

There is an answer to every single aspect of this. Every time we look at this Rubik's cube it looks better and better and better.

Also, the corporations that have moved offshore to avoid the taxes in United States of America will come back to this country, many of them, and other corporations will move to the United States. An example would be Ireland. They untaxed corporations in Ireland for a period of 10 years, and they ended up with 560 American corporations domiciled in that little island of 4 million people. So imagine multiplying this across this huge continent of almost 300 million people.

□ 2245

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, let me close with one point, and that is 47 percent of America does not pay any income taxes today. They pay payroll taxes, but we have a huge bias that is a dangerous bias in my judgment because people who do not pay taxes are disproportionate beneficiaries of government, and they want more government and more taxes because they think they do not pay them.

I want a tax system that is so fair and equal that the next time we decide we want a tax increase, my mother is willing to pay it. We had two tax increases in 1990, both promised at the top 2 percent; it works its way through the system, and we all pay. I want a system that everyone sees they are the ones paying the taxes, and they are the beneficiary.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, a recent study by the National Association of Manufacturers said a long-term solution to being competitive in the world market is to change the income tax system, to replace the income tax system. This is a question that Lou Dobbs asked me about 2 weeks ago when I was on the "Lou Dobbs Tonight Show" talking about the fair tax: Do you really think this can happen and how?

Mr. LINDER. We hear from everyone, and you talk about it, and people say it will never happen. This town responds to our constituents, and if the American people want this to pass, it will pass. There is no organized opposition to it. If the American people catch on, it will pass. But one thing that I have learned over the last 6 years on this issue, and I have been on several hundred talk radio shows, I have been in many States, the American people are so far ahead of the politicians on this it is scary. Politicians have no idea how close the American people are to throwing them out over this issue. The American people want the simplicity of it, the fairness of it, and they want it to be equal.

All of the polling and focus groups we did, they want everybody treated the same. Half of the people in the focus groups thought they were the only ones paying taxes, and everybody else had a deal. They want everybody treated the same. Cab drivers want wealthy people treated the same because they want to

be wealthy one day, and they want to be treated exactly the same.

I believe there is a confluence of events occurring. The Social Security and Medicare crisis is going to force us to make some tough decisions. The fact that our revenues are not dependable, when under the sales tax and the growing economy, would not only be dependable, we may not even be facing deficits, and the projected long-term growth of the economy of a significant percentage above what we can do now. And lastly, we cannot continue to compete in a global economy with such a large tax component in our price system.

These various things are coming to bear on our economy, and I believe the American people will catch on to this. As the gentleman knows in Georgia, he cannot run for office without discussing it. We need to do that in all of the States. I believe the American people will move this country, and it will take them to move the politicians. Politicians are, more than anything, followers. They want to know where the country is going, and they want to get in front of the parade, wherever it is. We are looking for some leaders, and the American people will show the way. Yes, it will happen.

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I concur that the American people will drive this issue. That is the reason it is important that the gentleman from California (Mr. THOMAS) holds hearings in the Committee on Ways and Means. Let us vet it and let the people understand it, and I think the people will respond to Members of Congress, and we will have action taken on this issue.

I was offered the cushy job of being the IRS commissioner about 2 years ago, but I turned it down. I chose not to join them; I want to end them. In order to do that, we have to abolish the income tax, and that will end the IRS as we know it today. I appreciate the gentleman's effort, and I am 110 percent behind you.

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I thank all Members who have participated tonight and continue the fight. This will happen.

### 30-SOMETHING CAUCUS REPORTS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) is recognized for half the time until midnight, approximately 36 minutes.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, we are here on our second weekly 30-something working group, and I am joined by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK). We started this last week on Tuesday. Every Tuesday night we are going to come here and talk about issues facing the young people, not only in our own communities in Florida or in the State of Ohio, not only young people who are at universities or private schools throughout the country, but people who are in their 20s, in

their 30s and the kinds of challenges they are facing in society here today.

As Members can see, the gentleman from California (Ms. PELOSI), who we would like to thank for the opportunity to do this, sponsoring the 30-something working group, we are going to ask young people, and you do not have to be 30, you can be 20, 40, 50, to contact us by e-mail at 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov, and we will repeat the mailing address later, but just to talk about issues that are facing young students, young people today.

