has been lobbying nonstop to ensure that the House does not slip anti-abortion language into its health care legislation, which the Chamber is expected to vote on this weekend.

We're working a lot of late nights, Crane said.

Then it goes on to talk about how various lobbyists are trying to have input into this, but it ends by saying that NARAL and the other pro-choice groups are comfortable with the Capps language and are comfortable with the Ellsworth language. The reason they are is that it really doesn't prohibit the funding of abortion. It's a ruse—it's a game—because what it says is that at least one plan has to have it, but we're going to have this little magical thing over here that's going to allow it to be funded in a different way before it comes through the public fund system.

Madam Speaker, the language in this bill, either the Capps amendment or the Ellsworth amendment, will not only allow the public funding of abortion for the first time with Federal dollars since the Hyde amendment in 1976, but it will also expand it, and that's the dirty, little secret in this bill.

This Saturday, we are to vote on this bill at right about the same time that I was in church last Saturday night, at right about this same time that the

priest stood up and said, Tell your Member of Congress.

Let me tell you, Madam Speaker, that it made me a little nervous because they kind of were looking at me, and I wanted to put up a sign and say, I get it, but I couldn't.

At right about this same time, we're going to be making a decision, not just on the health care for Americans and on the game changer that that is, but on a point that for the last 35 years has been protected, and that is not allowing the public funding of abortion.

Madam Speaker, we cannot allow the public funding of abortion to occur in any way in this bill. It is truly a game changer, and until it is corrected, no one should even contemplate anything but a "no" on this bill.

UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS NATIONWIDE BULLETIN

Tell Congress: Remove abortion funding and mandates from needed health care reform.

Congress is preparing to debate health care reform legislation on the House and Senate floors. Genuine health care reform should protect the life and dignity of all people from the moment of conception until natural death. The U.S. bishops' conference has concluded that all committee-approved bills are seriously deficient on the issues of abortion and conscience, and do not provide adequate access to health care for immigrants and the poor. The bills will have to change or the bishops have pledged to oppose them.

Our nation is at a crossroads. Policies adopted in health care reform will have an impact for good or ill for years to come. None of the bills retains longstanding current policies against abortion funding or abortion coverage mandates, and none fully protects conscience rights in health care.

As the U.S. bishops' letter of October 8 states: "No one should be required to pay for or participate in abortion. It is essential that the legislation clearly apply to this new program longstanding and widely supported federal restrictions on abortion funding and mandates, and protections for rights of conscience. No current bill meets this test. . . . If acceptable language in these areas cannot be found, we will have to oppose the health care bill vigorously."

For the full text of this letter and more information on proposed legislation and the bishops' advocacy for authentic health care reform, visit: [www.usccb.org/healthcare](http://www.usccb.org/healthcare).

Congressional leaders are attempting to put together final bills for floor consideration. Please contact your Representative and Senators today and urge them to fix these bills with the pro-life amendments noted below. Otherwise much needed health care reform will have to be opposed. Health care reform should be about saving lives, not destroying them.

Action: Contact Members through e-mail, phone calls or FAX letters. To send a pre-written, instant e-mail to Congress go to [www.usccb.org/action](http://www.usccb.org/action). Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Members' local offices. Full contact info can be found on Members' web sites at [www.house.gov](http://www.house.gov) and [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov).

Message to Senate: "During floor debate on the health care reform bill, please support an amendment to incorporate longstanding policies against abortion funding and in favor of conscience rights. If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed."

Message to House: "Please support the Stupak Amendment that addresses essential

pro-life concerns on abortion funding and conscience rights in the health care reform bill. Help ensure that the Rule for the bill allows a vote on this amendment. If these serious concerns are not addressed, the final bill should be opposed."

When: Both House and Senate are preparing for floor votes now. Act today! Thank you!

HEALTH CARE REFORM IS ABOUT SAVING LIVES, NOT DESTROYING THEM

Abortion is not health care because killing is not healing.

For over 30 years, the Hyde Amendment and other longstanding and widely supported laws have prevented federal funding of elective abortions.

Yet health care reform bills advancing in Congress violate this policy.

Americans would be forced to subsidize abortions through their taxes and health insurance premiums.

We need genuine health care reform—reform that helps save lives, not destroy them.

Tell Congress: "Remove Abortion Funding and Mandates from Needed Health Care Reform!"

Visit [www.usccb.org/action](http://www.usccb.org/action) to send your e-mails today.

For more information on the U.S. bishops' advocacy for authentic Health Care Reform, visit [www.usccb.org/healthcare](http://www.usccb.org/healthcare).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I yield to Mr. CAO, the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana.

I thank him for his leadership, the first Vietnamese American Member of Congress and a staunch fighter for human rights. I've known him in the refugee battles, especially for the boat people, and in so many other human rights' issues.

So I yield to my friend.

