

The proposal falls short of addressing the health care needs of the American people. It is clear that the concerns of the American people are being ignored again.

The proposal that has been introduced is a fake and (it is) a sham. Real managed care should guarantee a fast appeals process, patient access to specialists, coverage for emergency services without having to call in first, patient choice of plans at their own expense, and also make the people who make those irresponsible medical decisions accountable for those decisions.

That is why the American people in November are going to make that decision, and not necessarily in the gallery of the House today. We need real managed care reform. We need to hold insurance companies accountable for their decision-making, just like we held welfare mothers accountable during the welfare reform bill.

PRESIDENT TO SUSPEND HELMS-BURTON

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, today unfortunately, the President will once again suspend the Helms-Burton law, which passed overwhelmingly in the House and allows U.S. citizens to sue those immoral foreign investors who traffic in American confiscated properties on the island.

This decision is yet another sad example of the administration's slippery slide toward further relaxation of sanctions on the brutal dictatorship of Fidel Castro. And what has Castro done to deserve any weakening of sanctions? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Human rights violations continue, the harassment of dissidents proceeds, and there are no signs of any democratic openings on the island.

How ironic that the President's weak decision comes as we commemorate the fourth anniversary of the massacre by Castro of 50 Cubans, mostly women and children, who attempted to flee the island on a rickety tugboat.

The President can justify his decisions with the legalisms that have now made the White House spin doctors famous, but these false justifications will not help the suffering people of Cuba rid themselves of the totalitarian regime that oppresses them day in and day out.

DEMOCRAT PATIENT PROTECTION BILL

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

Mr. MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, today millions of Americans will visit their family physician seeking medical care, and, for thousands and thousands of those Americans,

they will be told by their family physician that they will not be able to see the specialist that they need to see, they will not be able to get the medicine that the physician thinks they need, they will not be able to get the medical procedure that their physician believes they should have. They cannot do that because some HMO bureaucrat is saying, we are not going to allow you to do that. We are not going to allow you to do that because we are going to try to save money, as opposed to dealing with your real health care needs.

The Democratic patient protection bill ensures that Americans have access to specialists, that Americans have access to the medicines they need, that Americans have access to the operations that are necessary to preserve their health. It does this in the patient protection bill that the President will be coming to Capitol Hill to support today.

Yesterday the Republicans introduced their HMO protection bill. They decided that rather than protect the Americans for health care, they would protect the HMOs.

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While they say they extend protections to Americans, they leave 100 million uninsured Americans out of these protections, 100 million Americans that will not be able to get the medicines, that will not be able to see the specialists, that will not be able to get the medical procedures necessary for their health care.

CONGRESS STANDS BY THE CUBAN PEOPLE AND AGAINST TYRANNY

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

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, one year ago today, July 16, 1997, four of the most distinguished and respected leaders of the pro-democracy movement inside Cuba were picked up in their homes by the political police and thrown into Castro's prisons.

Economist Marta Beatriz Roque, Social Democratic Party President Vladimiro Roca, former university professor Felix Bonne, and attorney Rene Gomez Manzano have languished in Castro's prisons for 1 year without Castro even having decided what to charge them with.

Yesterday, in an open letter to the foreign press and Diplomatic Corps, Vladimiro Roca asked for "a fair and public trial" for himself and the three other dissident leaders.

The letter, distributed by his wife, states, "We wish to draw public attention to our situation, and to demand a fair and public trial in the presence of the foreign press and any diplomats accredited in Cuba who may wish to attend, in proceedings both transparent and above board."

Mr. Speaker, in what constitutes an embarrassment to mankind, there is a

conspiracy of silence regarding the suffering of Cuba, but the Congress of the United States of America will continue to stand on the side of the Cuban people and against the tyranny that oppresses them until Cuba is free.

WE NEED A PATIENT PROTECTION ACT NOW

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

Mr. LEWIS of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, we need a Patient Protection Act. I know because I have heard from the people in my district. I have heard from a mother with a sick baby who had to travel 30 miles to a hospital when there was a hospital nearby. I heard from a doctor who had to fight to get coverage to treat his cancer. Mr. Speaker, too many patients are paying more and getting less. Under the present system, too many patients are getting a raw deal. They need a fair deal, a good deal, a better deal.

