

Passing commonsense gun legislation is a key step in the process by helping to keep guns out of the wrong hands. We must take a stand for these children and their mothers and send the message that we hear them, we care about them, and that their lives matter.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, later on this afternoon, the House will vote for the 37th time to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The Speaker of the House of Representatives has already been on record saying that the Affordable Care Act is the law of the land. So it's just not clear to me why we are wasting the time and the treasure of the American people on another futile legislative fantasy.

In fact, it's a legislative fantasy that has cost the American people more than \$50 million. If, in fact, the Affordable Care Act were to be repealed, it would do even more damage, as independent economists have estimated that a repeal would add to the Federal deficit by more than \$100 billion.

It's often been said that the classic definition of "insanity" is doing the same thing over and over and over again but somehow expecting a different result.

Barack Obama was elected President in 2008. The Affordable Care Act was signed into law in 2010. The Supreme Court, with the Chief Justice voting in the majority, held that the Affordable Care Act was constitutional in 2012. A few months later, President Barack Obama was reelected in an electoral college landslide. Yet, later on this afternoon, we're voting to repeal the Affordable Care Act for the 37th time—over and over and over again. It's a classic definition of legislative insanity, as if the 37th vote is going to be any different, will yield any different results than the previous 36 where we've wasted the taxpayer dollars of the American people.

The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land, and that's a good thing. It's a good thing because over the next decade more than 30 million Americans who otherwise would not have had health care insurance will be insured. It seems to me that that's a good thing.

The Affordable Care Act makes sure that insurance companies cannot deny medical coverage for preexisting conditions. It seems to me that that's a good thing.

The Affordable Care Act provides small businesses with a 35 percent tax credit, which will enable these small businesses to continue to grow and to flourish. It seems to me that that's a good thing.

The Affordable Care Act allows young Americans who are just starting

out to remain on the insurance plan of their parents until the age of 26, giving them a real chance to get themselves started in their pursuit of the American Dream. I'm new, but it seems to me that that's a good thing.

Yet later on this afternoon, for the 37th time, we're engaging in another futile legislative fantasy.

There are a couple of other things that we could be doing. We could be dealing with the sequester, \$85 billion in random cuts that are costing the economy more than 500,000 jobs, but we're not.

We could be debating the American Jobs Act, trying to put the people of this great country back to work and stimulate the economy, but we're not.

We could be trying to get a budget, go to conference, create some certainty for industry and the American people, but we're not.

Madam Speaker, I'm hopeful that after this vote is taken, we can finally come to the reality that the Affordable Care Act is the law of the land, it's good for the American people, and we should get back to doing things that will advance prosperity in this great country.

□ 1030

REPEAL PRESIDENT'S HEALTH CARE LAW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for 5 minutes.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Madam Speaker, I rise this morning to speak about an issue that is of great concern to my constituents back home in Pennsylvania, and it's the matter of the implementation of the President's Affordable Care Act, the implementation which some members of the President's party have described as a coming train wreck. Madam Speaker, that train wreck has arrived. This massive undertaking of enacting such a broad, confusing law has only highlighted the concerns that I and many of my constituents back home have had with this law and what it means for our small businesses and families in Pennsylvania.

However, a new concern—possibly greater than the idea of government-run health care—has presented itself over the last several days with the revelation that the Internal Revenue Service has been targeting law-abiding Americans simply because of their beliefs. The IRS now wants to know what we think and what books we read.

Madam Speaker, the President's health care law is largely a tax bill. It contains at least 20 new or higher taxes on American families and businesses. That makes it the biggest change to an already-confusing Tax Code in over two decades. And with the implementation of this massive tax bill comes the IRS' new role in running it.

By putting politics ahead of fairness, the IRS has violated the trust of the

American people at a time when the administration is loading it up with more responsibility and more power. Under health care reform, the IRS will gather extensive information about the financial resources and health insurance status of all Americans. The expansion of the IRS' power will include hundreds of billions of dollars in new taxes, the hiring of thousands of enforcement agents, and a tower of new rules and regulations. I'm deeply concerned with the ability of the agency and the resolve of the agency to lawfully manage this significant undertaking with discretion and with accountability.

