

the American people are not inclined to take advice on fiscal responsibility from an administration whose unprecedented borrowing and spending has done so much to create the mess we are in.

After 2 years of adding trillions to the debt and ignoring our Nation's looming fiscal nightmare, the President may be right in thinking that the politically expedient thing to do is point the finger at others. But the truly responsible thing would be to admit that his own 2-year experiment in big government has been a disaster for the economy and itself a major driver of our debt; and that his inaction on the latter is the primary reason others have been forced to step forward and offer meaningful solutions of their own.

That is what most people already believe anyway. So the President's attempt to stake out the high ground in this debate was, I suspect, hard for many Americans to swallow.

Despite the President's imaginative account of how we arrived at the situation we are in, the American people are well past the point of believing that Washington will be able to make good on all its promises if only we let the President and Democrats in Congress raise taxes.

Americans know that we face a fiscal crisis not because we tax too little but because we spend too much. They do not support the reckless Washington spending that has left us with record deficits and debt, and they will not support raising taxes to preserve an unsustainable status quo. Besides, lawmakers on both sides of the aisle have already rejected the kind of tax hike on small business that President Obama endorsed again yesterday. So it was counterproductive of him to revive it.

As for entitlements, the President rightly acknowledged that before we know it, the government will spend every dime it takes in just to cover the cost of Medicare, Medicaid, Social Security, and the interest on our debt. What he did not say is that the health care bill he signed last year takes more than half a trillion dollars out of Medicare to pay for an entirely new entitlement that could be just as unsustainable as Medicare itself; and which forces nearly 20 million more Americans into a Medicaid Program which, as currently arranged, is bankrupting our States.

So the President can claim to be a great defender of the social safety net. He may claim to stand for a nobler vision of America than those who disagree with him. But the facts speak for themselves. And when it comes to preserving the social safety net, the President's proposals simply do not address the things that have caused our most cherished entitlement programs to be unsustainable in the first place.

Instead, the President would simply tinker around the edges and leave the hard work for others, passing the buck

to future Presidents. And that just won't cut it anymore.

Americans are paying attention. They know the fiscal problems we face will not be solved by continuing the job-destroying policies that got us here. What is more, the centerpiece of the President's proposal, tax hike on top earners, may sound appealing to those whose primary goal in this debate is to protect big government. But looking at the most recent data, the Wall Street Journal points out this morning that even if we were to lay claim to every taxable dollar of every single American who earns more than \$100,000 a year, we still wouldn't raise enough to cover the \$1.6 trillion deficit the President's budget gives us this year.

The best way to bring down the debt and to create the climate that will lead to good private-sector jobs and prosperity is not to repeat the policies of the past but to change them. And that means cutting Washington spending, not squeezing family budgets even more.

Throughout the day today, Senators will have an opportunity to debate a down payment on those cuts for the rest of the current fiscal year. So I invite them to come to the floor to discuss that proposal. After that, we will move onto an even more far-reaching debate not about billions but about trillions. That is the debate that will show Americans exactly where their elected representatives stand on facing up to the fiscal challenges we face. Republicans look forward to that debate.

That brings me to a final point.

Yesterday, the President said that the debate we have been having in Washington about the size and scope of government is not about numbers on a page. It is about the kind of country we believe in. But he left out an important point. And that is, that there are a great many people in Washington and beyond who agree with him, but who also believe in their core that the approach he has taken over the past 2 years represents the greatest single threat to the very future he envisions. America will not continue to be the great Nation it is unless we are able to keep our promises to the current and future generations, and stop spending money we do not have. But the greatest obstacle to that future is not the everyday American who wants Washington to balance its checkbook, or those who look at where the President's policies have gotten us and map out a different path to the future than he would. The greatest obstacle we face is the crushing burden of our debt, as the President now admits.