If insurance companies want to make decisions about medical care for our children and our families, then they must be held accountable. The Democratic bill will give us those rights. The Republican bill will deny them.

Mr. Speaker, we need a real Patient Protection Act and we need it now; not tomorrow, not next week, not next year, but now.

TAX RELIEF

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

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, last year Republicans passed the first tax relief bill in 16 years. Did Members know that even after that, the tax burden on American workers is still nearly 40 percent? Americans ought to be enraged over that, and I am.

Just yesterday we find out, after a fourth revision, that we now have a surplus of \$580 billion over 5 years. It is only right we return some of that money back to hardworking Americans. After all, it came right out of their back pocket.

Mr. Speaker, the President and some of the Senate are balking at returning this money to its rightful owners, American citizens. As part of our balanced budget and protection of Social Security, the House voted to give \$100 billion in tax relief, which equals only one penny on the dollar. Americans want, need, and deserve tax relief, and I think surely we can find one penny on the dollar to give back to hardworking citizens in this country.

BEWARE OF THE REPUBLICANS' INSURANCE BILL OF RIGHTS

(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, I think the most important message we can give Americans this morning is buyer beware, beware of the Republicans' Insurance Bill of Rights. The Democratic Congress and caucus, and I am a wishful thinker, would like to offer the Patient Bill of Rights, because we believe that we need to read between the lines and make sure that we read the fine print.

The Republican bill is for the insurance companies. It does not protect the rights of patients and doctors. It does not allow emergency room visits. It does not hold the insurance companies accountable. It does not respect the 77-year-old World War II veteran who walked the Japanese Death March, yet, when he went to pick up his prescription at a local hospital in my district, they turned him away because of some confusion with his HMO plan.

In the hot sun of Texas he had to go back home without the necessary prescription drugs that he needed. Until he called our office to get relief, a World War II veteran was turned away from our standardized HMOs. The reason? The only words they know is no, I cannot serve you.

Vote and support the Democratic Patient Bill of Rights.

THE RIGHT COMBINATION FOR SUCCESS

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

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I cannot help but chuckle as I listen to my friends on the other side talk about their "Patient's Bill of Rights." I chuckle because all this rhetoric is coming from the same party that tried to socialize our health care system 4 years ago when they were in the majority. Pardon my skepticism, but I hope they now are not promoting something that in nothing more than a trial lawyers Bill of Rights.

Just like in health care, we are seeing the same thing from them in education. While some of my colleagues regrettably believe that education is best run by Washington bureaucrats, a story in yesterday's New York Times echoes what Republicans have been working toward all along. We know that when we give to local schools the support and incentive to excel, our students will achieve.

Students at New York's Aviation High are part of a unique partnership between Tower Air, the FAA, and local school officials. They were given hands-on training in the field of aircraft maintenance and other areas. But their education goes beyond earning a diploma. As the Times reported, Tower Air has hired all its student interns upon graduation. What is more, more than three-fourths of them go on to earn a college diploma.

Originally a vocational and trade school, Aviation High has broadened its curriculum, offering students a world class education, while providing a fundamental background in the airline industry. This is the kind of experience no Washington bureaucracy can provide.

Mr. Speaker, to those who disdain public-private cooperation, and love increased control from Washington bureaucracies, I urge them to consider the students and faculty at Aviation High School, and work to give students across the country an opportunity like this.

Mr. Speaker, I include for the RECORD the article in the New York Times of July 15, 1998, which describes this program.

The article referred to is as follows:

[From the New York Times, July 15, 1998]

STUDENTS AT AVIATION HIGH TEND TO 747'S

(By Macarena Hernández)

Oscar Mendez would sit on his porch and admire the small cropdusters. They flew low to the ground fumigating the rice fields near his home in the Dominican Republic.

"One day that will be me flying," he would say, pointing at the small planes. He was only 6 years old.