While the agency reported that new rules are in place to ensure that this type of situation never happens again, like many Americans, I question why this disturbing trend was ever allowed to happen in the first place. The President's health care law does too much to infringe on the rights of the American people and swells the size and scope of an already bloated Federal Government, which has once again proven incapable of acting responsibly.

Today, I urge Members of Congress to fully repeal the health care law and, in doing so, take the first step to replacing it with commonsense solutions for all Americans—like allowing people to purchase health coverage across State lines; stopping frivolous lawsuits against our doctors; clearing individuals to receive tax credits just like large businesses; and letting Americans keep control of the health care that works best for them.

RIGHT TO VOTE AMENDMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. POCAN) for 5 minutes.

Mr. POCAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to talk about the most fundamental right we as Americans have as citizens of this great country, the right to vote. The right to vote is not just fundamental; it is the right that preserves all of our other liberties that we as Americans hold dear. In fact, this right is so fundamental that most Americans, understandably, assume it is already enshrined in the Constitution. Unfortunately, Madam Speaker, most Americans would be wrong.

While the right to vote is inherent throughout our founding document, and there are amendments prohibiting discrimination, nothing in the Constitution explicitly guarantees our right to vote. We, as Americans, possess no affirmative right to vote.

Why is this important? Because without a constitutional provision, courts have upheld burdensome registration requirements, voter-identification laws, and reduced early voting opportunities in States across the country.

According to the Brennan Center for Justice, just this year alone, more than 80 restrictive laws have been introduced in more than 30 States. From New York to Washington, legislation

has been introduced that require voters to show a photo ID. States from Virginia to New Mexico have considered bills that would make voter registration more difficult. And from Arizona to Tennessee, States have taken steps to limit early voting.

Unfortunately, this plague of restrictive voting efforts has hit my State of Wisconsin as well. In 2011, our legislature passed a law that would limit the fundamental rights Wisconsinites have to vote. Not only would this law require a photo ID; it also took steps to disenfranchise senior citizens and college students, reduce registration opportunities, and restrict the ability of citizens to receive absentee ballots.

But Wisconsin has something that other States do not possess—a guaranteed right to vote. Article III, section 1, of the Wisconsin Constitution specifically states:

Every United States citizen age 18 or older who is a resident of an election district in this State is a qualified elector of that district.

This one sentence makes a huge difference for Wisconsinites. In two separate cases challenging the Wisconsin voter ID law, the Wisconsin circuit courts have ruled that these restrictive, burdensome voting laws are unconstitutional because, from the decision in NAACP of Milwaukee v. Walker:

The Wisconsin Constitution expressly guarantees the right to vote.

But this isn't enough. Not all States have this right. Our friends in Indiana, as we have seen, have little recourse if a restrictive voting law is signed into law.

Now more than ever, we need to be protecting our right to vote, not restricting it. We need to reaffirm our founding principle that our country is at its strongest when everyone participates. We need to guarantee a right to vote for everyone.

So this week, along with my friend and colleague, Congressman KEITH ELLISON from Minnesota, I introduced a right-to-vote amendment to the Constitution that will explicitly guarantee, without a doubt, the right of the American people to vote. The amendment is as simple as it is necessary: every American citizen possesses the fundamental right to vote in every public election where they reside, and Congress has the right and power to protect it.

No more will Americans have to prove their right to vote has been infringed. Instead, the burden of proof will be left to States to demonstrate that any efforts they take will not deny or abridge the fundamental right to vote.

Now, I know there are some out there who will say that an amendment to the Constitution is unrealistic; it's too hard to achieve. Those critics are shortsighted. This is about engaging my colleagues in Congress on both sides of the aisle and the American public in a movement to ensure our

right to vote is not at the mercy of those acting with partisan motives. The right to vote is not a Democratic right, nor is it a Republican right. It is an American right, and it is fundamental to a government for the people, by the people.

