

of the respective committees, and Chairman Emeritus JOHN DINGELL for the bill which will be before us tomorrow.

H.R. 3962 covers at least 36 million of the now uninsured, expands and improves Medicaid, strengthens Medicare, begins to close the doughnut hole, and makes it, as well as other insurance, more affordable. It will provide a robust benefits package, new prevention and wellness programs, with no copayments for preventive care. It ends insurance abuses that have led many families to bankruptcy or near bankruptcy—no exclusions for preexisting diseases, no dropping your coverage or putting limits on how much insurance will pay for you when you get sick.

It expands the health care workforce and especially supports the training of primary care physicians, nurses and physician assistants, as well as that of now underrepresented minorities. It provides community health centers and community health workers as well as programs that help communities to better prepare to take advantage of the new health care system. And it will strengthen our public health infrastructure and workforce. The bill is fully paid for, and will reduce the deficit over the 10 years.

What is not to vote for? I know that some of the hesitation is over abortion issues. I don't understand it because H.R. 3962 keeps the Hyde amendment in tact. It prohibits Federal funds from being spent on abortion. It excludes abortion from the basic benefits package. It prohibits discrimination against providers who do not perform abortions by insurance plans. It does not require any insurance plan in the exchange to cover abortion, and it provides that the exchange would have an insurance option that does not cover abortion.

I, like every Member of this body, I am sure, am deeply committed to life—to protecting lives, to saving lives, and to improving the quality of lives. Without passage of this bill, many will suffer the unnecessary loss of life that happens every day in this country of plenty to those who are uninsured and in people of color, whether they're insured or not.

In this 21st century, every year 88,000 African Americans alone, not counting American Indians, Latinos, Asians, or Pacific Islanders, 88,000 African Americans die who would not have if they were insured and if they had equal access to the services that this bill would now provide them, some of them for the very first time.

Have those who oppose this bill because of concerns of abortion considered that this bill would even reduce the need for abortion? Something everyone, no matter what side of the debate you are on, would want. It would do so by ensuring that everyone would have access to comprehensive health care and the kind of family-life counseling that is a part of it.

Tomorrow, we have the opportunity to save millions of lives. There is no

more important reason to vote "yes" for the Affordable Health Care for America Act than that. Everyone should want to be on the right side of the historic vote that awaits us tomorrow. We need health care reform now.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. This week, I had the honor of meeting 30 Kansas World War II veterans at the national World War II Memorial. These veterans, who are in their 80s and 90s, were part of Honor Flight, an organization that brings veterans to Washington, D.C. to see the memorial dedicated in their honor.

Welcoming these Honor Flight veterans is an incredible privilege and one of the most rewarding experiences of my time in Congress. As I visited with these veterans about the sacrifices they made, the friends they lost, and the love they have for their country, I was reminded about how serious my responsibility is as a Member of the United States House of Representatives to do right. It also caused me to reflect on the importance of this weekend's vote on health care reform.

As Chair of the House Rural Health Care Coalition, I know how important health care is to the survival of Kansans and their home towns. The vote we will take this weekend will affect all Kansans at every age, those proud aging veterans, the senior couple counting out their medications each morning, the young family just starting out, the children playing hide and seek in the yard, and the small business owner looking over the budget report.

The decision we make this weekend matters; it matters from coast to coast and across the sweeping plains of Kansas. Our State has unique health care needs, different from much of the country. We have an aging population that has spread widely across a large area. I consider these unique needs in each policy decision that I make.

Changes are truly needed in our current health care system, and I have written about my ideas for reform and have shared them with folks back home and anyone up here who will listen. After studying H.R. 3962, Speaker PELOSI's health care reform bill, listening to the concerns of Kansans and visiting with Kansas hospitals to speak with doctors and nurses, patients and administrators, I have concluded that the Speaker's 2,000-page bill will do

great harm to Kansans, and I strongly oppose it.

The Pelosi bill is essentially the same version that the Speaker started out with months ago, except it's 1,000 pages longer. Instead of working to repair our current system, which a majority of Americans favor, the Pelosi bill will turn much of our system on its head by creating a new government-sponsored health care program financed by deficit spending and taxes.

This bill levies taxes on businesses, cuts Medicare benefits to seniors, eliminates jobs with employer mandates, and enables bureaucrats to define what form of health coverage is acceptable for Americans.

The bill would create 118 new boards, bureaucracies, commissions and programs to carry out its so-called "reforms." I am especially troubled how \$500 billion in Medicare cuts and proposed reimbursement rate changes contained in this bill will affect Kansans with our high population of seniors. Only in Washington does cutting billions of dollars from a near bankrupt Medicare program seem like a good idea. These cuts will reduce benefits and raise premiums for Kansas seniors and make it harder for us to find a doctor or nurse when we need one.

We strengthen our health care system by reducing cost. The Speaker's bill does nothing to reduce cost. In fact, Medicare and Medicaid's own actuaries have warned that the plan will dramatically increase Federal health care spending.

The veterans I met at the World War II Memorial fought for a country they love and that country's promise of liberty and opportunity. After the war, these men and women returned to their homes and ventured off in different directions, some rejoined families and jobs, some got married, some went to college, and some started a business. But one thing they all shared was the desire to continue fighting to make a better life for their children, a life better than the one they had for themselves. This is the desire that my mom and dad—my dad who turns 94 tomorrow—had for my sister and me, and the one that my wife, Robba, and I have for our daughters. This is what we do in America: we leave the next generation better off.

I have concluded this bill will not make health care more affordable or more accessible to Kansans. I have also concluded that, coupled with all the other bad ideas of this Congress—stimulus packages, bailouts, Cash for Clunkers, cap-and-trade—we will be leaving our children with more debt, less freedom, diminished personal responsibility, and fewer economic opportunities. Worse, we will have failed to honor the dreams of those Kansas soldiers for a better life for another generation of Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr.