

In the neighborhood for April

They say it's one for the history books, this historic healthcare legislation. I say it is historic all right, but not for the reason most people think. This legislation is historic not for the sweeping changes in healthcare, but for the unprecedented partisanship displayed over these months. Even Roe v. Wade and the controversial abortion rights legislation did not have the extreme partisan battle as this healthcare legislation. How have we become so polarized? We have become a nation not of Americans, but of left and right, red and blue, donkey and elephant. We have stopped working together on problems, and have become total opponents, no matter what the issue. This problem, now **IS** the problem.

Most alarming is the fact that our representatives, whom have been elected by majority vote, and honored with carrying out the responsibilities of representative democracy are being threatened, not only politically, but with physical violence to themselves and their families. This isn't democracy, it is fascism! Media voices and political pundits are calling for dismantling the system, and undermining the democratic foundations that have upheld this country since its inception. This is counterproductive to the constitution and to the democratic ideals that have been paid for by the last full measure of devotion, given by so many. Threats of violence and retaliation are being raised against any who dare exercise their freedom of speech, and to those who have upheld their oaths to serve their country in the best way they know how. We owe these officials whom we elected, our gratitude and respect for their service, even if the outcome of an election is not what we wanted. If you voted, you have had your say. If you don't get your way you still have had a voice, and our system, imperfect as it may be, has delivered democracy in action.

President Lincoln once said, "A house divided against itself, cannot stand." We are quickly again becoming that house. We must find a way to work together. We have healthcare legislation now, a

longtime in coming. It is not the ideal for any side, but it is a step in the right direction, it is a place to start, and hopefully both sides can work together to make it the most workable solution for all Americans in the future.

No matter the outcome, this partisan rift must come to an end. Both sides of the political spectrum are equally guilty in party bashing. This, I suppose is the nature of politics; however, no one should be threatened, punished or sanctioned for legally exercising their rights of free speech, or free association, or for following their conscience. No group, especially elected-officials, local or national, has any business in pushing their political agenda on others as a means of political gain. I certainly don't appreciate my elected-officials putting their personal political perspectives ahead of doing what is imperative in solving the problems of this area, this state or this country.

I for one would like to see this spirit of animosity that is hanging over our country and county be exorcised. In the book of Isaiah we are told, "Come now let us reason together." It's about time we prayed for unity in this country, instead of asking God to smite those who don't agree with us. It isn't too late to use our talents, exercise our compassion and good will and work together with the grace of God to solve our many, many current problems. If we don't, our chances for success in recovery will be very slim.

Beverly Wallace a Greeley native tends to drive a car hugging the center yellow line and not the shoulder. An avid seamstress, she prefers finished seams with no fringe. She also likes the white filling in an Oreo, best.