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Tennessee Congressman Phil Roe Maintains that if Current Healthcare Bill Passes American People Lose.



The proposed healthcare bill leads off the discussion on the nationally syndicated "The Neal Asbury Show" on WZAB-AM, where host Neal Asbury was broadcasting from the Republican National Committee headquarters studio on Capital Hill. Neal contends that President Obama violated his election pledge to be transparent and bring hope to America by engaging in backroom deals on a healthcare program most Americans do not want. "This is the wrong bill at the wrong time that even if passed, will be tied up in the courts for decades. This is a distraction we cannot afford when the emphasis should be on jobs. The heart, soul and focus of Washington should be on jobs," said Neal. It's part of his ongoing commitment to represent The Truth for America.

Making an appearance on the show was Congressman Phil Roe (R-TN) who represents the First Congressional District. A physician,

businessman, and entrepreneur, Congressman Roe serves on three important committees: Agriculture, Veteran Affairs (serving as the Ranking Member on the Oversight and Investigation Subcommittee); and Education and Labor (serving on the Health Employment, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee and on Healthy Families and Communities Subcommittee).

Co-hosting the show this week was A. Paul Anderson, the former commissioner of the Federal Maritime Commission, who weekly appears on the "Anderson Report" during the show

Having been colleagues, Anderson asked Congressman Roe to talk about how healthcare was impacting the Congressman's constituents in Tennessee.

"I look at the proposed healthcare bill and it brings me back to 1993 when Tennessee tried a program called TennCare that rolled 8 plans into a single government controlled plan. It was a disaster. Our Medicaid costs soared from \$2.6 billion to \$8 billion. Consumers simply dropped their private insurance and had the state pick up their costs. This is exactly what will happen if the proposed healthcare bill passes," predicted Congressman Roe. "If this healthcare bill passes, the American people will lose."

He characterized the healthcare bill as the "Mother of all Entitlements," and shared his displeasure that the 10-member Physician's Caucus was never consulted on the plan for more than a year.

Anderson compared such arrogance to a CEO who refused to meet with his Board for more than year.

Congressman Roe recently held a telephone Town Hall Meeting with constituents that included a poll, which confirmed what Congressman Roe already sensed: Five percent wanted the bill to pass as is; 38 percent wanted the bill scrapped and started all over; and 52 percent wanted Congress to forget about healthcare and concentrate on jobs.

"It goes to show you that it is harder and harder to pass legislation that people don't want. A common sense healthcare bill shouldn't be so hard to create. We can cover 19 million uninsured people with two simple provisions taking up two paragraphs: all people who are eligible for government healthcare coverage should be able to enroll (12 million); and adult children who can't afford their own insurance should be able to remain on their parents' policies (7 million). Two paragraphs is a lot better than 2700 pages," said Congressman Roe. "We have the best healthcare system in the world. The discussion shouldn't be about the quality of care, it should be about bringing down costs. Healthcare costs too much and it's in need of reform."



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Anderson agreed, adding: "Creating a big bureaucracy isn't the solution. That's where the costs come in. Healthcare doesn't need a new bureaucracy to make it successful,"

Congressman Roe also was adamant that tort reform must be part of any discussion about healthcare costs, maintaining that lawsuits add \$26 billion to the cost of healthcare. "This money all goes to lawyers, not to injured people."

Turning to education, Congressman Roe suggested that America needs to encourage more young people to become teachers. He recounted his days as a student in a two room schoolhouse where he received a great education because the teachers were highly skilled. He wants to see that kind of teacher reappear, but is discouraged that new data shows that after five years in the profession, only 50 percent of teachers remain in education. That's one reason why 75 percent of Detroit students drop out of school before graduation. The Congressman would like to see education get the same kind of attention from the White House that it gives to healthcare.

"Education must be linked to job creation. We need skilled US workers so that small business can tap into this resource. After all, small businesses create 70 percent of new jobs. But that can't happen if barriers keep getting in the way for small business owners. They can't hire because they don't know what new costs they will have to absorb. They don't know what their energy costs will be so they can't plan any new spending. And they can't borrow money because capital has dried up," said Congressman Roe.

Neal's final guest was Congressman John L. Mica (R-FL), who represents the 7th

Congressional District of Florida. He serves as the Republican Leader of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, the largest Congressional panel in Congress.

Overseeing transportation issues, Congressman Mica was naturally cheered by the Obama State of the Union Address where the President vowed to double US exports. But the Congressman needs to see rhetoric turned into action, and see more small businesses involved in exporting.

"The problem we have to overcome is that not many people on Capital Hill have ever been involved in exports. They don't understand how they are tying the hands of small exporters by not passing free trade agreements, like the Colombian Free Trade Agreement, that lets the US compete with other countries by removing tariffs. We also need to stop charging US companies for export advice, and give them the help that other countries give their exporters. For instance, we need to establish US commercial centers overseas to help US exporters bring in goods," proposed Congressman Mica.

Due to his leadership on the Infrastructure Committee, Congressman Mica was deeply involved in trying to get the stimulus package to earmark \$150 billion to create jobs through infrastructure projects – the type that President Obama recommended during his election. But when it came to the floor, only \$63 billion was allocated, and only \$48 billion went to the Department of Transportation. Yet today, only \$13 billion has actually been used for these projects, since red tape has slowed many proposed projects.

"What really bothers me is that the recovery program involves the government taking over

banking, automobile manufacturing, and soon, insurance. Can you imagine if they did this in Venezuela? Chavez would be facing a revolution. And here in America I have never seen the electorate so riled up. They are angry that sound solutions are missing -- and there is a lack of focus on free enterprise," said Congressman Mica.

The discussion, as it usually does, swung back to jobs, where the Congressman proposed that if incentives are created for small business, job creation will follow. But this must be balanced by allowing community banks to resume lending by giving them some leeway on reserves and granting allowances on any "bad paper" that resulted from bad loans.

Congressman Mica, wearing his "transportation oversight hat," revealed that the TSA is "out of control." He noted that the TSA has grown to more than 60,000 employees, and that 3,200 managers are making more than \$100,000 a year. He wants to get spending under control.



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