Mr. CAO. Thank you, my friend from New Jersey, CHRISTOPHER SMITH, for yielding me time.

I just want to say that you have been my mentor, and you have been my friend, and I have been very honored to be part of your life and to have known you all of these years. So thank you very much.

Madam Speaker, abortion is a destructive perversion of our society. It is a distorted emphasis on rights to the disregard of individual responsibilities.

Our country was founded on fundamental human rights, and rightly so. "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator, with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

These rights were reinforced and more succinctly elaborated in the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution. These 10 amendments, more commonly known as the Bill of Rights, have served as the heart and soul of our legal tradition and as the foundation upon which we have built the most powerful democracy in the history of the world.

But life is "short and brutish," said Sir Thomas Hobbes, and if left to our devise, absolute right will lead to anarchy and chaos. Rousseau, Hobbes, and other thinkers of The Enlightenment saw the dangers of absolute rights, and

proposed a social contract upon which to build a civil society where mutual obligations are imposed on all parties to the agreement.

The balance between rights and responsibilities has served as a basis for an ethical context, but our society has disrupted this delicate balance between rights and responsibilities by accentuating rights, and it has contrived an anthropology detached from the moral conscience and has called it "social progress." The result is a skewed social politic devoid of moral coherency.

In his encyclical "Caritas in Veritate," Pope Benedict XVI loudly proclaimed, "Individual rights detached from a framework of duties can run wild." This is what we have seen in our society today.

We provide rights to convicted murderers, but at the same time, sanction the slaughter of the innocent. We protest in rage at the slaying of dogs, but barely blink an eye at the murder of millions of innocent children. Traditional principles of social ethics, like transparency, honesty and responsibility, have been ignored or attenuated. As a result, our moral tenor does not respect the right to life and the dignity of a natural death.

To protect individual rights, we have distorted the continuity of human development to portray the human fetus as something less than human and, therefore, as something that can be disposed of.

What happened to personal responsibility—the responsibility to respect and nurture a human life who happens to be one's own child?

Our children cry out for life, for justice, and until the U.S. Supreme Court can garner enough courage to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, it is up to the voices of the Christopher Smiths, of the Bart Stupaks, of the Jean Schmidts, of the Marsha Blackburns, and of others like myself to fight for those who cannot fight for themselves.

Yes, health care reform is important, and I support responsible reform; but, Madam Speaker, as my friend CHRISTOPHER SMITH so eloquently articulated, abortion is wrong, and I can never support a reform bill that seeks to fund abortion with the tax dollars of hardworking Americans.

Thank you.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I want to thank my friend and colleague for his eloquent and very passionate statement. Knowing of his work on behalf of human rights and of his standing as a human rights advocate globally, thank you so very much. And, for that very powerful statement.

I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT), and want to, again, thank him for his leadership for so many years in the defense of life.

Mr. GOHMERT. I so much appreciate my friend, Mr. SMITH from New Jersey. Earlier, he was talking about RU-486, and I couldn't help but reflect.

You know, we see people who are so concerned, properly, about our environment, about this wonderful garden

with which we've been blessed, and they fight against the use of chemicals that may affect this wonderful garden. They go to organic food stores so they can buy food that has never had chemicals used. They exercise. They go to health clubs, you know, to stay in good shape because they're so concerned about living clean, wholesome lives. Then they would think about taking a poison into their bodies, and they know at the time they take the poison that it's not good for them, for sure. They know that the very reason for taking it is to kill a life within.

How could we get to this point that such a caring society—one that cares about the environment, that cares so much about the world around us and about the people around us, one that will walk up and just chew out anybody who is smoking because of what it does to their bodies and because of what the secondhand smoke does to them, and one that will protect any others around them from someone's smoking—would take a poison into their own bodies for the very purpose of killing? I mean how does that make sense? How did we get to this point?

Then you realize, well, the reason you do that—take a poison to kill a child, a life within—is you're wanting to avoid the consequences of your conduct. That's the bottom line.

Then you come to realize, if you live in a society that goes on, say, 35 or 36 years where it becomes completely legal and acceptable to even poison or to kill or to decapitate for the sole purpose of avoiding the consequences of what we do, then you get to a point where people would want to avoid any tough decisions, any consequences. So you would get to the point where we are today where, perhaps, 40 percent or so would be willing to say, You know what? I'm willing to give up my freedoms just so I don't have to worry about consequences anymore. I'm going to give up my liberties, give up my freedoms so that my government will take care of all of my health care decisions from now on.

□ 1930

Isn't that wonderful. The government will make our health care decisions. They'll decide which things will be funded and which things will not, and I won't have to think about it anymore. I won't have to worry about it anymore. Just like when I got involved when I shouldn't have and the consequence was a life within me. I didn't have to worry about them because I could just kill that life with no consequences.

There is a woman named Abby Johnson who's self-described as "extremely pro-choice," who said she knew it was time to quit in September when she watched an unborn child "crumble" as the baby was vacuumed, dismembered, and destroyed.

