

we are eating breakfast back home with some friends who are complaining about the problems. It is time for us to fix the problems.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

PARIS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, policymakers from all over the world will be meeting in Paris this week and next to address the issue of climate change. With much fanfare, they will purport to reach an agreement that will prevent the Earth's "average global air temperature" from rising more than 2 degrees Celsius. This 2-degree limit will supposedly mean success for the conference in Paris and success in the battle against global warming, thus preventing catastrophic events from occurring.

So I come to the floor to call attention to several news articles pointing out problems with this approach, with this 2-degree Celsius approach. The first is a front-page story from yesterday's Wall Street Journal. I hold it in my hand. It is titled "Climate Experts Question Temperature Benchmark." This is not an opinion piece, it is a news article. The article points out that the 2-degree target is both arbitrary and based on questionable research.

The article quotes Mark Maslin, professor of climatology at the University College London, saying:

It emerged from a political agenda, not a scientific analysis. It's not a sensible, rational target.

The article goes on to say that despite assumptions by policymakers, the 2-degree target does not express "a solid scientific view." Indeed, no report by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change even mentions the 2-degree limit.

Economics Professor William Nordhaus appears to have been the first to use the 2-degree figure. The article notes that his work "argued that a rise of two or more degrees would put the earth's climate outside the observable range of temperature over the last several hundred thousand years." I ask my colleagues how did they measure air temperature 100,000 years ago, 200,000 years ago, as Professor Nordhaus appears to have been concerned about. I would also point out to my colleagues that being outside the observable range is far different than being catastrophic. It is not the same thing, but from that has evolved the 2-degree model.

This is not the first time the model has been criticized. In October of last year, David Victor and Charles Kennel wrote about it in the journal *Nature*. Victor is a professor of international relations at the University of California San Diego and Kennel is a professor at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, CA.

Yesterday I got this article from the journal *Nature* and read it myself. In their piece, Professors Victor and Kennel wrote:

Politically and scientifically, the 2 degree Celsius goal is wrong-headed. . . . It has allowed some governments to pretend that they are taking serious action to mitigate global warming, when in reality they have achieved almost nothing.

This is one of the things I worry about. This is one of the things I fear from the Paris conference. The United States will agree to do a lot, costing job growth here, and other countries will do almost nothing, as the professors say.

Victor and Kennel say that the 2009 and 2010 U.S. conferences in Copenhagen and Cancun officially adopted this approach. They then conclude: "There was little scientific basis for the 2 degrees Celsius figure that was adopted."

Additionally, in an op-ed last month for the Wall Street Journal, environmentalist Bjorn Lomborg cites his own peer-reviewed study to show how the most high-flown promises in Paris will fail to make any substantial impact on climate change.

Even if every country fulfills every promise made in Paris over the next decade and a half, according to Dr. Lomborg, the growth of global temperatures would be reduced by less than .05 degrees Celsius, or five-hundredths of a degree Celsius—by the end of the century, the year 2100. So is it 2 degrees or is it less than five-hundredths of a degree? And is 2 degrees sensible and rational? Not according to Professors Maslin, Victor, Kennel, and certainly not according to Dr. Lomborg.

One more quote from Professors Victor and Kennel. They point out one of the major problems in the 2-degree Celsius approach: "Failure to set scientifically meaningful goals makes it hard for scientists and politicians to explain how big investments in climate production will deliver tangible results."

Yes, what are the tangible results? What can we expect in tangible results from the agreements that will certainly come out of Paris? We will be \$3 billion poorer, that is for certain, because the President has pledged \$3 billion from taxpayers for the Green Climate Fund. I would point out that \$3 billion could be used for Alzheimer's research or malaria or malnutrition or any number of the other problems the people of the world see as more important than climate change.

Tangible results coming out of Paris: Electricity bills will be higher. Lower income Americans will be colder in their own homes, our economy will have suffered, and job growth will have been slowed, perhaps by as much as \$154 billion a year. That figure comes from Stanford University analysts who say that if we adopt the Obama administration's proposal of cutting domestic carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 28 percent, GDP will be reduced by \$154 billion per year.

