

today, hospitals and schools, private-sector buildings, mass assets of the Federal Government, and, yes, the NASA centers and the NASA shuttle and all of the equipment that goes into providing for human spaceflight.

Lending that space technology to commercial exploration and private-sector businesses on the basis of profit is not appropriate now. It will put us in a noncompetitive position with China, India, and Russia.

So this resolution is simple. It declares the National Aeronautics and Space Administration as a national security interest and asset. It indicates that the United States has invested in the human space program since May 5, 1961. We all can remember the words of our President, John F. Kennedy, that challenged this Nation when he asked the question, Not why, but why not? Although those words came from his brother, he captured it in the early 1960s when he asked and demanded what we could do not for ourselves, but what we could do for our country.

At that time, we established the United States as a leader in the role of space exploration, and as well in the advancement of scientific research, and therefore that equals a national security interest. It does so because science provides security, and the penetration of the scientific knowledge that we have lowers the security of this Nation.

My Committee on Homeland Security deals with protecting the infrastructure. Infrastructure is security. Infrastructure involves the science labs. Infrastructure involves the many space centers we have around the Nation. The States that are involved are Florida; Huntsville, Alabama; Texas; and the various sites in California as well.

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And so I would ask that this legislation be moved quickly in the United States Congress and in this House because the 2010 NASA budget funded a program of space-based research that supports the administration's commitment to deploy a global climate change research and monitoring system. That research can be done better on the international space station. That international space station needs to be supported. It needs to be able to carry astronauts and scientists there to continue the research to make the quality of life for Americans and the world better. In the early stages of the international space station, research was done involving HIV/AIDS, stroke, heart disease, and cancer. That research has created opportunities for a better quality of life, and it saved lives.

Let us not miss the opportunity, the treasure of being able to explore in space; the genius of America to allow us to be at the cutting edge of science; and, yes, to protect a natural security interest, which is the National Aeronautics Space Administration and all of its assets.

And so I look forward to working with General Bolden, an astronaut and

a very able appointee of the President of United States, to see how we can save NASA and the Constellation program that will allow us to be at the cutting edge of science, not in America, but around the world.

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

(Mr. JONES 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 Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

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

BUYING INTO MEDICARE

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

Mr. GRAYSON. Mr. Speaker, I have just introduced a simple 4-page bill that allows any American to buy into Medicare at cost. Let me explain why I have done that. I have five children. When one of my children was born, I found out from the insurance company that the insurance company would not pay for the birth of my child. I had what I thought was excellent health care coverage from this insurance company, but it turned out otherwise. As a result of that, I had to pay \$10,000 for the birth of my child.

You know, it could have been worse. Maybe I wouldn't have that \$10,000. A lot of Americans face that situation when they have health care bills that their health insurance company won't cover. It could have been worse. I had twins who were born afterwards, who were born a month premature, spent weeks in the hospital. God only knows what those bills would have looked like. I probably would have been broke.

But the fact is that I felt, like many Americans feel, that I had an adversarial relationship with my insurance company and that every penny they spent on my care was a penny less for their profits. And that is a fundamentally unfair situation that causes untold health care needs around this country that go unmet and, frankly, untold death.

That's why we need another option. We need a public option. We're going to be seeing a Senate bill that doesn't have a public option. We're going to be seeing reconciliation that doesn't have a public option. But America needs a public option. That's why I've introduced this bill.

There are other reasons as well. Another reason is that all across this country there are areas, including areas in Florida, where one or two private insurance companies dominate

the market to the extent that they have 80 percent of all the insured in the area. There is no competition. It's a monopoly in the case of one. It's an oligopoly in the case of two. Either way, these insurance companies pretty much do whatever they want. They can offer you care or they deny you care. They can cut you off when you already have care. And they can charge you pretty much anything they want.

Well, a public option would change that. In an area where one company had 80 percent of the market, suddenly there would be an alternative. Where two companies have 80 percent of the market, suddenly there would be an alternative. That alternative is an alternative that is already used by one-eighth of our population. That alternative is Medicare.

This simple bill would allow anybody—any American, any permanent resident—to buy into Medicare at cost. And what it does is it takes this enormously valuable public resource called the Medicare Provider Network and makes it available to all Americans. We've spent billions putting together a Medicare Provider Network that stretches from Nome, Alaska, all the way to Key West, Florida. We've spent billions doing that, and yet only one-eighth of the population can use it.

The most expensive part of preparing a health care plan for any American in any location is to set up the provider network, hundreds and hundreds of contracts with hospitals, with specialists, with nurses, with testing companies. All these things have to be done before you actually serve the first patient.

Well, we have a system like that called Medicare, and yet it's open to only one-eighth of the population. It's as if we're saying that only one-eighth of the population, senior citizens, can drive on Federal highways. That's how important the Medicare provider network is, and that's why we have to open it to everybody.

This is not a plan for subsidies. Everyone would have to pay their own cost. This is not a plan that's meant to help anybody, except for the people who cannot otherwise get insurance, or people like me, who simply don't trust the insurance companies anymore because of the raw treatment that we've received.

Let's face it, it's never going to be any different. The insurance companies are always going to look for ways to chintz you. They're always going to look for ways to charge you more and give you less, and the difference is what they call profit. And that's a system that a lot of people just can't accept anymore. They just don't want it anymore.

And for those people who have it in their mind that there will be some kind of government death panels, what about the real death panels that exist in this company—the insurance company death panels; the ones that look for rescission when you get sick, the