

to talk about what the Affordable Care Act means to them. All of them are opposed and concerned for the repeal of the Affordable Care Act.

We talked about how important it was to protect the 695,000 Michiganders who have gained coverage since the ACA was enacted and the fact that the uninsured rate in Michigan has been cut in half.

The story that struck me the most was from a local clergyman, Bishop Walter Starghill, who gained coverage for the first time through Medicaid expansion. He told me:

The impact on Black men with increased access to insurance coverage is big. We didn't take care of ourselves until it was too late. We ended up in the emergency room and some of us died. Now we can get checked out early.

I heard from another local UAW worker who said:

I come from a family where many members have struggled with cancer. We wouldn't have healthcare coverage after leaving our jobs or we'd have gone bankrupt without the ACA.

Everywhere I go in the district, people are frightened and come up and say: What will happen?

Tomorrow, you need to look people in the eye and tell them why you are taking their insurance away.

APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO JOINT ECONOMIC COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GAETZ). The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to 15 U.S.C. 1024(a), and the order of the House of January 3, 2017, of the following Members on the part of the House to the Joint Economic Committee:

Mr. PAULSEN, Minnesota
Mr. SCHWEIKERT, Arizona
Mrs. COMSTOCK, Virginia
Mr. LAHOOD, Illinois
Mr. FRANCIS ROONEY, Florida
Mrs. CAROLYN MALONEY, New York
Mr. DELANEY, Maryland
Ms. ADAMS, North Carolina
Mr. BEYER, Virginia

INTRODUCING REPUBLICAN FRESHMEN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2017, the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. COLLINS) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to be here tonight. As we all get started in a new session, we get started with the newness and excitement. We have already hit the ground running.

This Congress is going to be one of action. The American people spoke. They spoke loudly—they have been over the past few years—saying that the direction of our country needed to change. By changing, they meant change toward a government that is

more conservative, one that is listening to them and hasn't forgot that it is not about the government worker that we are about in this place and not about government in and of itself, but it is about what government does for the American people.

Tonight, as I have taken on my role as the vice chair in the Republican Conference, we have been talking about how we can introduce our Members and also work to get our messaging out.

Tonight is the first night where we have some of our new freshmen here on the floor, Mr. Speaker, as you can well attest to. We are going to take time just to get to know them, where they came from, introduce them to the floor, and introduce them to what we are going to be about and what their passion is to share with as part of our majority going forward.

The first gentleman is a dear friend from my home State of Georgia. He is, as what we call back home a dagg, D-A-G-G. We don't use the extra G, but we will do the first G. How about that?

He is a mayor from West Point, Georgia. He understands what real life is about. He understands about making jobs and getting people taken care of. He also is a dentist. He is going to stay on this side of the aisle tonight, Mr. Speaker, because I am not going over there to find out anything about that.

We are excited to have him. It is going to be a good time tonight.

I yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. FERGUSON).

Mr. FERGUSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to deliver my first remarks on the House floor.

Before I became mayor of West Point, I watched my hometown almost fall completely apart. I saw what happened when bad Washington policies almost destroyed my hometown by creating the environment for manufacturing jobs to go overseas. I watched Federal programs that were failing to meet the needs of my friends and neighbors try to take the place of good jobs.

The Federal programs weren't fixing the underlying programs in my hometown. They were simply catching people in the cycle of poverty, and we surely didn't want a handout. We wanted jobs.

I was faced with a choice of whether or not to move my dental practice and my family away from my hometown to a more profitable community or get involved and be part of the solution. I chose to get involved and work to better the lives of my neighbors and my hometown.

Instead of being satisfied with one-size-fits-all government programs that simply perpetuated the existing problems, we worked to bring manufacturing jobs back to West Point, Georgia, by making targeted investments in economic development and infrastructure.

We attracted a Kia Motors manufacturing plant, and the automotive industry brought with it suppliers and

other related businesses that produced over 15,000 jobs in just a few years.

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The city of West Point and the surrounding area today is revitalized not because of Federal Government programs or regulations, but because we worked at the local level to find solutions to meet the needs of our area.

I ran for Congress so that I could apply these lessons at the Federal level. We need policies that make America the most competitive place in the world to do business instead of creating policies that incentivize companies to take their jobs overseas. We need policies that help get people out of poverty instead of trapping them in a multigenerational cycle of poverty.

I know firsthand that more government programs do not make communities, schools, or individuals great. In fact, I have lived through and governed out of the dependence created by bad D.C. policy and government programs that continue to trap people in poverty.

What we have collectively done to those in poverty with these policies is morally wrong. There is a better way, and we will do right by our fellow Americans. I am excited to work with my colleagues to craft and enact these policies that will improve the lives of our citizens.

Mr. COLLINS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman from Georgia and his passion to serve and be a part of what is going to be going on here. We are a week away from the inauguration of our new President-elect, and we are excited about that and moving forward.

As we move across the country, all the way to Arizona, our next speaker is the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS). I am looking forward to serving with ANDY BIGGS on the Judiciary Committee. His background is working to promote a conservative, small-business agenda, which is something that is going to be valuable here. He is also an author. For those of us working in intellectual property and copyright, that is very important. There is so much job creation that is made by the intellectual spark that comes from our entrepreneurs. Tonight I am honored to have the second of our speakers, ANDY BIGGS from Arizona's Fifth Congressional District.

I yield to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. BIGGS).

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for yielding, and I am grateful for this opportunity to introduce myself to this Chamber.

My name is ANDY BIGGS. I represent Arizona's Fifth Congressional District. I hope to pick up where my good friend and predecessor, former Congressman Matt Salmon, left off. He left me big shoes to fill, but I am blessed to be able to counsel with him, and I am honored to follow his example.

My district covers parts of the southeast metropolitan area of Phoenix, the