

Senator PORTMAN, my Republican colleague from Ohio, and I and Senator MANCHIN and Senator CAPITO, a Democrat and a Republican from West Virginia, and Senator CASEY—a number of us—said: We should not leave Washington to go home to our families until we take care of mine worker families.

Congress has the power to stop these cuts and to live up to this pledge. We had a bipartisan solution that would have passed if it had been brought to the floor. But instead, Congress broke its promise to these miners and their families. Congress stole the health care they had earned by passing a continuing resolution that failed to address the pension problem, and it stole the funds that were still left in their health care plan to pay for a 4-month fix—4 months, 4 months. Who can make health care decisions when you don't know if you will have health care coverage 4 months from now?

These working people don't deserve to live with this kind of uncertainty. I have heard my colleagues, particularly on the Republican side of the aisle, always talk about predictability. Government should never inject more uncertainty into the lives of individuals, never should inject uncertainty into the lives of business people as they make investment decisions.

But that is what we have done with these mine workers. We have made their lives less certain, less predictable, and their health care so unpredictable. This is the health care these workers fought for, the health care they sacrificed raises for. Keep in mind that at the bargaining table, workers will be willing to accept less wages today in exchange for health care and pensions in the future. That is what collective bargaining is often about. That is what is so important.

This is health care they sacrificed raises for. It was the health care we promised them. My colleagues know their stories of hard work and sacrifice. We know these stories because over the past year, these miners traveled here by the busload. They rode long distances. They gathered in the heat and in the cold for hours outside this building to make their voices heard.

They worked decades in the mines—hard back-breaking work. But that work had dignity. It was dangerous work—work where some of them were killed on the job, work where many of them developed health problems later. Many of them died younger than people who dress like we do and have jobs like this. Their widows have been denied these pensions and health care. They clocked in every day, these workers. They knew the conditions they faced. Many of them now suffer from black lung or other illnesses. They accepted a lifetime of hard labor because they valued their jobs, they valued their work, and they believed that good-paying union jobs were their tickets to the middle class.

These miners believed in the covenant we used to have in this country

that promised if you work hard your whole life, if you put in the hours, if you save a little and do your part, you will be able to help your children go to college. They believed that would give their kids a chance at a better life perhaps than they had. They believed that if they upheld their end of the deal, if they put in the work to power our country by mining coal used for a generation of electricity, their government would do the same. In December, Congress told them they were wrong. I don't accept that. These workers sacrificed their lungs and their backs to keep our lights on. It is shameful that Congress, despite all intents and purposes, has stolen what they earned. These miners should have spent Christmas with their grandkids, not worrying about whether they could afford their medicine.

We aren't giving up. We had a bipartisan solution in December. We will keep fighting until mine workers across Ohio and this country have the full health care and retirement security that we promised them. They kept faith with us and powered our country. It is time to keep faith with the workers in our industrial heartland and to right this wrong.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the time during the ensuing quorum call be divided equally between the two sides.

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

Mr. BROWN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

TRIBUTE TO LARRY CLARK

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, for the first time in three decades, the Kentucky General Assembly began their regular session this month without the fiery voice and passionate character of State Representative Larry

Clark. After an impressive career, Representative Clark started a new adventure: retirement. He will be remembered for many accomplishments in Frankfort, among them that he never missed a single floor vote.

Despite our differences, Representative Clark and I both care deeply for Kentucky. As speaker pro tempore of the house, he championed the merger of the Louisville and Jefferson County governments, an issue I fought for when I was the county judge/executive. We also share a passion for the University of Louisville, and Representative Clark has a record of achievements on behalf of the school.

I join the Kentucky General Assembly in congratulating Representative Clark on his career of public service. He dedicated many years to Kentucky, and I wish him well in retirement.

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT L. HENDRICKSON

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to celebrate a distinguished Kentuckian and a friend. Robert L. Hendrickson has been the Publisher of the Ledger Independent in Maysville, KY, since 1993. When Bob announced that he would retire at the end of last year, I knew that the paper was not only losing a great journalist, but it also was losing a great man.

Bob graduated from the University of Georgia's Henry Grady School of Journalism. Afterward, he moved back to Kentucky to work on his dad's dairy farm. However, a pair of harsh winters in 1977 and 1978 convinced him, in his own words, "to put my journalism degree to work." He got hired by the Ledger Independent and has served his community ever since.

The Ledger Independent newspaper serves seven counties in northern Kentucky and southern Ohio. Through a series of owners and publishers, the paper continues a 150-year tradition of a local, independent, daily newspaper in Maysville.

Bob became editor of the paper in 1985, calling it "the best job in the world." In 1993, he was promoted to publisher. He oversaw the entire operation and guided the paper into the internet age with the unveiling of Maysville Online. While working full time at the paper, Bob also did post-graduate work at Northwestern University.

Bob and Missy Mann have never stopped working for their neighbors. Bob further dedicates himself to his community, both through his service on the board of directors of the Maysville Chamber of Commerce, and as the moderator of several important political debates in his area.

Bob is a great man and a pillar of his community, and I am honored to call him a friend. I wish him and Missy well in retirement, and I join with countless Kentuckians on thanking him for his service to Maysville.

TRIBUTE TO LAMAR JACKSON

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today I wish to offer my congratulations to an outstanding young man and athlete, the University of Louisville Cardinals' quarterback, Lamar Jackson. On December 10 of last year, Cards fans watched with excitement as Jackson was awarded the Heisman Memorial Trophy, the first in the history of my alma mater. The award is given to the most outstanding player in college football, and Jackson surely has earned it.

