

AoW 3.22.10

1. Highlight confusion.
2. Show evidence of a close reading.
3. 1+ page reflection in your WN

Historic Healthcare Bill Passes

President Obama’s comments supporting the passage of the healthcare bill	Republican House Leader John Boehner’s comments opposing the healthcare bill
<p>Good evening, everybody. Tonight, after nearly 100 years of talk and frustration, after decades of trying, and a year of sustained effort and debate, the United States Congress finally declared that America’s workers and America’s families and America’s small businesses deserve the security of knowing that here, in this country, neither illness nor accident should endanger the dreams they’ve worked a lifetime to achieve.</p> <p>Tonight, at a time when the pundits said it was no longer possible, we rose above the weight of our politics. We pushed back on the undue influence of special interests. We didn’t give in to mistrust or to cynicism or to fear. Instead, we proved that we are still a people capable of doing big things and tackling our biggest challenges. We proved that this government -- a government of the people and by the people -- still works for the people.</p> <p>I want to thank every member of Congress who stood up tonight with courage and conviction to make health care reform a reality. And I know this wasn’t an easy vote for a lot of people. But it was the right vote. I want to thank Speaker Nancy Pelosi for her extraordinary leadership, and Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Majority Whip Jim Clyburn for their commitment to getting the job done. I want to thank my outstanding Vice President, Joe Biden, and my wonderful Secretary of Health and Human Services, Kathleen Sebelius, for their fantastic work on this issue. I want to thank the many staffers in Congress, and my own incredible staff in the White House, who have worked tirelessly over the past year with Americans of all walks of life to forge a reform package finally worthy of the people we were sent here to serve.</p> <p>Today’s vote answers the dreams of so many who have fought for this reform. To every unsung American who took the time to sit down and write a letter or type out an e-mail hoping your voice would be heard -- it has been heard tonight. To the untold numbers who knocked on doors and made phone calls, who organized and mobilized out of a firm conviction that change in this country comes not from the top down, but from the bottom up -- let me reaffirm that conviction: This moment is possible because of you.</p> <p>Most importantly, today’s vote answers the prayers of every American who has hoped deeply for something to be done about a health care system</p>	<p>Mr. Speaker and my colleagues, I rise tonight with a sad and heavy heart. Today, we should be standing together, reflecting on a year of bipartisanship, and working to answer our country’s call and their challenge to address the rising costs of health insurance in our country.</p> <p>Today, this body, this institution, enshrined in the first article of the Constitution by our Founding Fathers as a sign of the importance they placed on this House, should be looking with pride on this legislation and our work. But it is not so.</p> <p>No, today we’re standing here looking at a health care bill that no one in this body believes is satisfactory.</p> <p>Today we stand here amidst the wreckage of what was once the respect and honor that this House was held in by our fellow citizens. And we all know why it is so.</p> <p>We have failed to listen to America. And we have failed to reflect the will of our constituents.</p> <p>And when we fail to reflect that will – we fail ourselves and we fail our country.</p> <p>Look at this bill. Ask yourself: do you really believe that if you like the health plan that you have, that you can keep it?</p> <p>No, you can’t.</p> <p>In this economy, with this unemployment, with our desperate need for jobs and economic growth, is this really the time to raise taxes, to create bureaucracies, and burden every job creator in our land?</p> <p>The answer is no.</p> <p>Can you go home and tell your senior citizens that these cuts in Medicare will not limit their access to doctors or further weaken the program instead of strengthening it?</p> <p>No, you cannot.</p> <p>Can you go home and tell your constituents with confidence that this bill respects the sanctity of all human life, and that it won’t allow for taxpayer funding of abortion for the first time in 30 years?</p> <p>No, you cannot.</p> <p>And look at how this bill was written.</p> <p>Can you say it was done openly, with transparency and accountability? Without backroom deals, and struck behind closed doors, hidden from the people?</p> <p>Hell no, you can’t!</p> <p>Have you read the bill? Have you read the</p>

that works for insurance companies, but not for ordinary people. For most Americans, this debate has never been about abstractions, the fight between right and left, Republican and Democrat -- it's always been about something far more personal. It's about every American who knows the shock of opening an envelope to see that their premiums just shot up again when times are already tough enough. It's about every parent who knows the desperation of trying to cover a child with a chronic illness only to be told "no" again and again and again. It's about every small business owner forced to choose between insuring employees and staying open for business. They are why we committed ourselves to this cause.

Tonight's vote is not a victory for any one party - it's a victory for them. It's a victory for the American people. And it's a victory for common sense.

Now, it probably goes without saying that tonight's vote will give rise to a frenzy of instant analysis. There will be tallies of Washington winners and losers, predictions about what it means for Democrats and Republicans, for my poll numbers, for my administration. But long after the debate fades away and the prognostication fades away and the dust settles, what will remain standing is not the government-run system some feared, or the status quo that serves the interests of the insurance industry, but a health care system that incorporates ideas from both parties -- a system that works better for the American people.