Unfortunately, the plan he outlined yesterday does not seriously address it. Americans know the stakes in this debate. They know the reason we are in this situation. It is time the President and Democrats in Congress acknowledge it as well. The debate has shifted. And while the President does not seem to see that yet, we will not solve our

problems until he stops campaigning and joins us in a serious, bipartisan effort to change not only his tone but his direction. That is how we will ensure that the future that he—and we—envision and want actually comes about. That is the only chance we have.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, a little later today we are going to receive from the House of Representatives a spending bill which, if passed, will fund the government for the remainder of this fiscal year, which ends on September 30. Included in that vote today are two other votes, separate votes, which were insisted on by the House Republicans. One of the votes will defund Planned Parenthood across the United States.

Under title X, a law which was proposed by President Nixon and passed by Congress—and supported for over 40 years since—we have provided money across America to clinics that take care of women, children, and families who otherwise would have no place to turn.

One of the recipients of those funds is Planned Parenthood. They do not receive all the funds or even a majority of the funds. But they do receive support through title X. In my State of Illinois, Planned Parenthood has clinics in many down-State communities, as well as in the Chicagoland area. In my hometown of Springfield, there is a Planned Parenthood clinic. It provides valuable services for many women in my community and State—services which otherwise they could not find or afford: basic examinations by doctors who can screen for forms of cancer, for infectious disease. These are things which many women rely on, and they are valuable services. Yet the House Republicans are determined to take the funding away from Planned Parenthood.

The amendment on the floor addresses that issue. I will vote against that amendment, and I will vote against it because I understand closing down Planned Parenthood as one of the recipients of title X funds will mean that literally 69,000 women in the State of Illinois who rely on Planned Parenthood clinics will then have to struggle to find another source of medical care, and it is not always easy to do it. Many of these women—most of them—are uninsured and very few of them have the economic wherewithal to pay for these services.

For over 90 years, Planned Parenthood has provided comprehensive preventive and primary health care to people, primarily the low-income, uninsured, and Medicaid recipients. Last year, 3 million people across America—that is 1 percent of our population—relied on Planned Parenthood's 800 health centers for cancer screenings, family planning, and annual exams.

Now the House Republicans are arguing we have to stop funding Planned Parenthood because that is a way to prevent abortion. Well, let me say, we have to understand that the law for over 30 years in America has made it clear—an amendment offered by a Congressman from Illinois, Henry Hyde, made it clear—that no Federal funds can be used for abortion services except in the most extreme and restricted cases: rape, incest, or where the mother's life is at stake. That has been the law. It has not been changed. It was not changed under this President or previous Presidents. That has been, since the time of Henry Hyde, the guiding policy of this land and there is no one to suggest that it be changed. Every dollar received by Planned Parenthood from the Federal Government is carefully restricted so that it cannot be used for abortion services.

Planned Parenthood does provide abortion counseling but only for 3 percent of their activities. Ninety-seven percent of their activities have nothing to do with it, and not a penny of the abortion counseling services can come from Federal funds except in the most restricted circumstances under the Hyde amendment. Ninety percent of Planned Parenthood's activities are basically preventive.

Let me tell my colleagues, if we don't allow women of limited means and with no insurance access to family planning counseling and services, it means there will be more unintended pregnancies and, sadly, more abortions. It is estimated that if we did not have title X funding in Illinois, if we didn't provide this kind of assistance for women in lower income categories, we would have 24 percent more abortions because of unintended pregnancies. So if what the House Republicans are seeking to do is to reduce the number of abortions, they are doing it exactly the wrong way. Providing information and counseling to women so they can plan their families and not end up with unintended pregnancies is a good way to reduce the number of abortions. That, to me, is as clear as possible. Yet they seem to be tied in knots when it comes to this and don't understand this basic causal connection.

Last year, with the help of Federal dollars, Planned Parenthood health centers performed 1 million cervical exams, 800,000 breast exams, and 4 million tests and treatments for sexually transmitted infections such as HIV. If Planned Parenthood is prohibited from receiving Federal funding, which is the issue that will be on the floor, most of their health centers would be forced to

close. Then what happens to the millions of women and others across America who rely on their services?