We have known for quite some time that Lamar Jackson would be breaking many records. Here are just a few. Jackson was the first player in NCAA Division I history to pass for 3,300 yards and run for 1,500 yards in one season. He holds the Atlantic Coastal Conference, ACC, record for most touchdowns in a single season with 51. Only a sophomore, Jackson is the youngest player ever to win the Heisman Trophy at 19 years old, and he is the University of Louisville's first ever Heisman Trophy finalist. The impressive list goes on and on.

It is clear that Lamar Jackson is a truly spectacular athlete. He has earned his spot in the pantheon of college football greats. It is easy to cheer when the quarterback hurdles a defender to score or runs between some of the best defenses in the Nation. His drive and dedication are traits we all admire, and just wait until you hear where it all started.

In an interview, Jackson said "[e]verything I do, I do for my mother." At an early age, Jackson's mother, Felicia Jones, sparked his interest in football, and she pushed him to be his best ever since. When Lamar and his younger brother were just learning the game, their mom would put on pads in the backyard and run plays with them. She became an active part of all of his teams, all the way to the University of Louisville. He said, "She would tell me the bad things I did. She wouldn't really tell me the good things I did. And I'd say 'All right, Mom. I've got to go fix it.'"

Lamar Jackson's story is just beginning. Under the guidance of some of the best coaches in all of college sports and an athletic director with a strategic vision for the future, the Cardinals are positioned to make a real impact in college football. With the Heisman Trophy already on the shelf, we can only wait and see what Lamar Jackson does next year. As an avid fan of UofL football, I know I can hardly wait.

I would like to join with Cards fans across the Nation to congratulate the entire University of Louisville Cardinals football team and staff on an exciting season and especially congratulate the 2016 Heisman Trophy winner, Lamar Jackson. He has truly made it great to be a Louisville Cardinal.

TRIBUTE TO JOE TOLAN

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, at the beginning of this year, one of Louisville's foremost community servants began his much-deserved retirement. I rise today to congratulate Joseph Tolan, a man of distinction who dedicated his life to the people of Louisville and Kentucky.

Many years ago, I had the pleasure of working alongside Joe. When I served as the judge/executive of Jefferson County, Joe led the county department for human services. I particularly remember his passion for helping those around him, and that passion has been the driving force of his career. And believe me, I can tell you, from firsthand experience, that passion is contagious.

For the last 30 years, Joe has committed himself to the Metro United Way, a Louisville organization that raises and distributes funds to worthy causes around the region. Spending the last 15 years as president and CEO, Joe led the effort to raise nearly \$30 million every year to support approximately 100 organizations. The community support that Joe inspired has led Metro United Way to be ranked in the top 25 markets nationwide.

However, organizations like Metro United Way are measured by so much more than just the donations they raise. True success is counted by the lives impacted and the good work done. With a focus on education, financial stability, and healthy living, Metro United Way impacts thousands of families across the region every single day.

Since joining Metro United Way, Joe has been a major player in the transformation of the city of Louisville and the entire region. Although the organization is over 100 years old, it is constantly adapting to meet today's challenges in the most effective ways possible. With this commitment to excellence and a growing network of strategic partnerships, Metro United Way proved to be a lasting force for good in the community. During his tenure as president and CEO, Joe hasn't just been a part of this innovation, he has been its leader.

Joe has surely earned his retirement, but I know many of us are very sorry to see him go. He leaves behind an impressive list of accomplishments and an organization well positioned to continue his work. I want to extend my congratulations to Joe on such a successful career of dedicated leadership always with a vision to help everyone reach their fullest potential.

CHANGING SENATE RULES

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, today I wish to continue what has become a tradition. At the beginning of the 112th Congress, I took to the Senate floor and called for this body to adopt its rules with a simple majority vote and to amend them so they actually allowed the body to function as our Founders intended.

I did the same at the beginning of the 112th, 113th, and 114th Congresses. Today, at the start of the 115th Congress, I again call for reform. This is something I have done as a member of the majority and the minority. Senator MERKLEY has worked closely with me on this issue and spoke briefly yesterday about our efforts.

But we did not start this tradition. It dates back decades. My predecessor, Clinton Anderson, was a leading proponent of what has become known as the "constitutional option" in the 1950s and 1960s. Vice President Walter Mondale—then a Senator from Minnesota—carried on the tradition in the 1970s. When Senator MERKLEY and I first joined the Senate, Senator Tom Harkin worked closely with us to help us carry on the tradition.

The proposals we have offered to change the rules at the start of a new Congress have never been radical. They were changes we were willing to live with whether we were in the majority or minority. We have offered the same proposals as Members of the majority and minority. We believe the Senate is broken, and even the minority party should want to fix it.

Congress had made some progress in recent years, but unfortunately, it took unprecedented Republican obstruction to bring it about. Republicans blocked nominees to all sorts of positions submitted by President Obama, so we took action to change the rules to break through the gridlock. It was unfortunate that Republicans precipitated that situation, but the result was for the best.

New rules allow for a lower cloture threshold for all nominees except those to the Supreme Court now, and the new Republican President can take advantage of them, just as President Obama was able to do for the final years of his term.

But no one would argue that Congress or the nomination process has been fixed. Further debate and reform is needed on many aspects of Senate function.

We believe the Senate should openly debate and consider its rules at the start of each Congress, to consider changes that can provide commonsense reforms. This ongoing process is the ideal way to restore the best traditions of the Senate and allow it to conduct the business that the American people expect.

We have one goal whether we are in the majority or in the minority: to give the American people the government they expect and deserve—a government that works.

This is not just about rules. It is about the norms and traditions of the Senate.

Neither side is 100 percent pure. Both sides have used the rules for obstruction. No doubt they had their reasons.

But I don't think the American people care about that. They don't want a