If we spend all of this money, trim our GDP by \$154 billion a year, and actually achieve this impractical 2 degrees Celsius, where will humankind be then? How much will the sea level not rise? No one can say. How much thicker will the icecap be in the Arctic or Antarctic? No one knows. How many coral reefs will be preserved? No one will even venture a guess. All of this to be done, all of this money to be spent, and experts cannot say how much it will help, if at all.

Dr. Lomborg writes that the Paris agreements are "likely to see countries that have flourished with capitalism willingly compromising their future prosperity in the name of climate change." Negotiators in Paris should weigh the real-world costs against the negligible environmental impact when discussing emissions reductions.

Finally, the Obama administration's international promises should come back to the Senate for advice and consent of Congress. Under the Constitution, the approval by two-thirds in the Senate is needed to enter into a legally binding treaty. I join many of my colleagues in urging the President to submit to Congress any agreement in Paris with regard to U.S. emissions targets and timetables or pledges that appropriate taxpayer dollars.

Americans should have a say in the approval process. A recent FOX News poll showed that only 3 percent of Americans believe that climate change is the most important issue facing our country.

In conclusion, the President's promises in Paris are not based on scientific analysis, according to these professors, but would certainly slow the economy, cost jobs, cost billions of dollars, divert money from real and pressing needs, and be of limited value. With so much at stake, these policies should come back to Congress for debate, consultation, and approval or disapproval.

Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair. The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. WYDEN addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I follow Senator GRASSLEY after he has completed his remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBAMACARE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I come to the floor because we are discussing ObamaCare on the reconciliation bill. Webster's dictionary defines the word "success" as the correct or desired result of an attempt. So I want to discuss the definition of the word "success" as we consider repeal of ObamaCare.

On the day the bill was signed into law, President Obama said the following:

Today we are affirming that essential truth, a truth every generation is called to rediscover for itself, that we are not a nation that scales back its aspirations.

Such grand words for where we are today with ObamaCare. Today the success of the law that now bears his name, ObamaCare, is defined in much more meager terms. Think of all we have been through to this point: the fight over the bill and the extreme legislative means used to pass it through the Congress; the Supreme Court decision that effectively repealed half of the law's coverage. Think of all the changes made to the law through regulation to make sure ObamaCare actually got launched—the postponing of the employer mandate, the postponing of lifetime limits. Think of the impact this law has had on our economy—people losing jobs, people losing the health insurance they currently have because if you like what you have, you may not be able to keep it.

Let's talk about that for a moment. "If you like what you have, you can keep it." This was the promise the President made to the American people on at least 36 separate occasions. It is a great sound bite. It is easy to say. It rolls off the tongue. It is also not true. It was never true. It obviously was not true when the law was written. It was obviously not true when the first proposed regulation came out.

This is what I said on the Senate floor in September of 2010:

Only in the District of Columbia could you get away with telling the people "if you like what you have, you can keep it," and then pass regulations 6 months later that do just the opposite, and figure that people are going to ignore it.

It is not that I have some magic crystal ball. We all knew it. The administration certainly knew the day would come when millions of people would receive cancellation notices. My constituents clearly know that. I heard from many Iowans who found out the hard way that the President made a bunch of pie-in-the-sky promises that he knew he couldn't keep; constituents such as this one from Perry, IA, who wrote to me saying:

My husband and I are farmers. For nine years now we have bought our own policy. To keep the cost affordable our plan is a major medical plan with a very high deductible. We recently received a letter that our plan was going away. Effective January 1, 2014, it will be updated to comply with the mandates of ObamaCare.

To manage the risks of much higher premiums, our insurance company is asking us to cancel our current policy and sign on at a higher rate effective December 31, 2013 or we could go to the government exchange.

We did not get to keep our current policy. We did not get to keep our lower rates. I now have to pay for coverage that I do not want or will never use. We are not low income that might qualify for assistance.

We are the small business owner that is trying to live the American dream. I do not believe in large government that wants to run my life.

From a constituent living in Mason City:

My wife and I are both 60 years old, and have been covered by an excellent Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield policy for several years. It is not through my employer. We selected the plan because it had the features we wanted and needed . . . our choice. And because we are healthy, we have a preferred premium rate.