Last week we talked for about an hour about the challenges that are facing young people with summer jobs, student loans, Pell grants, and issues related to getting into college, having access to college, having access to higher education in this country. The majority of the discussion we talked about last week revolved around the priorities of the country. As we sit in this Chamber late on a Tuesday night, the issue again is priorities.

We just want to communicate to young people today that there is active participation in this democracy in which young people who think that democracy does not matter, who think that their vote does not count, who think that somehow they cannot participate in the system, we are here to tell them that they can, and they do have an opportunity to participate in this system; and for two young people like the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) and myself and several others who are here, have gotten to this establishment, this institution, the United States Congress, through the help of a lot of young people. You can either say no, reject the system, you can say no, we do not have an opportunity to talk, we do not have an opportunity for our voice to be heard, or you can say, yes. Yes, we can participate in the system; we can participate in our democracy.

I heard some of the gentlemen before us talk about how the democratic process works and how people will, if given the opportunity, they will dictate what kind of government we get and what kind of government as citizens we receive; but it has to be active participation.

We are here to say we believe, and I know I believe passionately and have spoken on the House floor and I know the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK) has also participated in these discussions, that we believe that the priorities of this institution over the last year, year and a half, several years, have not represented the interests of young people. The Republican Party has controlled the House since 1994. They have controlled the Senate for a good portion of the years since then. They have controlled the White House for the last 3½ years; and the agenda for young people, the agenda for students has not been addressed. As we talked about last week, our discussion had a lot to do with Pell grants and access to college.

The question that we want to present to young people today, tonight, is: Do you agree with the priorities that this administration has established for you? Do you agree with trillions of dollars of tax cuts over the next 10 years? Do you agree with borrowing money to pay for the deficits that we have today in order to give tax cuts primarily to the top 1 and 2 percent? I know the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK), who has been very active in this discussion, has agreed with the majority of us on the Democratic side that we believe that money would be better spent balancing our budget, making sure we have fiscal responsibility in the country, and making sure we make the proper investments. We believe that some of those investments, and it would be misleading to say all of those investments, but a good portion or many of those investments should be made to our young people.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I want to say that the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. RYAN) has hit the nail on the head. I am glad we are here with our 30-something working group; and we are also joined by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ), as she was last week. We are showing a level of consistency; and just from last week, I hold in my hand, almost like the David Letterman Top 10, just some of the e-mails sent in from individuals who saw us here talking about issues not only facing college students, but also facing working families in America that are concerned about how they are going to pay back the second mortgage that they have taken out to allow their children to be educated, and also to students that are now working in student work study to try to pay for college. But they know they have loans that are under attack here in this Congress and the banking community is coming with a new scheme to have them pay more in interest rates rather than have a fixed low rate. I will talk about the e-mails later.

But first, I could not help but look at rockthevote.com before I walked over here, and I can tell Members something that is very, very disturbing. We talk about direct democracy and young people being part of the process to correct the issues that we are here to talk about tonight, health care; and in many locations throughout the country and in some States, students are being told that they cannot register to vote on their college campus.

This is very, very disturbing because it violates Federal law for a State to say you cannot vote, and if you are going to be on a college campus, the University of Ohio, whatever the case may be, if they are there, they are in school, they may register to vote. I would encourage parents and students that care about higher education, care about tuition costs, Pell grants and care about making sure that we have the workforce for the future to lead our country, I encourage them to go to

rockthevote.com so they can learn more about this voter suppression.

Mr. Speaker, I am from Florida, and we cannot wait until the last minute to inform not only parents who want their children to be politically active.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, on that point, we have many kids in school surrounded by their peers who want to participate in the process, who are campaigning for a certain candidate or referendum on a State ballot, but they are from another State. How do they register to vote? I remember being from Ohio, and I went to school in Bowling Green which is across the State, how do you get registered to vote? Should it be by absentee ballot? You have to send a formal letter and you have exams, and you are trying to balance your duties at school to try to achieve a better life; and it becomes a very complicated process, instead of saying register to vote where your school is and being able to participate in the process.

