

to organize; they wanted to have the opportunity to be stronger and negotiate on behalf of their patients. Minority doctors in particular have been shut out from HMOs and so inner-city physician many times cannot serve the patient needs of their base.

Frankly, I think we have a responsibility to put this bill forward. But the Committee on Rules, the Republican Committee on Rules knew what they were doing when they added the Coburn amendment and the Cox amendment to prevent something the bill doesn't do anyhow—force a physician to join a union. That is not in the Bill—plain and simple. The Supreme Court just 48 hours ago just indicated to this Congress that the right to an abortion is the law of this Nation however the Coburn brings up unnecessary anti-choice provisions. Why we have this legislation in this way in order to undermine the very good bill offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL), of which I am a cosponsor, I do not know.

Mr. Speaker, I support the ranking member's proposal that we defeat the previous question and allow a redrafting of this rule to eliminate the Cox amendment and to offer the Greenwood amendment, to get on with the business that health care providers need to serve the people of America's health needs.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

(Mr. PAUL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the rule. It is an imperfect rule, but this bill needs to be brought to the floor.

H.R. 1304 is the only bill that I have seen in the last 3 years, probably in the last 30 years, that would move us in a proper direction for health care in this country. For 30 years now we have moved in the direction, not toward socialized medicine, we do not have socialized medicine, we have a mess. We have a monster we created called "medical management." But we have moved toward corporate medicine.

Who are the greatest opponents of H.R. 1304? The HMOs and the insurance companies.

All we are asking for here is a little bit of return of freedom to the physician, that is, for the right of the physician to freedom of contract, to associate. We are giving no special powers, no special privileges. Trying to balance just to a small degree the artificial power given to the corporations who now run medicine, who mismanage medicine, who destroyed the doctor-patient relationship.

Mr. Speaker, this has given me a small bit of hope. I am thankful the leadership was willing to bring this bill to the floor tonight. We should go through, get the rule passed, and vote on this. This is the only thing that has offered any hope to preserve and to restore the doctor-patient relationship.

We need this desperately. We do not need to support the special corporate interests who get the money. The patient does not get the care. The doctors are unhappy. The hospitals are unhappy. And who lobbies against this? Corporate interests. This is total destruction of the doctor-patient relationship.

All we want to ask for is the freedom to associate and the freedom to contract. If they do not want to become a union, doctors do not have to. They had the power to become unions in the 19th century, but under ethical conditions they did not. Nobody tells doctors that they have to, if we remove this obstacle.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, this bill is one of the most essential pieces of legislation I have seen in the last several years, and I commend the gentleman from California (Mr. CAMPBELL) for the work he has done to bring it to the floor, and I condemn the underhanded actions of the Republican leadership of this House in allowing poison pill amendments to put those of us who think this bill essential in a quandary in supporting it.

Mr. Speaker, I will talk more during the general debate about why this bill is essential, but the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) hit it on the head. An HMO comes into town, signs up the employers, controls all the health care, controls all the patients, and says to the doctors: sign on the bottom line. Take it or leave it.

If they do not want to have to treat 20 patients an hour, 5 minutes apiece, if they think it requires more time to give them decent treatment, too bad. They do not have to sign up with us; we will get plenty of doctors who will not have such scruples.

The bill authored by the gentleman from California will enable the doctors to get together and say: no, we need time to talk to our patients and we need time to do proper services.

Mr. Speaker, this is profoundly in the interests of the patients of the United States. This is easily as important as the Patients' Bill of Rights in destroying the tyranny the HMOs have taken over the doctors and patients in this country.

But then we have the Coburn amendment made in order as a poison pill with one purpose and one purpose only. Nothing to do with abortion. That is the fig leaf. The real purpose of this amendment is to get people to vote against the rule and vote against the bill who otherwise would vote for it.

The real purpose of this amendment is to get people who would vote against the insurance interests and for patients' rights, which is what this bill is about, to put them in a quandary so they cannot do it.

Mr. Speaker, I urge that Members vote against the previous question so that we can rewrite the rule. If the pre-

vious question motion is passed, I will reluctantly vote for the rule and hope that we can then defeat the Coburn amendment. Because this bill is as important a bill as any bill we have seen on this floor; and we should not allow a leadership that does not dare get up and say its real purpose, that we are beholden to the insurance companies and we do not want to serve the patients of the United States, we want doctors to be slaves to the insurance companies, so let us hide behind the fig leaf of an extraneous issue. We should not hide behind that issue.

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume only to point out to the gentleman that the real purpose of me being here is to pass this rule, and I appreciate his help.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BOEHNER), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Employer-Employee Relations of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. BOEHNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GOSS) for yielding me this time.

Mr. Speaker, we all know this is a very difficult bill. I congratulate my colleagues on the Committee on Rules for doing the best they could with a difficult situation. But I say to you, Mr. Speaker, you can put lipstick on a pig, but it is still a pig.

We have problems in our health care system, and I think all of us know it. There are ways to address these problems, such as the Patients' Bill of Rights that we are working on in conference today. There are other things that we can do. But this, I would argue, will destroy our health care system.

What protection are we giving our Nation's patients when we take away their health insurance because of increasing costs? What other group of Americans have we ever exempted from our antitrust laws that were created over 100 years ago to stop the big steel trusts, to stop the big oil trusts? We put those antitrust laws in place to prevent consumers from being harmed.

What we are doing here is we are exempting one group of Americans in our health care system, one group of Americans to go out and to negotiate on whose behalf? Come on, they will be negotiating on their own behalf. That is why the Congressional Budget Office and others have talked about the tremendous increase in cost that will result if this bill is passed.

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So, Mr. Speaker, let us quit kidding ourselves. This is a bad solution to a problem that does exist. There are better solutions. Let us defeat the rule, send this bill back to committee and go home and visit with our constituents over the next week.

Mr. HALL of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MALONEY).

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Ohio for yielding.