I appreciate my friend CHRIS SMITH's bringing this to my attention. Abby Johnson is from Texas. She said, "The

clinic was pushing employees to strive for abortion quotas to boost profits." In former clinic director Abby Johnson's words, "There are definitely client goals. We'd have a goal for every month for abortion clients." The article continued, "The Bryan Texas Planned Parenthood clinic expanded access to abortion to increase earnings." They reported that Johnson said, "'One of the ways they were able to up the number of patients they saw was they started doing the RU-486 chemical abortions all throughout the week.'"

Yes, that's the ticket. Just give people poison and let them not only kill a life, but poison their own systems. People that wouldn't dream of smoking, it's okay, take this poison, can kill a life, and hurt yourself.

Well, World Net Daily did an article and they explained that "RU-486 chemical abortions kill the lining of the uterus, cutting off oxygen and nutrients, resulting in the death of an unborn baby."

Just like CHRIS SMITH was talking about, you're starving a child.

Johnson said the chemical abortion cost the same as an early first-trimester abortion: between \$505 and \$695 for each procedure. And Johnson's words were "Abortion is the most lucrative part of Planned Parenthood's operations . . . they really wanted to increase the number of abortions so they could increase their income."

Folks, it is wrong. And if you didn't believe abortion was going to get funds under this bill, then you ought to believe it when you read the bill. You go to the trouble to read the bill. And when the subtitle is, and this is Page 110, "Abortions for which Public Funding is Allowed" and then read through there, gee, public funding must be allowed for abortion because it's in the bill if people will bother to read it.

But we come back to this: We're living in a time when we have got to come back to educating our children that conduct has consequences. And when you make them believe for 35 years that their conduct has no consequences, then you get to the point where we are today. You have a Republican administration running up the deficit and then you have a Democratic administration raising it exponentially because there are no consequences to our conduct. We can break the Nation but we won't go broke. We can, in the face of terrible economic conditions, run up the deficit even more and have no consequences because we know, going back to Roe versus Wade, we have learned in this country you don't have to have consequences to conduct.

We have got to come back to sanity while we have still got a country because we are in this country not because of what we did, what we deserve, but because people who came before us sacrificed, because they knew there were consequences to conduct. And we've got all we have today because of them. And the only way we will ever

show we deserve what we have is if we can pass on a country with freedom and liberty, where, yes, there are consequences to conduct to those who come after us. And if we don't turn this thing around, they're not going to get the gift we were given.

I thank my friend from New Jersey for taking this hour and concentrating his time on such a critical issue.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank Mr. GOHMERT for his, again, very eloquent statement and for his logic, which is so important and sometimes lacking in this august body.

Let me also point out that we have a man who is going to speak next, MARK SOUDER. Truth in legislating is not a forgotten art, and when people say, as you pointed out, Mr. GOHMERT, that the abortion funding in both the public option and in the program that establishes affordability credits couldn't be more clear, there's no ambiguity about it. There is some language that is very, very deceiving that leads people to think it's not in there. And then people say it. The President of the United States suggested that funding for abortion is not in his plan. And, frankly, assuming he was misled by perhaps staff, nothing could be further from the truth.

I would like to yield to a man who offered airtight pro-life language in the committee on which he serves, Education and Labor Committee, to speak, Mr. SOUDER.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank my friend from New Jersey for yielding.

Before I get into a couple of specifics with that, this isn't the bill. This is the bill. Originally we had a bill with about 1,200. It was like this. Now it's gone to 1,900. And I want to make it clear that I definitely oppose this abortion funding in this bill, but this is an unconstitutional attack on capitalism, our freedoms, our health care. And even if they fix the abortion, this bill is an atrocity.

But in addition to being a generally bad bill, it's a specifically bad bill in the protection of human life. I've worked with this issue for much of my life. Actually even before the Supreme Court decision on abortion, I was concerned about what California and New York had done. When I was a grad student at the University of Notre Dame, they did the original decision on Roe v. Wade, and we formed within 48 hours the student coalition to support a constitutional amendment. I've spent much of my life doing that.

We now have our first grandchildren. And when you have grandchildren and your own children, you cannot possibly not want to defend that life.

I worked with my friend and colleague from New Jersey. We did a hearing in my subcommittee when I was Chair on RU-486, the only hearing that was ever held here.

It's not only a danger to the baby where they die, and it's a certain death to the baby, but it's a death threat to the mother. And they deliberately covered up these stats. We held a hearing

showing that RU-486 was supposed to be the safe thing, the way to do it behind doors; then you're not cutting up the baby and having to take the pieces out. You're not burning the skin off the baby. You're not exploding the baby into pieces. It's supposed to be more humane. It kills the baby. It destroys it at its early stages.