There are many instances where we have a college or university in a congressional district that is controlled by a Member of Congress or a party that is not representative of the people who are at that university, where if all of those kids would be able to register to vote at that university, they would swing a congressional election.

□ 2300

Mr. MEEK of Florida. If I can, I just want to make sure that the listeners that are listening to us right now and also Members of the House, I would definitely urge them, because they should lead in this fight. Direct democracy is important, being able to do away with voter apathy. I do not believe that the folks that are not voting, that it is all voter apathy. It is voter access. I want to read something to you: Under Federal law, college students have the legal right to vote where their residence may be and that is at schools. The Supreme Court established this right in 1979. Yet 25 years later, many local elected officials across the country have not gotten the message. They are rejecting the voter registration applications of students claiming that they are not permanent residents in their community, but the Supreme Court has already said that this concept of permanent is not relevant to students. We have to get that word out.

I would say to the parents that are listening to us tonight, your children can vote in the fall elections. Where will they be in late August or September? They are going to be in school. Where are they going to be in November? They are going to be in school. We have to make sure their voices are heard.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Go to rockthevote.com. Or, if the C-SPAN cameras can come in here, 30somethingdems@mail.house.gov. Send us some e-mails. We received a bunch just from last week, our first

week here. Send us some e-mails. Let us know what you think, what your issues are so we can develop a students' bill of rights in order to advocate.

I would like to welcome a great new Member of our freshman class the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ).

Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California. It is really great to be here. We are also joined by another colleague of ours, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS). Just to catch the tail end of your conversation, I wanted to say that there seems to be something wrong when people are advocating that young people get involved in politics and express their opinions and vote, and you have 18- to 35-year-olds who want to do just that and then the rules are set up in such a way that make it nearly impossible for them to participate. There is something wrong with a democracy that does not embrace making it easier for folks to participate in the political process and exercise their right to be heard.

Not to get off topic, but one of the things that I wanted to talk about a little bit this evening is a subject that is troubling not just for students, for a lot of young adults all across America, folks that may have graduated from college and been out in the workforce for several years, but that is the need for access to health care. I can remember myself when I was at UCLA law school right after I graduated, there was this intense pressure to find a job, and I had this fear during the period when I was studying for my bar exam, I had this fear because I was not covered by any health insurance, this fear that if I did not get a job quickly after taking the bar, that I was pretty much going to be on my own where health care was concerned. I was fortunate in that when I graduated from law school, I graduated in a somewhat healthy economy and there were quite a number of employment opportunities that presented themselves.

But today students are not so lucky. They are graduating from universities and the job market is very dismal for them. Not only does that mean that they are going to have to struggle without having an income after they graduate and the thought of student loans on top of it, but chances are they probably will not be covered by any type of health care. As we rapidly approach the months of May and June, a lot of college students are going to be graduating and finding themselves in the situation that I have just described.

I know of one particular instance in which a female college student recently shared a story with me regarding her personal hardship where health care was concerned. She is about to graduate from college in California and just received a scare by testing positive for an ovarian cyst. She does not know where to turn. She does not have any idea where she is going to get the money to pay for the necessary procedures; and if this situation is not bad

enough because she is a student, currently some of the things are covered by student health, but imagine if she had just graduated and were covered by no health insurance whatsoever, she might not even be aware of the situation that she is in because she might not have gone to the doctor to be tested. I am sure she is not alone in that situation.

I do not know what it is about young people, and to young people that may be watching this, I say you absolutely have a right to affordable and accessible health care. Do not think because you are young that that is one of the dues that you have to pay. You absolutely should have access to affordable health care. Do not sell yourself short and do not demand anything less. Do not think that because you are young, the government can ignore you. You have an opportunity. You have a voice. Exercise it. You have an opportunity to try to shape the policy that this Nation abides by. Be vocal about that.

We have seen the number of people who are uninsured in this country continue to rise. That is just not the people that are uninsured, but there are many people who are underinsured, which means they have very superficial health care benefits; they are not really meaningful, they have high premiums, they have high deductibles. That means that people have just one more worry as they are starting out and embarking on what should be the rest of their lives and a positive experience.

