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## U.S. Rep. Tim Johnson discusses planned healthcare reform

**Guest Commentary**  
**By U.S. Rep. TIM JOHNSON**  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. – America has the best health care system in the world, the best doctors and the most advanced resources. This system, and the astonishing advances in science that have driven it, have allowed us to live longer and better, and survive diseases and injuries that once routinely crippled and killed our citizens.  
 I intend to do all I can to preserve this model that is now being challenged by forces intent on unraveling it. With all the good this health system has accomplished, I recognize there are flaws. There are too many Americans without health insurance, too many citizens and small businesses that can't afford it. The rising cost of care is beyond many family budgets. Emergency rooms are overburdened. Poor and uncoordinated decision-making in health care often drives up the costs for all of us.  
 There are solutions to those problems, which do not require scrapping the institutions we have created and starting over from ground zero.  
 What the leadership in Congress has offered to date is a catastrophically costly hoax on the American people. From the failure of HillaryCare in the 1990s to the upheaval of the Energy and Commerce Committee which saw statesman John Dingell replaced by the ultra-liberal Henry Waxman as chair, failed policies are being promoted that undercut our institutions and our value system. Health care is just the latest example.  
 For those able to examine the House Democratic Health Reform Bill, it is clear that it bears little resemblance even to the President's often-repeated goals of not adding to the deficit, not increasing health-care costs, and not taking away people's private health care coverage.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office analysis shows this legislation will increase the deficit by approximately \$239 billion over 10 years. That is on top of record annual deficits projected at \$1.8 trillion for this year alone. These numbers are unfathomable to most Americans, including me, who as a member of congress, has routinely voted against the spending plans put forward by the House leadership. All of this profligate spending on the so-called stimulus and various bailouts plans has shot the federal debt level to an incomprehensible \$11 trillion, and that could reach \$19 trillion in the next 10 years.  
 Further, this plan would be paid for in part by \$219 billion in cuts to Medicare and Medicaid, cuts largely derived by reducing reimbursement rates to doctors and hospitals. This could have a devastating effect of people being turned away, or care compromised, because of inadequate compensation, especially in rural areas like the 15th District where access to medical care is a pressing issue and doctors and nurses are already in scarce supply. They will be even scarcer if this plan survives. Medicare and Medicaid are the very safety nets put in place, and rightly so, to care for our elderly and the poor. Millions have dutifully paid into these programs with trust they could rely on them in time of need. We are jeopardizing that trust with this proposal.  
 Other means of paying for this proposal would come from taxing health-care benefits citizens now enjoy, and from reducing the deductions people now get for their charitable donations. That can only translate into one thing – fewer donations to support your local United Way, humane society, church or YMCA.  
 There is an additional threat in this proposal to pro-life values many of us hold dear. White House Budget Director

See HEALTHCARE on other side

**Cornjerker Golf Outing**  
**Saturday, August 1**  
**Hubbard Trail Country Club**  
 8 a.m. & 1 p.m. flights  
**\$50 per person**  
 includes 18 holes, cart & lunch  
 Contact Kevin Root at (217) 283-6660  
 or sign up 1 hour prior to tee time.  
*All proceeds benefit Cornjerker Athletics*

**Tunes 'N Transit**  
 Friday 9 p.m.-1 a.m.  
**Open menu Friday**  
 No steak fry  
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 Bar & Package Liquor Store  
 1023 W. Main, Hoopeston

**Sports Physicals**  
 Friday, Aug. 7  
 2:30-4:30 p.m.  
**CHARLOTTE ANN RUSSELL**  
**MEDICAL CENTER**  
**\$15**  
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Healthcare continued from other side

rector Peter Orzag said he was “not prepared to rule out” the possibility of requiring coverage of abortions in the mandated government-run insurance program. That means we would all pay for abortions. That is not choice.

Health care coverage under this bill would purportedly apply to 29 million people, not the 46 million uninsured. What is not clear is how many illegal immigrants this includes, or people who are already eligible for existing programs but have not availed themselves of that opportunity and are thus categorized as the “uninsured.” A Repub-

lican amendment in the House Ways and Means Committee would have required better screening of applicants for subsidized health care to ensure their citizenship. It was defeated, as were all other Republican amendments.

The consequences of this legislative proposal are far-reaching and stand to alter not only health-care delivery but our economy and the ideals of free enterprise and personal responsibility that undergird our value system. The non-partisan Lewin Group estimated 114 million people would lose their current coverage under this bill. The Council of Economic Advisors estimates 4.7 million jobs could be lost as a result of taxes on businesses that cannot afford to provide health care coverage.