But this they don't report. They don't separate out the facts. We had over a hundred that even years ago were near-death experiences, a number of deaths. We pull drugs off the market if they're risky. We document this. And all of a sudden, they're on the non-scientist side. They don't want to see the science on RU-486. On top of that it appears they're prescribing it even outside of FDA guidelines. And by the time that the mothers learn they're pregnant, by the time they go into Planned Parenthood, even RU-486 says it's unsafe to the mother after a certain date, and they're getting away with this at Planned Parenthood.

Some say there's no abortion in the bill. Let me ask you, from personal experience, then why did Planned Parenthood fund ads against me after I offered the two amendments? They funded ads in my district in August, along with ACORN and the government unions, to try to "make an example," was their words, for my offering two amendments in the Ed and Labor Committee to make it clear that it didn't fund abortion. Why were those amendments defeated?

Well, part of the frustration of the general public with a bill like this, and you've heard different parts, but in the section on abortion services, I love the section before: "Nothing in this act shall be construed as preventing the public health insurance option from providing for or prohibiting coverage of services described in (4)(A)." "

Well, what's (4)(A)?

(4)(A) says, "The services described in this subparagraph are abortions for which the expenditure of Federal funds appropriated for the Department of Health and Human Services is not permitted."

Excuse me? It says that it's prohibited, but the thing before says nothing in the next section applies. What kind of double-talk is this? I just do not understand. Do they think that with all the information systems today, with the posting of this, with all of us out there that somebody isn't going to read this? I mean how stupid.

"Nothing in this act shall be construed as preventing the public health insurance option from providing for or prohibiting coverage of services described in (4)(A)."

(4)(A) says, right off the bat, "The services described in this subparagraph are abortions for which the expenditure of Federal funds appropriated for the Department of Health and Human Services is not permitted." A, reverse A, and you think we're going to buy that?

Furthermore, the Capps amendment, which is what this is basically trying

to do, is trying to bypass the Hyde that doesn't cover elective abortion. They say this bill will put a Planned Parenthood clinic in every county in the United States, that it mandates multiple types of things in the public health option.

Congressman ANDREWS very eloquently responded to my amendment and said if there's a public option, there has to be public payment of abortion. He said if it's a constitutional right, you have a constitutional right to have it paid for.

I have a constitutional right to have a Shelby Cobra and I'm hoping to get one soon from the government.

Just because it's a constitutional right does not mean you have a constitutional right to have it paid for, but that's the language behind this.

Then they came up this week with the so-called Ellsworth compromise, a friend of mine from Indiana. This Ellsworth language, however, merely channels the funding through another entity. This is like saying, well, if SBA gives you a direct loan, it's a government loan, but if the SBA runs through a bank and you get it through the bank, well, that's not an SBA loan, that's a bank loan. Now, the government put all the money in, the guarantee. The government's standing behind it. It's an SBA loan. But it's not really an SBA loan because now we're going through a fig leaf.

The American people are getting sick of the misleading nature and the double-talking of Congress. You have double-talk straight in the bill. Then you have another compromise that double-talks the double-talk. And they wonder why the confidence in government is down? They wonder why people don't trust American politicians as much anymore and American political leaders?

There is a fix for this. There was a fix in committee. There's a fix on the floor. But if we come out with this type of thing and people who claim they're pro-life vote for this, hold them accountable.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Thank you, Mr. SOUDER. And I do want to thank you again for offering that amendment and for that very illuminating and incisive hearing on RU-486.

Again, we know that the trials that led to approval by the FDA, when Kessler was the head of the FDA under President Clinton, he on bended knee asked the company that manufactures RU-486 to bring it here. Sham trials were conducted where women who were seriously hurt were not reported. And we know for a fact, women are actually dying from RU-486. Probably because they had the best reporting of any other State, those women have surfaced in California from those deaths attributable to RU-486. And it's baby pesticide that has serious consequences for women, including death.

Again, no pharmaceutical company in America would take up RU-486, the

abortion drug, simply because it was so dangerous. So they found the Population Council Company. Try suing them when you have egregious harm done to a woman or a death, a fatality. It's an organization. It's not like Merck or some other because all of them took a pass because it is so dangerous.

And you held the only hearing, as you so well pointed out, and I commend the gentleman for them.

I would like to yield to Mr. FORTENBERRY, a good friend and great champion of human rights as well.

Mr. FORTENBERRY. I thank my colleague Mr. SMITH from New Jersey, whom I learned a great deal from primarily about being passionate for those who are least among us, for being passionate in the belief that women deserve better than abortion. So I thank you for your leadership, sir.

I would like to point out what is becoming increasingly clear, Madam Speaker, that the health care plan under consideration would authorize Federal funding for elective abortion, even though the majority of Americans do not want their government funding that procedure.