Four years ago, the President promised us action on health care but every year since then, more and more Americans have lost their health insurance. It is particularly dramatic in young people. Young adults comprise a disproportionately large share of the Nation's uninsured. Despite only representing 15 percent of the population, young adults account for 30 percent of those who go without health care in our country.

It is a shame that an industrialized, modern society, supposedly the greatest country in the world, cannot find a way to make sure that every person in this country has access to health care. Those of you who are listening, all of us here on the floor tonight that are talking about these issues that impact young folks, we are fighting like crazy to try to make sure that big HMOs and pharmaceutical companies are not the ones that are receiving the benefits of the health care policy that we pass in this House. We are urging that 12 million young adults who currently find themselves without access to health care, to get involved politically, talk to your Representatives, let them know how critical this issue is for you.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. I thank the gentlewoman, and let me certainly thank my colleagues from Ohio and Florida for their vision in putting this hour together and for making it a regular part of the congressional calendar and the congressional schedule. As I

listened to the three of you before I had a chance to participate in this dialogue, something struck me. I am normally one who tends to be resistant to too many political analyses that rest on generation. I am one of these people who thinks that people try to load a whole lot of analytical content into that term when it should not always be there, but this is something that occurs to me from listening to all three of you. Maybe because we are new to this body, maybe because all four of us are relatively new to public life, maybe because all four of us are still young people, we still have a sense of the possible. We still have a sense of how the power in this institution and the power in this government can still be used to make better the lives of some of our people.

Sometimes when I listen to our friends and our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, I honestly think one of the most fundamental differences is that they do not have a very strong sense of the possible. They pretty much want to take this country as we found it. They want to take the divisions in this country as we found them, and they are pretty much happy to get by with that. Maybe what separates us as younger Democrats and as Democrats is that we have a profound sense of what is possible.

As I listened to the gentlewoman from California and I think about health care in this country, we do have an enormous amount still to do. One day some historian is going to look back at the fact that 4 years ago, we had a \$122 billion surplus, and we somehow did not manage to spend a dime of it on providing health insurance for working Americans who need it, who are playing by the rules, who are doing everything that the system demands of them, and yet they somehow do not have health insurance. We had a \$122 billion surplus and could not spend any of that largesse on addressing the problem of the uninsured. Here we are 3 years later, we have a \$521 billion, and climbing, deficit. We are spending all of that money, and we are still not spending a dime of it on addressing the problem of the working uninsured. That is something that a lot of the young people who I hope are listening in their college classroom and in their college dorms tonight will hold us accountable for. That we have had an opportunity to spend an enormous amount of the Treasury in this country, and we have never touched this problem.

Understand something very basic about the problem of the uninsured. Sometimes when we listen to the debate, we almost think that the uninsured are all poor people. This is the reality. A significant number of people who are uninsured are people who are working and people who are earning between \$50,000 and \$75,000. Not poor by any stretch of the imagination. A lot of these are people who are working as young lawyers. They are people who

are working as young legal assistants. They are people who by no means are what we think of as being on the margins of society.

□ 2310

So I would simply make this point tonight when we talk about the obligation that we have as young leaders, one of the most fundamental obligations that we have is to maybe finish some of the business that some other people have left for us, to maybe find some way to deal with some of these problems that have been sitting and festering. Forty-two million Americans are uninsured. That means 42 million Americans are essentially one health crisis away from seeing their financial security wiped out.

Again, my sense of the possible leads me to think that we can do something about that, and my sense of the possible leads me to believe that if we do not address this problem and we simply let it fester, that we are going to wake up one day in America, in this wonderful land of opportunity and we are going to see that we can split in two and become two Americas. We become one America for people who are well endowed and people who are wealthy. We become one America for those who are without.

And I will close on this point. A lot of us are institutional lawyers. The gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) I know is an attorney who practiced very ably in California. Unfortunately, in our profession as lawyers, we kind of accept the fact that the more money one has, the better legal service they can get. It is just something that we accept.