The longer this debate continues, the more we learn about the disastrous possibilities under this plan. Longer waits, diminished care, rationed care to your children and mothers and fathers by faceless bureaucrats in a whopping 53 new offices, bureaus, commissions, and programs created by this takeover.

Perhaps that is why Democratic leaders want a vote now. Their own party is beginning to splinter under the

weight of the evidence.

Regardless of how passionate one may feel about health care reform, it is more important to do it correctly than enact new laws, new taxes and new mammoth bureaucracies that will bury us.

Alternatives exist. They involve cutting regulations on competition within the insurance industry and relying on the power of the marketplace to compete for your insurance coverage, giving people more choice in insurance companies and giving them incentives to take care of themselves. Working models already exist that can be applied on a broader scale.

Costs can be reduced and access expanded by allowing small businesses to band together through associations to purchase health care at a lower cost for their employees and families. I am a sponsor of just such a piece of legislation.

Medicare fraud runs to an estimated \$10 billion a year. We can attack that and streamline our existing safety nets to apply to the people who are truly eligible.

Government-run health care simply does not work. Countries that have tried it are failing to provide patients

with quality, timely and affordable health care. Their attempts cannot be sustained by their budgets. Raising taxes while rationing health care is not a solution I will support.

There are many earnest and learned people in Congress and in the public who are eager to hammer out meaningful solutions. That’s what happens in a representative Democracy. That is not what is happening today in Washington, D.C.



Court Dispositions



June 18

**Carl Sanford**, Hoopeston, pleaded guilty to restraint of dogs by owner or keeper; fined waived, \$80 court costs to be paid.

**Kayla Wilson**, Danville, new status hearing July 16.

**Mary E. Vaughn**, Hoopeston new status hearing September 17 in three cases; \$390 fine converted to 50 hours public service work.

**Megan Lane**, Hoopeston, public service work completed.

**Becky Gibson**, Ambia, Ind., new status hearing September 17.

**James C. Roof**, Hoopeston, failed to appear; cases to

Police News



No tickets or injuries were reported in an accident at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at McFerren Park. Officer Tim Beckett, in a 2008 Ford Crown Victoria owned by the City of Hoopeston, backed into a road sign, causing minor damage to the rear bumper.

be filed with Vermilion County Circuit Court, Danville.

**Austin L. Rhodes II**, Hoopeston, failed to appear; case to be filed with Vermilion County Circuit Court, Danville.

**Teanna Lambert**, Hoopeston, status hearing July 16.

**Ambrocio Ybarra**, Hoopeston, fined \$180 for disorderly conduct; fine paid in court.

**Jeffrey T. Smith**, Hoopeston, sentencing rescheduled on July 16.

**Becky Gibson**, Ambia, Ind., new sentencing date of September 17.

**Aaron Linares**, Hoopeston, case dismissed by hearing officer.

Weather



Chance of thunderstorms today and tonight. High 83, low 64. Tomorrow, partly sunny. High 80, low 62.

For current weather conditions, call Hoopeston Weather Service, (217) 283-6221.

Classifieds

HELP WANTED

Hoopeston Area Community Unit School District #11 is seeking bids on miscellaneous automotive accessories and tools. Items will be on display Monday, August 3rd through Friday, August 7th, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Bids may be placed at time of viewing. Bids will be opened Monday, August 10, 2009 at 9:00 a.m. Bid winners will be notified.

Board of Trustees Hoopeston Public Library District is accepting resumes for library director. Resumes should be mailed by August 7 to: Hoopeston Public Library, 110 N 4th St., Hoopeston, IL 60942, Attention: Dale Fry, Board President. Applicants should have technology, communication, and materials selection skills. Ability to develop programs, write grants, work with library finances, legal issues, supervise and schedule staff, and work with community organizations.

HOUSES FOR RENT

3-4 BR, 2.5 baths, upstairs laundry, convenient kitchen, central air, efficient furnace. Corner lot near McFerren and John Greer. Lovely family home. Will consider pet. Available Aug. 1. References, first & last month’s rent. (217) 377-6741 or 377-6705

408 S. Fifth St., Hoopeston. \$475/mo. + deposit. Available August. References, no pets. (217) 304-3477 for application.

HOUSES FOR SALE

Very nice 3 BR, 1 BA home at 842 E. Orange St. New kitchen with new appliances, new bath, carpeting & hardwood flooring, 2 1/2 car garage, full basement, new siding, windows, foundation, fenced in yard. Phone 249-6323 or 283-6323 for appointment

MISCELLANEOUS FOR SALE

Magic Chef gas stove for \$150. Works great!! Microwave cabinet for \$25. Call (217) 283-7138.

SERVICES

Pampered Pet Grooming. Lots of TLC. Call anytime for appointment. (217) 339-2340

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