

S. 3187. An act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to extend the funding and expenditure authority of the Airport and Airway Trust Fund, to amend title 49, United States Code, to extend authorizations for the airport improvement program, and for other purposes.

□ 2145

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

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

(Mr. MORAN of Kansas addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

HEALTH CARE REFORM

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

Mr. POLIS. A key part of the historic health care reforms that this Congress has now passed is the way that it empowers people to rise from poverty and reduce their reliance on government for providing their health care. Medicaid provides health care as an entitlement to the very poorest Americans. For a family of four, the Federal poverty line is about \$22,000. For an individual, it's just under \$11,000. So your earnings have to be below that to qualify for Medicaid. Now one thing that our health care reform package does is it increases that dollar amount to 130 percent of poverty, but the other thing it does is it provides a way out of poverty, a way to earn more money without losing your health care.

Currently, many people who hover just around the poverty line can't accept a raise, can't take a second job. If they take a raise of 10 cents an hour from \$8.50 to \$8.60, if they work 50 or 60 hours a week instead of 40, they lose their eligibility. Their income puts them slightly above the poverty line. And what they lose in health care benefits is far more than the money that they earn if they earn an additional \$500 or \$800, which could make all the difference in their lives.

With health care reform, we're replacing that with a sliding scale. No more does all that aid cut off right when you hit poverty or 130 percent of the poverty level. You have an incentive to get out and earn that extra dollar to better yourself, to work that extra hour because the Federal assistance for your health care will decrease on a sliding scale. This will provide an incentive and help lead people off of government health care.

It's rather ironic. I've heard people on the other side of the aisle talk

about a government takeover of health care. Of course the government isn't taking over any part of health care with this bill. Not only that, we finally will help people get off of government assistance for health care by giving them the incentive to work more and have individual responsibility to pay their own premiums for their own policy with their own money. No more will people lose all of their health care benefits as a perverse incentive not to work that existed prior to this historic law being signed by President Obama. I am confident that over time, this law will lead to less people relying on government for their health care, more individual responsibility. People will have an incentive to get themselves and their families out of a life of poverty, to break the vicious cycle of poverty that has held too many families and too many generations in chains.

The government needs to encourage people to better themselves, and with this historic health care, we are doing that by allowing a sliding sale of subsidies all the way up to a couple hundred percent of the poverty level. So as that family earns \$25,000, \$30,000 a year, is working their way up, climbing on up the ladder of opportunity that this country offers, so too will their aid decline that they are given to afford health care, but it will decline on a sliding scale so that when they earn that extra dollar, they may lose 40, 50, 60 cents of Federal Government assistance. But there is an incentive to earn that extra dollar because, by golly, they get to keep part of it and spend it for themselves and their family. And that can make all the difference in lifting Americans out of poverty and encouraging the American value of individual responsibility for all American families.

VACATING 5-MINUTE SPECIAL ORDER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the 5-minute Special Order in favor of Mr. FRANKS of Arizona is vacated.

There was no objection.

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

(Mr. MAFFEI addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

IN SUPPORT OF MEMBERS OF ILWU LOCAL 30 IN BORON, CALIFORNIA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. RICHARDSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. RICHARDSON. I rise today to something that's very personal to me and important, and that's advocating for working people. You see, you're

looking at a Member of Congress who had the opportunity to have a mother who was part of a bargaining unit, who was a member of a union. She had an opportunity to have someone advocate on behalf of not only herself but her two daughters as well. And because my mother had that advocate, she was able to send her daughters to good schools, she was able to put braces on our teeth, and she was able to ensure that, yes, that little girl back in Los Angeles, California, would have an opportunity to one day become a Member of Congress.

You know, it wasn't that long ago when we had elections, and we saw things that were happening out in America where working people had worked all their lives for these companies, and yet they were finding that they were being sent out the door. Let me tell you about a story that I heard about this last week. I rise today to speak in support of the hardworking miners of Local 30 of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union, ILWU, in Boron, California. Since January 31, 2010, approximately 560 mine workers, 560 families have found themselves locked out of their jobs by their employer Rio Tinto, leaving them scrambling to provide for their families and to pay for health care benefits—what we've been talking about these last couple of weeks, to have to pay through the nose premiums of COBRA which many of them cannot afford. So they've had to choose between putting food on their tables and providing benefits for their families, something no one in America should have to choose. Days before the lockout, the miners were presented with a contract that called for cutting benefits, converting full-time jobs to part-time jobs, and reserving to itself the right to outsource all of their jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this style and approach to hardworking Americans is not operating in good faith. This isn't what we signed up to do, and neither did we sign up to support it. Leaving 560 hardworking men and women forced to choose between their job and benefits is happening too often to too many workers these days. Companies that come to this Congress to ask us to approve and authorize assistance so that they can have concessions and then to refuse to turn around and pass those same benefits on to the American people is wrong. I believe it's time for this Congress—not other Congresses, but this Congress right now—to stand up, this administration and the agencies, and support legislation and funding that helps the workers, the companies, and our economy. All of them should be viewed at the same level.

This Congress helped with TARP legislation. We helped with the American Recovery Act. We did all that, and many on Wall Street benefited, and we see that today. My message today is, isn't it time for us to also do the same for Main Street, for those 560 locked-out mine workers in California who deserve at least the same?