

We have come along to celebrate the culmination of Lucas' years of preparation. His family, wife, Jennifer, and close friends have been there all along, in the good times and the bad, in the disappointments and in the small triumphs. Yesterday they added a huge triumph, and we join them in the celebration.

Congratulations to our own U.S. Open golf champion, Lucas Glover.

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PROTECT OUR PLANET

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

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, we all want to protect our planet, but will the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009 do that? I don't think so.

The pollution targets are inadequate. Regulatory authority is stripped from the EPA. The bill relies on huge numbers of carbon offsets. For example, it says you can have 2 billion tons a year of carbon offsets, which is roughly equivalent to 30 percent of all U.S. greenhouse gas emissions. Recent analysis suggests it might be 2026 until we see the emissions decline below 2005 levels.

The renewable targets are not strong enough. A recent analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists indicates this target provides no new renewable energy over business as usual projections. Dirty-energy options qualify as renewable, including biomass burners and trash incinerators. The bill gives a significant number of pollution permits away free.

It opens up a carbon derivatives market in the U.S., and this bill would help establish one of the largest derivative markets in the world without adequate oversight or regulation. It taxes households to pay for an unproven carbon sequestration of capture and storage technology, and allocations for funding for international obligations are underfunded.

We can do better.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. PAULSEN. Madam Speaker, Capitol Hill and the Nation are abuzz over health care reform. While there is much speculation to what a reform plan will look like, one thing is for sure: We must avoid any plan that would lead to a government takeover of health care.

A government takeover of health care will stifle medical breakthroughs and take away the peace of mind that families around America have, knowing that they can get the timely treatment for their children, their parents and themselves. We need real com-

prehensive reform that protects what works and fixes what doesn't.

We need patient-centered reform where the patient is in control of their own care, not politicians, not bureaucrats, not special interests. We need to enact commonsense measures, like allowing small businesses to band together to purchase more affordable coverage for their employees. And we need a lower cost and focus on prevention by rewarding quality over quantity.

I know we can pass real comprehensive health care reform.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT RUN HEALTH CARE

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

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, as dangerous to the public's health and well-being as government-run health care is in Europe and Canada, we have our own American example that has some very serious problems. Last month there was a surprise inspection at Veterans Affairs clinics in the United States. The surprise inspections exposed that fewer than half of those clinics followed proper standards for colonoscopies.

Some mistakes could have exposed veterans to HIV and other diseases. Let me repeat: Less than half followed proper medical standards for colonoscopies.

Since February, the VA has informed 10,000 veterans in three States to get retested. More than 50 patients tested positive for infections, including some with HIV. But that's just the beginning of the medical malpractice by the VA.

VA patients with prostate cancer were put through their own particular set of horrors. In Philadelphia, a patient received a common surgical procedure where a doctor implants dozens of radioactive seeds to attack the cancer.

But the doctor's aim was more than a little off. Most of the radioactive seeds, 40 of them to be exact, ended up in the patient's healthy bladder instead of the prostate. The mistake was a serious one, and under Federal rules it was investigated by the bureaucrat regulators. The regulators allowed the doctor to rewrite his surgical plan to make his mistake just disappear.

In the private sector, somebody would have been held accountable for this negligence, but not with government-run health care VA style. They cover up their errors.

The patient had to undergo a second radiation implant. This time the unin-

tended dose ended up in his rectum. Once again, more negligence. Two years later in 2005, the same doctor made the same mistake, putting more than half of the radioactive seeds in the wrong organ, and again the bureaucrat regulators did not object when he once again rewrote his surgical plan to cover up his mistake.

Had the bureaucrat regulators actually done their jobs, they would have uncovered what the media calls a rogue cancer unit. This one Philadelphia VA hospital, botched 92 of 116 treatments over 6 years, then covered it up.

Let me repeat, Madam Speaker, the VA government health care hospital in Philadelphia medically erred in 92 of 116 cancer treatments. The medical team continued to perform these radiation implants, even though for over a year the equipment that measured whether or not the patient had received proper radiation dosage was broken. Records proved that the radiation safety committee at the veterans hospital knew of this problem but took no action.

In Philadelphia, 57 of the implants delivered too little radiation to the prostate, either because the seeds were planted in the wrong organ or were not distributed properly inside the prostate. Thirty-five other cases involve overdoses to other parts of the body. An unspecified number of patients were both underdosed in the prostate and overdosed somewhere else in their body. This is a horrible way to treat America's veterans.

Another patient, 21-year veteran of the Air Force, had to remain in bed 6 months with pain so severe he couldn't even stand. He lost his job as a pastor at a local church and all of his income, thanks again to the incompetence of the Veterans Administration.

Adding insult to injury, this 21-year veteran of the Air Force didn't learn of the radiation injury from the Philadelphia VA hospital. He found out when he sought treatment in Ohio at a hospital where he underwent major surgery to treat the damage.

Because the bureaucrat regulators were covering up for the VA, it took a private hospital to not only diagnose but treat his injury. That is right, Madam Speaker, the good old private sector saved the veteran where the VA just took a pass.

The New York Times conducted its own examinations. They found that none of the safeguards that were supposed to protect veterans from poor medical care had worked. They also found none of the botched implants in Philadelphia were reported properly. So the errors weren't investigated for weeks, months and sometimes years.

During that time, many patients did not know their cancer treatments were flawed by our government-run health care. The regulators are now looking into the flawed implants in other government-run VA hospitals in Mississippi and Ohio. Who knows what they will find out there about the way government treats our veterans.