

President. But the House bill coming up will block tort reform. As a candidate, the President said that we shouldn't underestimate the amount of money that can be saved in the current health care system. I agree. But these bills will cut Medicare by \$500 billion and eliminate disease management programs and other programs that could save money.

This bill doesn't fix our health care system. It finances it. It is not too late to reform Medicare, reform Medicaid, reform health care, cut the waste and improve quality. Let people buy across State lines. Let them join groups. Make insurance personal, portable and permanent. Millions are asking us to fix health care, but they want us to do it right. Millions of Americans can't all be wrong.

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#### HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I oppose the government takeover of our Nation's health care system. The Democratic legislation, a 1,990-page \$1 trillion bill will raise taxes, it will increase our national debt, and it will put government bureaucrats between patients and their doctors. I agree it's important to reform our health care system, but this is not the way to do it.

I've spent the last 10 months trying to share my perspective as a physician with over 30 years' experience. My constituents and millions of Americans across this country have also spent the last 10 months trying to make their voices heard by the President and the Democratic majority. This legislation that the Democrats want us to vote on suggests that the Speaker just doesn't care what practicing physicians and the American public think.

This legislation is the wrong direction for America, and it's a death knell for quality care for American patients. Mr. Speaker, I reject any government takeover of our Nation's health care system.

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#### HEALTH CARE

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I would like to draw your attention to a letter from the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau. It concisely sums up many of the problems in the Pelosi health care bill for our small family farms.

According to the letter, "The employer mandate and 8 percent payroll tax will place an enormous burden on a significant portion of agriculture and its related industry. Although some tax incentives are provided in the legislation, farmers are price-takers, not

price-makers. They do not have the option of merely passing along those mandated costs."

The letter continues, "It is concerning that there are no allowances for seasonal workers. Requiring coverage for seasonal workers would have significantly adverse economic effects on many farmers across this country."

And finally, "Our Nation cannot afford the projected costs of H.R. 3962, especially considering the growing deficits and other fiscal calamities with entitlement programs that must be dealt with in the immediate future."

This legislation makes little sense when many farmers around the country are struggling with high feed costs, unsustainable energy prices, and a difficult national economy. I urge my colleagues to reject H.R. 3962.

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#### HEALTH CARE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, the Speaker of the House cares about all Americans. She cares about all Americans because we have worked together as a team. It's not the Pelosi bill; it's the bill that responds to America's needs. And I'm proud of our Speaker and this Congress and those who will make the right decision tomorrow.

I imagine if you were here in 1965 when President Johnson had the vision and the wisdom to formulate the strategy for Medicare in collaboration with that Congress, you could hear the sound, echoing sound of the naysayers, "no, no, no." But in none of our town hall meetings did one person stand up and say, "I'll give away our Medicare."

So tomorrow we will give seniors what they know and understand: saving a buck, closing the doughnut hole, providing no pay for preventative coverage, helping low-cost seniors. And one of the things that we will do is those States, like the State of Texas, who don't do their job as it relates to providing for the uninsured, because Texas stands at the number one State of uninsured and Houston is the number one city, we have got to fix it for those people who are in need.

Vote the right way tomorrow.

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#### HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to Speaker PELOSI's 2,032, and growing, page health care bill.

Today we are at the highest unemployment level since 1983. The American people can't afford these massive new spending increases, and I refuse to pass them on to my children and grandchildren.

This legislation will immediately increase taxes on American families and

small businesses by \$729 billion. The total bill will cost over a trillion dollars over the next decade, with money we don't have.

And what do the American people get for all this new spending? A bill that you pay for now but doesn't give coverage for 4 years.

Republicans have real solutions for improving access and affordability for American health care. We support tort reform to eliminate frivolous lawsuits. We support allowing negotiating across State lines and group purchasing power. We support choice of coverage without the government's forcing people into government-run health care.

Oppose the Pelosi health care bill.

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#### HEALTH CARE

(Ms. FALLIN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. FALLIN. Mr. Speaker, if we pass Speaker PELOSI's 1,990-page bill, which creates a massive new Federal bureaucracy to manage our health care system, States will face huge unfunded mandates.

The \$34 billion worth of unfunded mandates to the States in this bill might help hide the true cost of this \$1.3 trillion legislation, but the truth is the States will be picking up a lot of these costs. And the only way States could deal with the increased costs and the unfunded mandates would be to look at raising taxes on small businesses and on individuals, and that is unacceptable.

Speaker PELOSI may be all right with increasing the national debt and spending up to \$1.4 trillion on this legislation, but when the bill comes due, the children of America and their children will be the ones who will be paying a hefty price for reckless spending in this Congress.

It is estimated that this Pelosi health care bill will cost Oklahoma \$127 million a year in unfunded mandates. In our State of Oklahoma, we're required to balance our budget each year.

Let's kill this bill because it will be bad for the States and bad for unfunded State mandates.

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#### THE GOP HEALTH CARE PLAN

(Mrs. LUMMIS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. LUMMIS. Mr. Speaker, while earlier this week the Wall Street Journal called the Pelosi health care plan "the worst bill ever," the Chicago Tribune last week called the GOP plan a good plan and said, "We don't agree with everything in these bills but we do agree with ideas such as these:

"Let insurers sell policies across State lines. That would loosen the strangling State-by-State regulations and unleash competition to drive premium prices down." And, indeed, that