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Senate

The Senate was not in session today. Its next meeting will be held on Monday, September 30, 2013, at 2 p.m.

House of Representatives

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2013

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STEWART).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 28, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CHRIS STEWART to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION AND DEBT CEILING

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

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, we are here in the Capitol awaiting a deci-

sion by the Republicans in the House about the next step to deal with the fiscal crisis they have created.

It is not really that complicated. The Monday deadline approaches to continue the operation of the Federal Government with a shutdown looming because the Republicans have refused to work on a bipartisan basis to resolve the funding issues.

The centerpiece of their rhetoric has been objection to the Affordable Care Act and their childish insistence that a program that has been approved by Congress, President Obama reelected defending it, and validated by the Supreme Court, that somehow this bell can be un-rung.

Billions have already been spent, hundreds of thousands of people are working to make the reform operational, and it seems to be working. Better prescription drug benefits for senior citizens are putting more money in their pockets. Children under the age of 26 have been able to stay on their parents' policies.

Beginning Tuesday, enrollment starts for the exchanges, and on January 1 it goes live with better health insurance. People can't be refused insurance for preexisting conditions. There will be no lifetime limits on benefits. Health insurance will be more affordable with subsidies for millions, and there will be more competition for all. These provisions are overwhelmingly supported by the American public.

The health insurance program will save billions of dollars for the Federal Government, reducing the deficit. That's the judgment of the CBO. In

fact, isn't it ironic that having campaigned against these health care savings and losing, PAUL RYAN and the Republicans include those very savings in their budget?

My Republican friends are paralyzed in part because they've adopted a draconian budget that actually requires savings in the very health plan they want to defund. They claim to want to reduce government spending; yet they have refused to allow the House to vote on the spending bills their budget calls for.

We have been waiting for 2 months to finish the transportation and housing spending bill. They got halfway through it on the floor of the House, and they realized that their own Members wouldn't vote for it because it was so awful, and they stopped. They didn't even bother to bring the Interior spending bill to the floor.

If their budgets are so bad that their own Members won't vote for them, they shouldn't throw a tantrum, threaten to shut down the government, or destabilize the global economy by playing games with the debt ceiling. If they're afraid to have their own Members vote on their spending bills, shouldn't they allow a conference committee between the House and the Senate to resolve budget differences? That's how the system is supposed to work.

They whine the President won't negotiate with them. How is the President supposed to deal with people who are unwilling to face up to the consequences of their own irresponsible budgets or refuse to allow Congress to

This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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