Yesterday, we got a call from our agent explaining that since our plan is not grandfathered, it will need to be replaced by the end of 2014. The current plan has a \$5,000 deductible and the premium is \$511 a month. The best option going forward for us from Wellmark would cost \$955 per month (a modest 87 percent increase), and have a \$10,000 deductible. And because we have been diligent and responsible in saving for our upcoming retirement, we do not qualify for any taxpayer-funded subsidies.

These are just two of many letters, emails, and phone calls I have received from Iowans.

Now the issue has turned to cost. Millions of people face rising premiums. The impact is real and undeniable.

Here is another from a constituent from Des Moines:

In 2013, I encountered some medical problems which caused me to retire early. My spouse works as an adjunct instructor . . . thus not qualifying for coverage. In 2014, with 4 part-time jobs between us, we made \$44,289 in Adjusted Gross Income.

Our Obamacare insurance cost \$968 per month and after credits, we paid \$478 per month or approximately 13 percent of our Adjusted Gross Income. In 2015, our Adjusted Gross Income will be approximately the same, however our Obamacare insurance jumped to a premium of \$1,028.82 and our cost to \$590.12.

The insurance company touted that premiums went up less than 10 percent, but as you can see, my costs went up 23 percent. The impact to Adjusted Gross Income went to 16 percent, a 23 percent increase. I just received my 2016 premium estimate. Our Adjusted Gross Income is likely to be the same. Our gross premium is scheduled to rise 36 percent to nearly \$1,400; our cost after the credit is jumping 63 percent and the impact to our Adjusted Gross Income is that 25 percent of our income will be spent on health insurance (a 56 percent increase).

Thousands of Iowans have contacted me asking what can be done. Now that we clearly see that what the President sold the American people was a bag of Washington's best gift-wrapped hot air. All the grandiose talk about the importance of this statute, and what we ultimately have is an optional Medicaid expansion with a glorified high-risk pool and a government portal that makes DMV look efficient.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention the co-op disaster. The first co-op to fail was Iowa's CoOpportunity. CoOpportunity enrolled the second most beneficiaries of any co-op in America. CoOpportunity knew they were in trouble because they enrolled more than 100,000 people when they were planning for less than 20,000. CoOpportunity was in contact with CMS and so was the State of Iowa. CMS chose not to further fund CoOpportunity and CoOpportunity has since been liquidated. American taxpayers have billions of dollars invested in these co-ops. The taxpayer only gets their

money back when co-ops succeed. CMS's stewardship of this program has proven that CoOpportunity was not an exception but unfortunately the rule as more and more co-ops have failed.

Americans deserve better. They voted for better. It is time to admit that ObamaCare has not achieved the correct or desired result of an attempt. It has not been a success by any measure, unless, of course, you lower your standard to the point that the mere act of keeping the doors open is a success. How sad is that for all we have been through.

Maybe, just maybe, it is time to admit that the massive restructuring has failed. Partisanship has failed. Perhaps it is time to sit down and consider commonsense, bipartisan steps that we could take to lower the cost and improve quality. Perhaps we could enact alternative reforms aimed at solving America's biggest health care problems, reforms like revising the Tax Code to help individuals who buy their own health insurance, allowing people to purchase health coverage across State lines and form risk pools in the individual market, expanding tax-free health savings accounts, making health care price and quality information more transparent, cracking down on frivolous medical malpractice lawsuits, using high-risk pools to insure folks with preexisting conditions, giving States more freedom to improve Medicaid, and using provider competition and consumer choice to bring down costs in Medicare and throughout the health care delivery system.

The American people need to know that this failed program is not the only answer and we are not scaling back our aspirations. With this vote this week, we once again demonstrate to the American people our willingness to not accept failure and to aim for better. That is what America is all about.

I yield the floor.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business be extended until 7 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

RECONCILIATION LEGISLATION

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, with so many issues to wrap up before the end of this year and so many enormous challenges facing our country, my view is the Senate ought to be embracing bipartisanship at every turn. In fact, earlier today the senior Senator from Iowa and I released an 18-month bipartisan inquiry into Solvaldi, which is the blockbuster drug to deal with hepatitis C, and the reason we did is because these specialty drugs are the