Several amendments, as has been discussed, introduced in the committees of jurisdiction to make sure abortion funding was explicitly excluded from the bill all failed. Now it is reported that there is a so-called abortion funding compromise that I fear is put in place to draw the support of pro-life House Members who otherwise, in good conscience, would not vote for this particular bill.

□ 1945

This move should not mislead the American people. However clearly, cleverly worded the proposal might be, this plan would authorize a government-run option to fund elective abortion and subsidize private plans that cover elected abortion. This language creates a smokescreen by appearing to offer a restriction on the use of Federal funds for abortion while leaving in place the key legal authority which says, "Nothing in the act" should be interpreted to "prevent the public health insurance option from providing for coverage of elective abortion."

The abortion language requires the public option to hire contractors to ensure that money paid into the government option could potentially be used to pay for elective abortions. For example, Medicare contracts with private business to handle claims, but no one in their right mind would say that Medicare payments are private payments. They're government payments. So this new compromise language is a hoax.

So, Madam Speaker, I don't believe my colleagues should be misled. I also believe that we should have the opportunity for more dialogue, debate, and consideration of potential amendments that could actually strengthen the opportunity for good health care reform

in this country. I would personally like to offer an amendment that broadens a long-held American tradition that we call freedom of conscience. I would like to simply read a part of the amendment that I will potentially offer. It says, The Federal Government and any State or local government or health care entity that receives Federal health assistance shall not subject a health care entity to discrimination on the basis that the entity does not perform, participate in, or cover specific surgical or medical procedures or services or prescribe specific pharmaceuticals in violation of the moral or ethical or religious beliefs of such entities.

This amendment goes on and actually protects the freedom of conscience of those who are actually in the health insurance coverage business by saying that the Federal Government, any State or local government that receives Federal health assistance shall not prevent the development, marketing, or offering of health insurance coverage or a health benefit plan which does not cover specific surgical or medical procedures or services or specific pharmaceuticals to which the issuer of the coverage or sponsor of the plan has an objection of conscience that is clearly articulated in its corporate or organizational policy.

So, Madam Speaker, here is the issue. We should be allowed to amend this bill. We should be trying to work together to strengthen health care for all Americans by improving health care outcomes, reducing costs, and protecting our most vulnerable. The most vulnerable include people who find themselves in very difficult circumstances, those who call upon us—maybe not verbally because they're inside the womb, but those who are the least among us that need our protection and help.

So, with that, I yield back to my colleague CHRIS SMITH.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague Dr. ROE, an OB/GYN who knows so much about this and has been a leader in this Congress on all life-related issues as well as other things.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey. I am going to go back many years ago in my life to a time when I was a young physician trying to decide what I was going to be in life. I decided I was going to be an internist, which is a noble thing to do. But I realized one day when I was in the hospital that what I really had a passion for were for babies and children and delivering babies, and it was fun. And of the almost 5,000 babies I delivered, they were fun. I had a wonderful time doing it, bringing life onto this planet. The group I belong to in a small town in Tennessee, Johnson City, Tennessee, has delivered almost 25,000 babies since I joined the group. We're a pro-life group.

I think back to the children I have delivered during the past 30 years, and

these young people have become musicians and attorneys and physicians and teachers and carpenters and pastors. I was at my college homecoming last week, and one of them was a 6-foot 7-inch, 300-pound football player. They become all kinds of things. To me, the thought of them not being here is heartwrenching and heartbreaking because you've snuffed out a life that could have otherwise been a Congressman, a teacher, anything.

This bill that we're discussing should be a health care bill, and, distressingly, in my opinion, elective abortion is not health care. We should be doing, as the previous speaker said, everything we can to protect the unborn. Let me explain a little bit about that.

When I first began practice, of the babies born before 32 weeks, half of them died. And we have used extraordinary means and technology. Now a child born at 32 weeks is a term baby, and I recall a child that we delivered at 24 weeks over 20 years ago, which even then would have almost been considered a miscarriage. This child got down to 14 ounces, that's how big, and that was over 20 years ago. That child is a fully grown adult today. If we had used the idea that this was, hey, an abortion or a miscarriage, that child would not be there with a mother and a father who are loving it and a family and a chance to have a family.

We shouldn't disguise health care as abortion coverage. Madam Speaker, I think this is one of the most egregious things in this particular bill. There are a lot of things in this health care bill that are not related to health care, but this is one that should be done away with, and whether you are pro-life or you are pro-choice, the majority of people in this country don't want their tax dollars used for abortion. To me, it's a very emotional issue, a very personal issue, and I will continue to be a pro-life doctor until I'm not on this Earth.

I yield back my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) very much.

I now yield to my good friend and colleague Mr. JORDAN from Ohio.

Mr. JORDAN of Ohio. Madam Speaker, let me thank Representative SMITH for his many years of leading the Pro-Life Caucus and fighting to protect the sanctity of human life. I especially want to thank him, along with Congressman PITTS and Congressman STUPAK and a host of others, and you as well, Madam Speaker, for your efforts in working to get this language out of the bill which would take us to a point that would cross a line in this country that I believe is very, very scary.