Friends laughed. But two years later, Oscar took his first plane ride, to the United States. And today, at 19, Mr. Mendez has graduated from Aviation High School and is working at Kennedy International Airport as an aviation mechanic for Tower Air.

Mr. Mendez's easy move from school to a job just days after graduation last month is a prime model of one of the nation's most unusual school-to-work programs. While many schools are forging stronger links with businesses, Aviation is still the nation's only high school whose students service commercial aircraft, educators say.

For three years, Tower Air and Aviation High have worked together. About 40 seniors are interns there during a fifth year at the high school, spending 20 hours a week at Kennedy instead of in shop classes. Tower Air has hired all its student interns after graduation either full time or part time.

"It is a unique school," said Jim Peters, a spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration's eastern region. "It has been doing it for the longest time and has been among the most successful programs in the country."

Lest the thought of teen-age interns fixing planes generate fear of flying, the airline and the high school both point out that trainees start work with baby steps. They observe for the first five weeks, then they perform more elementary tasks like changing light bulbs in the cabin, fixing seats or lubricating the flap controls on the wings. Eventually, students are allowed to replace faulty circuit breakers and remove and replace aircraft engines, under the supervision of an experienced mechanic.

"It's hard to believe a 19-year-old is working with Tower," said Mr. Mendez, who plans to continue working next fall when he enters the College of Aeronautics, in East Elmhurst, Queens. "It's kind of crazy. Here we are fixing airplanes that actually fly."

Aviation High School opened in 1925 as the Central Building Trades School, a vocational training program with three instructors teaching woodworking, plumbing and electrical installation. In 1936, the school took aviation technology as its focus and 21 years later, it moved to Long Island City, Queens.

After four years of shop classes, including hydraulics, welding and sheet metal, students qualify for an F.A.A. exam that li-

censes them to work on either an aircraft frame or engine maintenance. Students who, like Mr. Mendez, stay a fifth year can obtain a second license from the agency and qualify for an internship with Tower Air—and usually, a job offer. Tower gets the chance to evaluate potential workers while the school's students get the chance to work on real aircraft. "We have the equipment, but it is not the same thing," said an assistant principal, Mario Cotumaccio. "We don't have a 747 in our back yard."

Mr. Cotumaccio started the program because Aviation graduates faced a familiar teen-age Catch 22: they had trouble finding their first jobs because they lacked airline experience, which they could not get until they had a job. Tower Air, a low-cost airline based in New York, decided to give the internship a try. Morris K. Nachtom, chairman and chief executive of Tower Air, said the company has been pleased.

Before the internship program, training programs were confined to the small hangar behind the school, which holds about 16 aircraft, 4 from World War II.

The school now faces a series of new academic hurdles as the state tightens its academic requirements. All public school students—including those at vocational schools—are being required to take Regents exams, which test a student's preparation for college work. It comes during a national effort to raise standards for vocational schools.

"We are seeing a need for well-rounded education," said John Decaire, president of the National Center for Manufacturing Sciences, a consortium of industrial companies based in Ann Arbor, Mich. "Companies don't operate sort of autonomously anymore."

While some Aviation graduates stay in aircraft maintenance, about 77 percent go on to college. Yvonne Franco plans to go to Jacksonville University in Florida after she completes her fifth year in June of 1999, paying for school by working in aviation maintenance. "It is a backbone for me," Yvonne said. "I know it assures my future."

Her mother, Marleny Franco, said, "When the children come out of there, they come out with a career in their hands so that they don't have to go fry potatoes at McDonald's."

TIME FOR CONGRESS TO ACT ON A PATIENT PROTECTION ACT

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

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to act now on a Patient Protection Act for managed care plans. With more people moving into managed care plans like HMOs, doctors and sound health care decisions are being replaced by insurance companies and their economic decisions.

With managed care plans, patients who are giving up some choices need protections. That is why I support a Patient Protection Act, a Patient Protection Act that gives a clear right of appeal, that guarantees access to specialists and OB-GYNs, that provides reimbursement for needed emergency room visits, that holds insurance companies accountable for their bad decisions that they make doctors and other providers carry out.

Mr. Speaker, the horror stories are growing about managed care across the