If you have health insurance, this reform just gave you more control by reining in the worst excesses and abuses of the insurance industry with some of the toughest consumer protections this country has ever known -- so that you are actually getting what you pay for.

If you don't have insurance, this reform gives you a chance to be a part of a big purchasing pool that will give you choice and competition and cheaper prices for insurance. And it includes the largest health care tax cut for working families and small businesses in history -- so that if you lose your job and you change jobs, start that new business, you'll finally be able to purchase quality, affordable care and the security and peace of mind that comes with it.

This reform is the right thing to do for our seniors. It makes Medicare stronger and more solvent, extending its life by almost a decade. And it's the right thing to do for our future. It will reduce our deficit by more than \$100 billion over the next decade, and more than \$1 trillion in the decade after that.

So this isn't radical reform. But it is major reform. This legislation will not fix everything that ails our health care system. But it moves us decisively in the right direction. This is what change looks like.

Now as momentous as this day is, it's not the end of this journey. On Tuesday, the Senate will take up revisions to this legislation that the House has

reconciliation bill? Have you read the manager's amendment?

Hell no, you haven't!

Mr. Speaker, in a few minutes, we will cast some of the most consequential votes that any of us will ever cast in this chamber.

The decision we make will affect every man, woman and child in this nation for generations to come.

If we're going to vote to defy the will of the American people, then we ought to have the courage to stand before them and announce our votes, one at a time.

I sent a letter to the Speaker this week asking that the 'call of the roll' be ordered for this vote.

Madame Speaker, I ask you. Will you, in the interest of this institution, grant my request?

Will you, Mr. Speaker, grant my request that we have a call of the roll? Mr. Speaker, will you grant my request that we have a call of the roll?

My colleagues, this is the People's House. When we came here, we each swore an oath to uphold and abide by the Constitution as representatives of the people. But the process here is broken. The institution is broken. And as a result, this bill is not what the American people need, nor what our constituents want.

Americans are out there are making sacrifices and struggling to build a better future for their kids.

And over the last year as the damn-the-torpedoes outline of this legislation became more clear, millions lifted their voices, and many for the first time, asking us to slow down, not try to cram through more than the system could handle.

Not to spend money that we didn't have.

In this time of recession, they wanted us to focus on jobs, not more spending, not more government, certainly not more taxes.

But what they see today frightens them. They're frightened because they don't know what comes next.

They're disgusted, because they see one political party closing out the other from what should be a national solution.

And they are angry. They are angry that no matter how they engage in this debate, this body moves forward against their will. Shame on us. Shame on this body. Shame on each and every one of you who substitutes your will and your desires above those of your fellow countrymen.

Around this chamber, looking upon us are the lawgivers -- from Moses, to Gaius, to Blackstone, to Thomas Jefferson. By our actions today, we disgrace their values. We break the ties of history in this chamber. We break our trust with Americans.

When I was handed the Speaker the gavel in 2007, I said: "this is the people's House -- and the moment a majority forgets this, it starts writing itself a ticket to minority status."

If we pass this bill, there will be no turning back. It will be the last straw for the American people.

And in a democracy, you can only ignore the will of the people for so long and get away with it.

embraced, and these are revisions that have strengthened this law and removed provisions that had no place in it. Some have predicted another siege of parliamentary maneuvering in order to delay adoption of these improvements. I hope that's not the case. It's time to bring this debate to a close and begin the hard work of implementing this reform properly on behalf of the American people. This year, and in years to come, we have a solemn responsibility to do it right.

Nor does this day represent the end of the work that faces our country. The work of revitalizing our economy goes on. The work of promoting private sector job creation goes on. The work of putting American families' dreams back within reach goes on. And we march on, with renewed confidence, energized by this victory on their behalf. In the end, what this day represents is another stone firmly laid in the foundation of the American Dream. Tonight, we answered the call of history as so many generations of Americans have before us. When faced with crisis, we did not shrink from our challenge -- we overcame it. We did not avoid our responsibility -- we embraced it. We did not fear our future -- we shaped it. Thank you, God bless you, and may God bless the United States of America.

And if we defy the will of our fellow citizens and pass this bill, we are going to be held to account by those who have placed us in their trust. We will have shattered those bonds of trust.

I beg you. I beg each and every one of you on both sides of the aisle:

Do not further strike at the heart of this country and this institution with arrogance, for surely you will not strike with impunity.

I ask each of you to vow never to let this happen again -- this process, this defiance of our citizens.

It is not too late to begin to restore the bonds of trust with our Nation and return comity to this institution.

And so, join me.

Join me in voting against this bill, so that we may come together anew, and address this challenge of health care in a manner that brings credit to this body, and brings credit to the ideals of this nation, and most importantly, it reflects the will our people.

Possible WN topics

- Discuss what each of the speakers doesn't say.
- Do you support or oppose the passage of this bill? Why?
- How will the passage of this bill affect your life (positively or negatively)?