If you remember when the decision happened in 1973 and we started down this road, one of the arguments we heard from the pro-life community—and we, frankly, continue to hear—is the slippery slope argument, the fact that this slope is slippery, it is steep, and that if we begin to allow unborn

life to be taken, it will lead to a whole host of things. Now, here we have a health care bill in front of us scheduled to be voted on this weekend, this Saturday, which would, in fact, permit taxpayer dollars, Federal dollars, government money to be used to end the life of an unborn child. That is just wrong. It is important that we tell the American people we do not want to go past this. The American people understand this. They do not want their tax dollars used in this way. I think it is critical that we just continue to fight.

So again, I want to be brief tonight. I know we have a few more speakers in just the few minutes we have left, but it is so critical that we understand how sacred life is.

There was a precedent here today in the Nation's Capital where thousands of people came. One of the things that concerned them—not just the price of this bill, not just other elements, not just a lack of empowerment for families and small business owners and taxpayers in this bill, but the fact that their tax dollars could, in fact, be used to end life, and they spoke out loud and clear.

And one of the things that was said at that conference, we went back to the document that started it all—and I will finish with this. The document that started it all. I tell people, next to Scripture, the best words ever put on paper in the Declaration of Independence, where the folks who started this great country, this great experiment in freedom and liberty, they wrote these words: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

We've all heard this before, but it's so interesting to go back to these fundamentals, to go back to these basic principles that started this grand place we call America. It's interesting the order the Founders placed the rights they chose to mention. Life, liberty, pursuit of happiness.

Just ask yourself a question, Madam Speaker. Can you pursue happiness? Can you go after your goals, your dreams? Can you go after those things, pursue those things that have meaning and significance to you if you first don't have liberty, if you first don't have freedom? And do you ever truly have real liberty, true freedom if government doesn't protect your most fundamental right, the right to live? That's what's at stake here.

We are on the verge of crossing a very dangerous line if we allow this health care bill with all its other problems, but the central focus in this bill of allowing taxpayer dollars, Federal money to be used to end the life of an unborn child. It's so critical that we stop this bill in general, but certainly to make sure that provision is not there and continue to be a country that respects the sanctity and sacredness of human life.

So again, I want to commend the Chair of the Pro-Life Caucus for his many years in doing just that and fighting this good fight. God bless you.

With that, I will yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Thank you for your kind words, but more importantly, for your leadership on the behalf of innocent unborn children and the wounded mothers. I know you work very hard with pregnancy care centers and believe passionately that we need to love and affirm both. It's not about one or the other. It's both. So I thank the gentleman from Ohio for his leadership and consistency.

I would like to yield to my good friend and colleague Mr. KING from Iowa.

Mr. KING of Iowa. I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for heading up this Special Order tonight and for taking the lead on life in this Congress for years and years. Maybe we could start to count that in decades, it's been such a persistent and relentless effort that has been made.

As I listen to the dialogue here tonight and I see the pro-life leaders that are here in this Congress, the core of the pro-life people that are on my side of the aisle and the help we have of some of the pro-life people that are on the other side of the aisle come to a head here in this Congress this week with the very idea that Congress might pass a national health care act, a socialized medicine act that would have in it the kind of language that would compel pro-life, God-loving, God-fearing, unborn baby-loving and protecting Americans with a conscience to fund abortions, and this would be the complete component of a socialized medicine piece of legislation that wouldn't just be cradle to grave, it would be conception to grave. We have long held this standard in this Congress, with the Hyde Amendment, with the Mexico City policy, that it is immoral to impose the costs of abortion on the people who strongly believe in this—it is a majority of the American people that strongly believe that innocent, unborn human life are human beings too.

I simply ask two questions, and I will raise these questions in a high school auditorium or anywhere across this land. Madam Speaker, I especially make this point to the young people in America. I tell them, You will have a profound moral question to answer, and it will be very soon that you need to come to this conclusion. And when you make moral decisions, they need to be very well grounded. They need to be grounded in the fundamental principles.

The first question that young people need to ask is, is human life sacred in all of its forms? Do you believe in the sanctity of human life? I ask them to look at the person who sits next to them. Is that person on your right, is their life sacred? The person on your left, is their life sacred? They will say yes. Is your life sacred? And, Madam

Speaker, they will say yes. It's almost universal in America that we believe our lives are sacred, each one.

And the law in America doesn't differentiate between someone who is 101 or someone that's 1, whether they have a century of life ahead of them or a century of life behind them. All human life has the same value under the law in the United States of America with equal protection under the law. That's the principle. That's the belief.