Let me tell my colleagues one story that I think demonstrates why this is a critical vote. It comes from a Planned Parenthood clinic in Aurora, IL. A woman in her early forties was uninsured because she lost her job. Her daughter suggested she go to Planned Parenthood for her annual checkup. During the woman's routine breast exam, a 4 centimeter by 4 centimeter lump was found in her breast. That is a sizable lump. The providers at Planned Parenthood helped the woman get a mammogram and connected her with an oncologist. Thankfully, the cancerous lump was removed, and the woman recovered completely. That woman went back to the Aurora Planned Parenthood to thank them and to let them know that without that care, she could have died. So when it gets down to this vote, it literally is a matter of life and death.

I hope those who feel strongly about one issue or the other will also feel strongly about the right of every person to have access to quality care whether they are rich or poor. Planned Parenthood provides that care in my State and across the Nation.

The other amendment is also going to relate to health care. I find it hard to believe that at this moment in time the Republicans are suggesting we should repeal health care reform. This morning, we had a town meeting, and in our town meeting was a group of young people who came from Illinois and who are recovering or in treatment for cancer. These are brave young children and young adults who are battling this disease. I asked them, when someone suggested repealing health care reform, what they would think about a provision in health care reform, which we insisted on, which said that no health insurance company can discriminate against an American under the age of 18 for a preexisting condition. Well, they all cheered because they know, having had cancer in their lives, if they go out on the open market, the cost of their health care and health insurance, if they can buy it, would be prohibitively expensive.

The health care reform we passed here prohibits health insurance companies from discriminating against those children under the age of 18 for preexisting conditions. Those who want to repeal it basically want to take away that protection.

We also know many families raising children of college age get worried because the kids may not have health insurance while they are looking for jobs. We extend the family coverage of people up to the age of 27 so they can stay under their family policy when they get out of college. That gives peace of mind to a lot of families that as their young son or daughter is out taking a part-time job or internship or a trip around the world, they are going to have health insurance until the age of

27. Repealing the law, which is what we will vote on here on the floor, will remove that protection.

Also, when it comes to Medicare, the prescription drug program has a gap in it called the doughnut hole. A lot of seniors with the need for expensive prescription drugs find, after a few months, no coverage from the government. They have to turn around and reach in their savings account and pay out thousands of dollars before that protection coverage resumes. That doughnut hole—the gap—is being closed by this bill. Those who want to repeal health care reform will repeal our efforts to make sure people have this access to the kind of health care and prescription drugs they need to survive and be strong and independent.

I think it is a very clear vote. I have said before that I am open to revisiting health care reform, reforming health care reform, making sure it works the way we intended it to work. As I have said before, the only perfect law I am aware of was written on stone tablets and carried down a mountain by Senator Moses. Every other effort since has been a human effort full of frailties and flaws, and we should always try to make it better. But the notion of wiping the slate clean and repealing health care reform would be a step backward for America. It would acknowledge that the 60 million uninsured Americans will have their ranks swell from others who can't afford to pay for health insurance and certainly can't buy good-quality health insurance today.

I encourage my colleagues to vote no on this amendment to repeal health care reform. We don't need to leave so many American families vulnerable, but we do need to have protections against health insurance companies which too often discriminate against those who need protection the most.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Kansas.

HONORING BOB DOLE

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am a firm believer in the view that an individual can make a difference. I am a firm believer that what happens in Washington, DC, is important in our Nation's history and what goes on in our country, but the reality is we change the world one person at a time. That individual is how we make life better.

Earlier this week, on Tuesday morning, I was on the National Mall near the World War II Memorial, and I was there for the dedication of a plaque honoring an individual who made a tremendous difference in the lives of many and made a tremendous difference in the life of our Nation. It was the moment in which a plaque was unveiled recognizing Senator Bob Dole for his contribution—in fact, his efforts and leadership—in seeing that the World War II Memorial was built. Clear