Madam Speaker, I'm proud to support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to join on and protect our most fundamental right.

HONORING JACOBY DICKENS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of America's most prominent African American businessmen and financiers. Mr. Jacoby Dickens was born and grew up in Panama City, Florida, one of six children in a low-income family.

The family moved to the south side of Chicago when Mr. Dickens was a teenager. He attended Wendell Phillips High School. After school he worked as a building engineer, saved his money, and began investing in real estate. He eventually purchased and managed a large number of apartment buildings before selling them in 1971.

After investing in several bowling alleys in the Chicago area, he was asked to join the board of Seaway Bank in 1979. In 1983, he became chairman of the board and remained until his death earlier this year. Under his guidance and leadership, Seaway Bank and Trust Company became the largest Black-owned bank in Chicago with assets of \$547 million.

Mr. Dickens was a great civic activist and contributor to public causes. He served on the boards of Chicago State University, the School of Business at Florida A&M University, and the Chicago Urban League. He donated more than \$1 million to Chicago State University's athletic center, which bears his name. He was a trustee at the Museum of Science and Industry and DePaul University, where a scholarship and loan program are named for him. In the 1980s, he was a key supporter and fundraiser for Harold Washington, who was elected the first African American mayor of Chicago.

Jacoby Dickens was a man of vision, courage, and determination. He used his wisdom, business acumen, and money wisely, not only for himself and his family, but also for the uplifting of humanity. My condolences and well wishes go out to his wife, Ms. Veranda Dickens, their family, and all of the trustees and employees of Seaway Bank and Trust Company.

□ 1040

Mr. Dickens was, indeed, a man for the times and the seasons in which he lived. His bank gave loans in depressed communities and neighborhoods where people were hard-pressed to find re-

sources. He will be sorely missed and always remembered.

POVERTY IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE) for 5 minutes.

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, as the cofounder of the Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus and chair of the Democratic Whip Task Force on Poverty and Opportunity, I rise today to continue talking about the ongoing crisis of poverty and the impact of sequester.

We are well aware of the impact the sequester is having on many, many communities across the country in terms of devastating some of the basic social safety networks that we have all benefited from in many, many ways. They're really very, very harmful to our most vulnerable.

Nearly 50 million Americans, including 16 million children all across our country and in every congressional district, are living in poverty. Yet the sequester continues to have devastating impacts on access to childhood education, affordable housing, hot meals for low-income seniors, Head Start, and countless other programs that help low-income and vulnerable Americans.

But, Madam Speaker, these draconian cuts are not enough for some of my colleagues, given what took place last night at the Ag Committee. Last night, the Ag Committee passed a \$20 billion cut to our Nation's first line of defense against hunger in the farm bill. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as the Food Stamp program, is really a vital lifeline for millions of Americans.

As a young, single mother, I relied on food stamps and public assistance during a very difficult period in my life. Let me tell you, no one—no one—wants to be on food stamps, but it is a bridge over troubled water. And so I am, quite frankly, appalled and very sad to see my colleagues attacking the integrity of such essential programs for families that need a helping hand during difficult times.

As we work to create, hopefully, a balanced reauthorization of the farm bill, we must keep in mind the people, the families, and businesses impacted by these proposed cuts.

Nearly half of all SNAP recipients are children. One in five children in America are at risk of hunger, and we know that nearly half of all children in America will be on SNAP benefits sometime during their childhood. That's half of all children in America.

Not only does SNAP help put food on the table for struggling families, every \$1 increase in SNAP benefits generates \$1.70 in economic activity. Yet, if the farm bill becomes law, more than 2 million families will be cut off from this economic lifeline.

With unemployment still at 7.5 percent—and in some communities it's over 13 percent—and the rate of poverty at 15 percent—again, some communities, it's 27 to 30 percent—ongoing