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House of Representatives

Restoring America's Healthcare Freedom Repeal Obamacare; Defund Planned Parenthood

(Excerpts)

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey ... Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Restoring Americans' Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act and urge all of my colleagues to vote to dismantle Obamacare by repealing the most damaging aspects of this egregiously flawed law.

The legislation before us today will send a strong message on behalf of the millions of Americans who lost or were forced to switch their healthcare coverage and/or doctors, as well as those facing additional charges, higher copayments, and larger annual fees as a result of Obamacare.

I have supported, and the House has passed, legislation to repeal Obamacare in its entirety many times but today's vote is different. Through the reconciliation process, which allows for expedited consideration and a simple majority vote in the Senate, today's bill will be placed on the President's desk. The President will have to decide if he stands on the side of the American people or continues the misguided policies squeezing middle class families.

In particular, the bill repeals the individual mandate—where American are coerced into purchasing expensive insurance packages many do not want or need, and many cannot afford.

Unfortunately for the millions who cannot afford to purchase Obamacare insurance, the penalties are expensive too. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation report issued last month, this year the penalty for noncompliance will spike 47%, up from \$661 in 2015 to a whopping \$969.

The report also states that for 7.1 million uninsured Americans, the penalty is still cheaper than the least expensive insurance option available to them through Obamacare. Since the law did little to address affordability and the increasing cost of obtaining coverage, the federal government—the IRS, no less—will now take money out of the pockets and pocketbooks of Americans, further penalizing the uninsured.

The President and Obamacare supporters promised otherwise, but health insurance still remains out of reach for many Americans. Additionally, those who had quality affordable coverage that they were comfortable with have seen unwelcome changes that they likely would not have had to face—but for Obamacare.

The Restoring Americans' Healthcare Freedom Reconciliation Act will also—fully and permanently—repeal two misguided tax increases harming businesses, innovation and middle-class Americans: the excise tax on employer-sponsored health insurance, aka “the Cadillac tax,” and the medical device tax.

This legislation moves us a step forward in the process of repealing Obamacare's mandates, tax hikes and slush funds and begins undoing the damage inflicted on individuals, businesses, our economy and our national debt. But we can do more to address these inadequacies of our healthcare system and provide alternative reforms and solutions.

We have the ability to ensure that all Americans have access to affordable, high-quality health care. I am a longtime supporter of a number of positive reforms that can replace Obamacare including: reforming the private health insurance market so patients and their doctors are in charge of medical decisions; encouraging healthy behaviors; incentivizing innovation;

ensuring insurance portability and the availability of high-risk pools; reforming Medicare to be a model of efficiency; modernizing the tax code to make health insurance more affordable; and strengthening the health care safety net so no one is left out.

Finally, the bill before the House today defunds Planned Parenthood. Subsidized by over \$500 million taxpayers' dollars each year, Planned Parenthood dismembers or chemically poisons a baby to death every two minutes—killing over 7 million innocent children since 1973. Planned Parenthood is “Child Abuse Inc.” Now, undercover videos have exposed in numbing candor, several high level Planned Parenthood leaders gleefully talking about procuring children's internal organs for a price all while altering gruesome dismemberment procedures to preserve “intact” livers, hearts and lungs from freshly killed babies. Far too many politicians including our Nobel Peace Prize winning President and much of the media continue to ignore, trivialize—even defend—these gross human rights abuses.

So know this: we will not be deterred in exposing this Planned Parenthood scandal, no matter how aggressive and misleading the cover-up.

End taxpayer funding to those who commit these cruel and inhumane acts.