When it comes to accounting, as we are just finishing the tax season, the quality of one's bank account determines the quality of the accountants that they get. I hope that we never let ourselves lapse into a world where the quality of one's health and their capacity to fight the ravages of disease is a function of how much money they have got, because if we ever enter that kind of a world, we have entered a world that is fundamentally less fair than what we have had and we have entered a world that is less generous than what we need it to be.

And I would just in conclusion say this: I know that all four of us are fans of Robert F. Kennedy and the vision that he had for America. He was fond of saying, when he concluded a lot of his speeches, "Some men see things as they are and say why? I see things that never were and say why not?" And I think that is our challenge as young Democrats, not just to see the things in this country that trouble us and raise our hands and say why, but to see a better and fairer world and to say why not?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman was extremely articulate in his analysis of the situation that we are in, and I think he is right, that a lot of us that are here, and I have seen

many Members who are just a few years older than us, have maintained that attitude that say this institution and politics in general is about what can be for the rest of society.

We have talked a little bit about health care, and I think there are two ways to look at this. I think both are very valuable, but the one is we need to cover people because it is a justice issue. It is an issue where we all believe that every person in America should have adequate health care regardless of one's wealth, period, end of story. That should not be a debate that we are having in the 21st century in America.

And as we provide health care for young people, we are beginning to educate them on the way to behave, the way to treat themselves, the way to be more healthy, so that when they are in the Medicare program one day, that they are not costing us as much money as they would have cost us had they not had the education that they had at a young age.

This should not be just about providing health care coverage. This should also be about teaching wellness in our schools, whether it is through Leave No Child Behind or some other Federal program that we have, but to make sure we are teaching people at a very young age how wellness is the best way to approach life. That is one.

And then the second reason is an economic argument. Imagine if we were providing health care to manufacturers here today. Young kids graduate from school. They go and they work. Maybe they do not even go to college. They go get a 2-year degree, run the new machines, have a technical degree, and they have health care. Imagine the burden that would be released from those people who were owning small manufacturing shops and the money that they would save that they could put back into their business to create economic wealth in the country again.

So this is an investment that I think when we want the government to invest money, we say we want to get the best bang for the buck. We get a justice issue solved, and we also want to get economic development and assist small businesses in a way that they have not been assisted under the current regime that we have here in the United States.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, if I can, I just want to mention I am so glad that the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is here and also the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS). The gentleman from Alabama (Mr. DAVIS) represents a rural part and a very poor part of Alabama, and I have heard him on many other occasions, not only in the Committee on the Budget, share the stories of his constituents, and I just want to steal from that for a minute.

I represent Miami and also South Broward County, and it is a very urban area. I will share with my colleagues that not only with the educational institutions that we have there, we have children or we have young people that

are gambling on health care. They do not have health care because they cannot afford health care, and they are what I call emergency room health care. As we speak right now, some mother or father has to take their child into an emergency room because they do not have health care coverage. They are working. They are not at home eating a bag of chips and drinking some sort of soda saying that, well, I do not want to work. They go to work every day. These individuals are walking into emergency rooms for their health care. Then we wonder why our health care cost is so high. Why do we have a pill in the hospital, Tylenol, that costs \$10?

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, so in essence we do have universal health care in the country but it is through the emergency room.

Mr. MEEK of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I do not want to start talking, but the first thing we instituted in Iraq was universal health care. So I do not want to bounce back and forth, but the gentleman from Alabama is on the Committee on the Budget, and I am glad we have a diversity because I know the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ) is on the Committee on the Judiciary and the gentleman from Ohio is on the Committee on Armed Services along with me, and I am on the Select Committee on Homeland Security; but really where the rubber meets the road is how we set our budget here, and then how we are setting up future generations and even this generation for failure. Can the gentleman from Alabama talk a little bit about that? Because I am so glad he is here and he is knowledgeable on the issue.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for raising the issue. One of the interesting things that we often hear in this town and we hear it from the other side of the aisle is we cannot justify their commitment, we are told, by the amount of money that we are spending. A lot of our colleagues and friends on the Republican side of the aisle say we care very deeply about health care, we care very deeply about education, we are just not spending a lot of money on those things and one cannot judge our commitment by that.

