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Senate

The Senate met at 2:15 p.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ROB PORTMAN, a Senator from the State of Ohio.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Lord God, source of righteousness and the center of our joy, forgive us when we assume we know what is right without seeking Your wisdom. Inspire our lawmakers to think Your thoughts, to listen for Your directions, and to follow Your guidance. Lord, lead them to seek what is best for our Nation and world, depending always on Your sovereignty and might. May they constantly remember that You possess all power and can accomplish the seemingly impossible if they would only believe. Continue to sustain them with Your might, showering them with Your bountiful blessings.

We pray in Your mighty Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 11, 2017.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable ROB PORTMAN, a Senator from the State of Ohio, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ORRIN G. HATCH,
President pro tempore.

Mr. PORTMAN thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the Nye nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of David C. Nye, of Idaho, to be United States District Judge for the District of Idaho.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am going to speak for about 5 minutes. Before I begin, I will reference an item that I ask unanimous consent be printed in the RECORD following my speech.

I rise to share real stories of real hardships from hard-working families in my home State of Iowa. Seven years ago, Americans were promised that the Affordable Care Act would make health insurance cheaper and healthcare more accessible. Well, I will not pretend to break any news here. The facts speak for themselves: ObamaCare is not liv-

ing up to its promises. When passing the law, the other side made promises they knew could not be kept.

The irony is, the so-called Affordable Care Act is anything but affordable. I have heard from many Iowans who tell me, in no uncertain terms, that they cannot afford to buy health insurance because ObamaCare is unaffordable. In fact, 72,000 Iowans can't even get help from the exchange because there isn't an insurance company to service them.

One Iowan wrote to me:

I am forced to pay \$230 a month for a healthcare plan that covers nothing until I reach \$11,000 in deductible. So on top of paying 100 percent of my medical bills anyway, now I also have to pay for insurance I can't use.

How did we get to this point?

Seven years ago, I spoke right here on the Senate floor and predicted what would happen to the cost of insurance if ObamaCare passed. So let's go back to that period of time when I spoke in October of 2009. This is my own quote from that speech:

And while some of the supporters of these partisan bills may not want to tell their constituents, we all know that as national spending on health care insurance increases, American families will bear the burden in the form of higher premiums. So let me be very clear, as a result of the current pending health care proposals, most Americans will pay higher premiums for health insurance.

That is the end of my quote from a speech in the Senate in October of 2009.

Now, I don't have a magic crystal ball, but it was easy to read the writing on the wall. I knew that layers of new taxes and burdensome new mandates in ObamaCare would lead us to where we find ourselves today: a broken healthcare system that is not better off than it was 7 years ago, and for millions of Americans—including those 72,000 Iowans—it is much worse.

So where do we go from here? After 7 years of rising premiums, soaring deductibles, and climbing copays, Republicans are committed to fixing the damage caused by the Affordable Care

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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