The late father of Senator CASEY from Pennsylvania, Bob Casey, the former Governor of Pennsylvania, made this statement that I had put on the wall in my office at home in Iowa, and it's been there for years. Bob Casey, Democrat, denied the ability to speak before the National Convention, but his statement on life, Madam Speaker, was this: Human life cannot be measured. It is the measure itself against which all other things are weighed. Life is sacred.

Question number one, do you believe in the sanctity of human life? Answer, yes, we all believe that. Then the only other question we have to ask, in what instant does life begin? I pick the instant at conception. It's the only instance we have. If there was a moment before that, we should examine that. The instant of fertilization/conception. Those two questions ask, do you believe in the sanctity of human life? Yes. Does it begin in any other instant other than that of conception? No. Therefore, life begins at the instant of conception.

It's immoral to ask the American people—to compel the American people to fund abortion.

□ 2000

Yet that's what this Speaker is prepared to do and that's what we are prepared to oppose.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I thank my good friend. That was a very wise and eloquent statement.

I would like to yield to Mr. BURTON of Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

I won't give my normal 20-minute speech, but I would just like to say that CHRIS SMITH has been a leader on the right-to-life issue as long as I have been in Congress. He and Henry Hyde were the stalwarts that were always fighting for the unborn, and I am very happy to lend my support to their efforts.

I would just like to say that in addition to the language that's in the bill that's going to allow the taxpayer to pay for abortions, this bill is really an abomination. The bill that is going to be before us Saturday costs \$2.25 million per word and the bill is over 2,000 pages long. It's going to cost \$1.3 or \$1.4 trillion and maybe more than that. It's an absolute disaster waiting to happen. It's going to cause rationing; it's going to cause seniors to lose Medicare Advantage; it's going to cost \$500 billion out of Medicare and Medicare Advantage. This is a disaster.

And when I hear the President say that the doctors want this, my wife's a doctor. He says the AMA wants it. Doctors across this country don't want it. He says that the seniors want it because of AARP. Seniors don't want it. AARP is getting 61 percent of their money from kickbacks from insurance companies and commissions, and they are going to get more if Medicare Advantage goes down the tubes because they will sell more Medigap insurance.

There are a lot of problems with this bill, but one of the most important things to me and to CHRIS and all those who are here tonight is the right-to-life issue. For that reason alone we should defeat this, but there are a lot of other problems with it as well.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. BURTON, thank you very much for your leadership, longstanding, over these many decades. Thank you for being such a great defender of life.

I would like to yield to Dr. BROUN.

Mr. BROUN of Georgia. Thank you, CHRIS SMITH. I greatly appreciate all your leadership on this.

Madam Speaker, I'm a medical doctor. I've practiced medicine in Georgia for almost four decades. The very first bill I introduced in Congress, the first bill I will ever introduce in every Congress, as long as the Lord continues to send me up here, is one called the Sanctity of Human Life Act. It defines life beginning at fertilization.

As a medical doctor, I know that that's when my life and all of our lives begin. Madam Speaker, God cannot continue to bless America while we are killing 4,000 babies every day through abortion. He just cannot and will not because He is a holy, righteous God.

He tells us in Jeremiah that He knows us before we are ever knit together in our mother's womb. We have to stop abortion. We have to stop this bill that is going to continue to fund abortions with taxpayers' dollars. The future of our America depends upon it. Right to life is absolutely the central part of liberty and freedom in America.

Madam Speaker, we cannot lose that right.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Dr. PHIL GINGREY.

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

We were on the floor last night and a gentleman on the Democratic side on the part of the majority in their hour, Mr. GRAYSON, talked about the number of lives that were lost or are being lost in every congressional district across this country because of the lack of health insurance.

Last night I asked the gentleman to yield to a friendly question, and my question was going to be, Representative, are you pro-life or pro-choice on the abortion issue? The gentleman chose not to yield to me. I don't really know the answer to that question to this day.

But 4,000 babies are losing their lives every day. I hope the gentleman is pro-life, because he said, Stand for life.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the subject of my Special Order.

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

There was no objection.

## THE PROGRESSIVE MESSAGE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. ELLISON. Madam Speaker, my name is KEITH ELLISON. I am here to speak for the Progressive Caucus, to talk about the Progressive Message.

Tonight, before I begin, I just want to say that my heart is sick and broken for the horrible tragedy that occurred at Fort Hood, and I ask all Americans to keep the families in their prayers and in their thoughts.

I now will proceed with the hour.

Tonight is the Progressive Message, we are here to talk about a progressive message for America, a message that says the human and civil rights of all people must be respected; a message that says dignity of people, regardless of their race, class or religion must be respected; a dignity that says that if 36 other countries in the world can provide universal health care coverage for their citizens, how come the richest country in the world, not only the richest country in the world but the richest country in the history of the world, can't do it.

Why do we have 50 million people who are not covered? Why do we have a doubling of premiums for the people who do have health care coverage? Why do we have people being excluded for a preexisting condition? Why do we have these things?