Most American families, I think, realize that people spend money on the things they value. They do that in their homes and they do that in the United States Congress. We are steadily walking away from commitments that are decades-long commitments to improving the quality of our educational system, improving the quality of health care. We made a commitment, or our predecessors did, because none of us were here. Not a single one of us voted on Leave No Child Behind. But before we got here in this institution, this House passed a bill called Leave No Child Behind and made a commitment to improve education in this country. That commitment has

never been funded adequately. It has never been funded to set the original vision that was laid out.

And on health care, the prescription drug bill that all four of us voted against, incidentally, last November, this is a bill which has an enormous price tag. It is a bill that will leave large numbers of seniors still without prescription drug coverage. And in so many areas, and this is what is striking I think to a lot of our constituents, they hear about the obligations we are undertaking abroad. They hear about the commitment that we are making to improve the lives of people around the world. What they do not see is a commensurate commitment here at home.

And I think we have to recognize that if we want our country to move forward, if we want to fix a firmer and better foundation for our people, that is a matter of resources. It is incredible that we have run up a \$521 billion deficit and we have left so many national problems untouched. Now we know why. It is because we have made it a priority to cut taxes by \$3 trillion over the last 3 years. We know why, because we have made a commitment to engage in so many crises around the world when there are festering crises here at home. We know why. It is because we frankly have not had our priorities straight in this institution.

I strongly believe that we have to identify the unfinished business of America, and as we move into this congressional and Presidential election, maybe there is one very clear and simple challenge we ought to issue to our colleagues and ideological opponents on the other side of the aisle.

□ 2320

A very simple question: They are fixated on fixing the world and remaking the world. We have to be fixated on remaking America. Because what are we fighting for abroad? If we are fighting for anything, it is for a vision of the promise of democracy. Well, if we believe in that promise of democracy and we believe that the promise of democracy means expanded opportunity, then surely we have to fight for that here at home.

All of us, I know, have a great deal of admiration for John F. Kennedy. John F. Kennedy was a great Democratic President who believed that we can be bold in asserting our interests around the world, but that we can be equally bold in asserting our vision here at home.

You would almost think you could not have it both ways. You would almost think you could not do both of those things, if you listened to some people in this town. We have to have enough confidence and enough belief in the better powers of our government and the better angels of our nature to try to transform America.

I will make this last point. There is a reason, I believe, why so many of our people are disengaged and not voting;

why so many young people, why so many Americans who are struggling economically do not even want to participate. It is because they often do not hear this institution speaking to their values. They often do not hear their needs and their concerns being addressed.

They turn on the TV at 10 o'clock at night and hear us talking about a fair tax that is never going to be, some kind of a complicated esoteric tax thing that is never going to happen. They turn on the television in the middle of the day and they hear us talking about renaming bridges and post offices. They turn on the TV late at night and they hear us talking about cutting veterans benefits, the day we went to war in Iraq. So much of what they hear us say in this institution does not resonate, it does not seem a part of their lives.

I think if we want to get people to vote, if we want to get people engaged, then they need to hear something of themselves in this place. They need to hear something of the echoes that are going all around American living rooms echoing in this chamber.

It is a very real question of relevance, making the things that our people care about a part of our priorities in setting government.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mr. Speaker, I just want to make this one observation: When I was young I played sports and inevitably was plagued with injuries from time to time, and my mother once told me something, and I hate to admit when my mother was right, but she was so right.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Do not do it.

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. Mom, here goes. She said, "You do not feel it now because you are young. You have energy, you are strong, you recover quickly and you think you are indestructible. But when you get older, these injuries are going to come back to haunt you."

I do not particularly consider myself very old, but it is true. As somebody in my thirties, my soccer ankle that I broke three different times playing bothers me.

For young people who do not have access to health care, who do not have access to treatments and medicines that can help prevent a minor injury from becoming a severe injury down the road, or prevent a mild form of a disease or an illness from becoming something full-blown, the sole thing standing between them and some kind of chronic illness or really devastating health problem is early access to preventive medicine and early access to medicine and to therapies that are going to help them.

