

rules of the House and the Senate into a pretzel to get it done.

But I am not here to talk about the arcane rules of the Senate and reconciliation that the follow-on bill would be an abuse of. I'm not even here to talk about the rules of the House. I'm really here to talk about the Constitution of the United States of America.

I mean, this so-called Slaughter House Rule that is being proposed, the idea that the Senate bill could be deemed as passed on the House floor without Members of Congress being asked to vote for it, I believe not just tramples on the common sense and insults the intelligence of the American people, but it really tramples on the Constitution of the United States. Let me break it down for you.

I've understood this since the first time I saw "School House Rock" about how a bill becomes a law and that little bill danced up the House steps when I was a kid. Let me read it. It's in the Constitution, Article I, section 7, "Every bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it becomes a Law, be presented to the President of the United States." There it is.

As we learned as school children, as it says in the Constitution, a bill becomes a law after it has passed the House of Representatives—not after it was deemed to have passed, not after it was buried in a procedural motion that no one really has to say they have supported, but after it has passed on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Now, some will say that, well, Republicans just want to talk about process here; we're trying to do something for health care. Well, wait a minute. The processes that are in the Constitution of the United States exist to protect the liberty of the American people and hold those who govern them responsible. The reason our Founders enshrined in the Constitution of the United States the requirement that bills might not become law unless they pass on the House floor is so that they could hold accountable the decisions that the men and women who would serve in this Chamber throughout our history would make.

Madam Speaker, the very idea that the Senate bill could be adopted by the House without any vote on the floor is anathema to the Constitution of the United States, and I believe it's an insult to the American people.

I would say respectfully, Madam Speaker, if you have the votes, vote the Senate bill on the floor. Let's bring it down here. Let's have a good, long debate about that bill that passed the Senate on Christmas Eve with all of its backroom deals and all of its public funding for abortion and its individual mandates and its tax increases.

But if you don't have the votes, let's scrap the bill. Let's start over. Let's commit ourselves to building health care reform on the principles of limited government and free market econom-

ics. Let's pass health care reform that will lower the cost of health insurance rather than growing the size of government.

And for heaven's sake, whatever we do, let's go forward this week in a way that honors those who have gone before, those who have fought for this Constitution. Let us live up to the ideals of our Founders and the expectation of our people. And let's throw this Slaughter House Rule business in the trash heap where it belongs.

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#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 59 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess until noon.

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□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas) at noon.

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#### PRAYER

The Chaplain, the Reverend Daniel P. Coughlin, offered the following prayer:

God Almighty and Father of us all, we praise You, the source of all we have and all we are. Teach us to acknowledge always the many good things Your infinite love has given us. Help us to love You in return with all our heart and all our strength.

Empower us to serve this Nation with such wisdom and compassion that Your own gracious goodness and love of humanity may be evident and give You glory both now and forever. Amen.

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#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House her approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

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#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. SCHAUER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SCHAUER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

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#### MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has agreed to a concur-

rent resolution of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. Con. Res. 53. Concurrent resolution recognizing and congratulating the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado, as the new official site of the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial Service and the National Emergency Medical Services Memorial.

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#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BACA. Anthem Blue Cross in my home State of California is trying to raise premiums by 39 percent. This is only the beginning if we do nothing. We must give the American people, not the insurance companies, more control. If we do nothing, the American people will continue to pay higher premiums and higher out-of-pocket costs now and in the future.

We cannot, our families cannot, afford to do nothing. Health reform will hold health insurance companies accountable; end discrimination based on preexisting conditions; cut and eventually close the doughnut hole for thousands of seniors, including 5,200 seniors in my district; cut the national deficit; and produce over 4 million new jobs in the coming decade. That is 400,000 new jobs every year.

Health care reform will bring coverage to 219,000 in my district and 31 million nationwide for the very first time in history. This is a historic moment. In 1935, we passed Social Security. In 1965, we passed Medicare. We must pass health reform now.

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#### HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. BOEHNER. Madam Speaker, the American people are appalled by what they have seen in this health care debate. But the worst is still ahead. The bill has already failed. The American people don't want it, and they are screaming at the top of their lungs, stop. But, yet, Congress continues to proceed.

The American people want jobs. But what does this bill do? It puts the American people out of work. They want lower health care costs, while the health care bill being debated is going to raise the cost of premiums. They want less government, yet this bill is going to create a giant bureaucracy here in Washington. They want to protect life. Yet the bill is going to force taxpayers to fund elective abortions.

If that weren't enough, the majority plans to force the toxic Senate bill through the House under some controversial trick. There is no way to hide from this vote. It will be the biggest vote that most Members ever cast. Now you can run, but you can't hide. Let's defeat this bill.