Well, the time for those things to end is now. We are within grasp of major health care reform and no scare tactics, no fear-mongering, no stretches of the facts are going to change that.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle are quite upset about the present state of affairs because they know that Americans want health care reform. They want health care reform, and I believe they're going to get it.

I want to say that I have spent these last several weeks talking about the problem. I have also spent many days discussing the Democratic bill, and I will do so tonight.

But I want to spend a little time talking about what our friends on the other side of the aisle are proposing in their bill because, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Speaker, we haven't heard much detail from the Republican side of the aisle. We haven't heard much at all, but they recently put forth an out-

line of a plan, an outline of a plan, not a plan, but just sort of like an outline of one, and it's not good.

It was always convenient to just bang, bang, bang on what the Democrats were proposing, but now that America has said, okay, you guys don't like what the Democrats are calling for, what have you got? And their answer was less than satisfactory.

Under the GOP health plan—I don't believe it's been introduced as a bill yet; it's just sort of a plan—people with preexisting conditions would pay up to 50 percent more than average for insurance coverage under the GOP plan. States would have to cover the rest of the tab with a stable funding source. This is Roll Call, November 4, 2009. Check it out. Under the Republican plan, most States already have such plans but typically are much more expensive than regular insurance and have not made much of a dent in the ranks of the uninsured. Also from Roll Call.

A key piece of earlier Republican drafts, tax credits that would help people afford insurance, was rejected by the House minority leader as too expensive. Also Roll Call, November 4.

The Republican measure has no limits on annual out-of-pocket costs, which means bankruptcy for some. But let me quote from the Roll Call article: The Republican measure has no limits on annual out-of-pocket costs, nor does it provide any direct assistance for uninsured people to buy insurance.

So how are we going to deal with the uninsured problem, which you and I pay for anyway?

The Congressional Budget Office, the CBO, has said on Wednesday that an alternative health care plan put forward by House Republicans would have, quote, little impact in extending health care benefits to roughly 30 million uninsured Americans. This is from the New York Times.

Do you mean to tell me after all this attacking of the Democrats' proposal, the Democratic plan, that the Republicans have just bashed us, week after week, day after day, hour after hour, minute after minute—oh, it's bad, bad, bad, and that's all you ever hear is "no"—they finally come up with their idea and they're going to leave 30 million people uninsured?

This has got to be April Fool's Day come early. The Republican bill has no chance of passage, because Americans really don't want it, because if they did, we would be talking about it. But I quote again from the New York Times: The Republican bill, which has no chance of passage, would extend insurance coverage to about 3 million people by the year 2019.

Why aren't they embarrassed? I have no idea. The Republican bill, which has no chance of passage, would extend insurance coverage to about 3 million people by 2019, and, continuing to quote, would leave 52 million people uninsured. The budget office said, meaning the proportion of nonelderly

Americans with coverage would remain about the same as it is now, roughly at 83 percent.

Let me read it again. The proportion of nonelderly Americans with coverage would remain about the same as now, about 83 percent, meaning that we have upwards of 16 to 17 percent who don't have insurance.

Going along with the Republican plan, the Republican plan tonight, as we are discussing the Progressive Message, we're just going to talk about their plan since they got real expert talking about ours, we're going to let the American people know the real facts about the Republican plan. This is not a criticism or an attack on any individual member of the party opposite. I regard that they are honorable people, but we have to talk about their plan because it's not a good one. And the reason they haven't been bragging about it is because not even they are proud of it.

The Congressional Budget Office umpires say the House Republican health plan would only make a small dent in the number of uninsured Americans. Let me say that again. According to the Associated Press article on November 4, 2009, Congressional Budget umpires say, quote, the House Republican health plan would make only a small dent in the number of uninsured Americans.

Wait a minute. I thought that they had some great plan. How can you not make a dent in the number of uninsured Americans and still claim you have a good plan? Their plan is an embarrassment. They're not bragging about it because they, themselves, know that it's far more strategic to just bash away on the Democratic plan rather than talk about their own plan, which is nothing but status quo and keep insurance companies making lots and lots and lots of money. That's what it's all about—protect the wealthy and let everybody else do the best they can with what they got.

Let me go to another important quote: Late Wednesday, last night, a bill that Republicans expect to offer as an alternative to the Democratic package received its assessment from the congressional budget analysts who concluded that the proposal wouldn't do anything to help reduce the ranks of the uninsured. The CBO said some people would see higher premiums, including older and sicker people.

This is the Republican plan? Here is one. The CBO, the Congressional Budget Office, begins with the baseline estimate that 17 percent of legal nonelderly residents won't have health care in 2010. That's a lot of people. Seventeen percent of legal nonelderly residents won't have health care insurance in 2010. That's an indictment of the status quo, which the Republicans support.

But, in 2019, after 10 years of the Republican plan, the CBO estimates that it will still be stuck at 17 percent of the legal nonelderly residents not having insurance.