Again, it is kind of hard to think when you are 18 years old that you are going to be old and sick and frail one day, but if you do not have access to health care and you cannot get a head start and make sure that you get yearly visits so that you are checked out

for any potential conditions, that is a potential that is a very real potential down the line.

So, for young folks, again, I cannot stress this enough. I think sometimes we think, well, we are young, we are just starting out, we do not have the dream job that we are hoping for, but I am working full-time to put myself through school or working full-time right now and have no health care benefits or very minimal health care benefits. You deserve better. Again, you need to exercise your voice and make sure that you are getting better.

Mr. RYAN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, as we are wrapping up here, I want to thank the gentleman from Florida, the gentlewoman from California and the gentleman from Alabama.

I want to take this opportunity to say e-mail us, 30-SomethingDems at mail.house.gov, and check out rockthevote.com for the voter suppression.

I just want to read a couple e-mails real quickly that we received last week. Melanie from Maryland said that she heard us last week. It almost brought her to tears, that people in the Congress were actually talking about her.

Amy from Abilene Christian University wrote. And there was also one other student who called and said he never watched C-SPAN, but ended up watching it for 45 minutes last week to watch "Gregory Meeks, Tim Ryan and one other guy." That "one other guy" was the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MEEK).

We will be back next Tuesday. Drop an e-mail to us. We are going to continue to have this dialogue and make sure that the students and 20-some-things and 30-some-things of this country are represented in the United States Congress.

#### PROVIDING HEALTH CARE FOR ALL AMERICANS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CHOCOLA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 7, 2003, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized until midnight.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker. I appreciate being invited here to be part of the youth leadership hour of tonight's session of the House of Representatives.

There were some interesting comments from the other side of the aisle. I am actually here to talk tonight about health care. Certainly the concept of voting where you live is one that I endorse, and always have. I have several universities in my district, and in fact the NAACP awarded a college chapter at the University of North Texas an award for their program of Live Here, Vote Here that they ran last year, and I certainly salute them in their efforts.

But let us talk a little bit more about health care. Maybe we can talk a

little more in depth about health care. I believe the gentleman from Alabama, if I am quoting him right, said that his group had a profound sense of what is possible. Well, let us spend some time talking about what is indeed possible; what is doable right now, this year, even though it is an election year.

Mr. Speaker, I was on the plane coming back from my district in Texas back to the Nation's Capital today. I picked up a copy of the Fort Worth Star Telegram at the airport, and the headline above the fold was "Firms Offer Plan for Uninsured Workers."

Now, there is a novel concept. Here is a consortium of large companies. "More than 50 of the country's largest employees said Monday that they will band together to offer health insurance to workers who would otherwise not qualify, offering coverage up to 4 million uninsured workers and their dependents by next year. The companies include major Tarrant County employers; American Airlines, Lockheed Martin, Bell Helicopter, as well as McDonald's, Sears Roebuck, Home Depot, Ford Motor and General Electric."

I will not read the entire article, but the article goes on to say that "uninsured workers tend to delay medical treatment and avoid cheaper preventative care, seeking expensive emergency room treatment." We know that emergency health care is some of the most expensive health care in the world. We know this is a huge driver in the cost of overall health care spending.

So here are these large companies back in Texas, many in my district, who are recognizing that the cost of the uninsured is a major cost driver for health insurance, and these companies are banding together to provide a type of coverage available to their employees, who otherwise would not have health insurance available to them. I think this is an example of the type of innovative, consumer-driven approach that we are seeing in health care.

One of the really disappointing things to me, to listen to the dialogue I just heard on the other side, actually goes back to an article written by Mr. Brownstein of the Los Angeles Times last December, where he said there are only two ways to pay for health care in this country. One is private, employer-based insurance, and the other is for the government, State or Federal Government, to pay for the cost of health insurance.

That completely ignores the cost of uncompensated care. As a physician, I know I probably gave away much more in medical care than any of these young lawyers will ever give away in legal fees. But there is a tremendous amount of care that is just simply uncompensated in this country, and that needs to be calculated into the overall expensing of health care.

But the other area that was completely ignored in Ronald Brownstein's article last December was those individuals who pay for health care themselves. We did a great thing in this