



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 115th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 163

WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2017

No. 117

Senate

The Senate met at 12 noon and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

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

Let us pray.

Eternal God, You alone reign supreme in our Nation and world. May our lawmakers permit You to direct their steps. Give our Senators a renewed sense of Your sacred presence, filling them with reverence for You. May this reverence engender in them a spirit of profound gratitude for Your goodness and grace.

Lord, inspire them to live such exemplary lives that Your Name will be glorified in the Earth. Help them to relinquish all anxieties to You, as they remember Your promise to supply all their needs. May they dedicate themselves to providing opportunities and justice for all Americans.

And, Lord, bring comfort to the families of our military personnel killed in the C-130 crash in Mississippi.

We pray in Your merciful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore 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.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The majority leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I have often come to the floor to relay

the stories of Kentuckians who have suffered under ObamaCare.

Under ObamaCare, Kentuckians have seen their premiums skyrocket—by an average of 75 percent since 2013.

Under ObamaCare, Kentuckians have seen their options for health insurance plummet. This year, families living in 90 percent of the counties in Kentucky will have little or no options of insurers to pick from; that is, two options or less.

We all know the statistics in our own States. We also know the pain of ObamaCare is about far more than just numbers on a page. Behind each of ObamaCare's unaffordable premium increases, there is a family struggling to make ends meet. Behind all the canceled plans and restricted choices, there are countless individuals who have been left behind by this failing law.

Today Vice President PENCE is traveling to Lexington in my State to hear directly from my constituents, including small business owners who have struggled under ObamaCare. As the Vice President knows, ObamaCare's pain is about more than just skyrocketing costs and plummeting choices; its taxes, mandates, and heavy-handed regulations hurt too. They have subjected small businesses across the country to serious challenges.

ObamaCare has been hurting the men and women we represent for many years in many different ways. I am thankful we finally have an administration that seems to care, an administration that has made a real effort to actually listen to those who have been forced to endure the negative consequences of this failing law.

ObamaCare has been spiraling toward collapse for years. Today it teeters on the brink of total meltdown, threatening to hurt even more of our friends and loved ones. We really can't allow that to happen.

Doing nothing about ObamaCare is simply not an option. That is why we

have been working hard to move beyond the failures of ObamaCare with Better Care legislation. We want to stabilize and reform the collapsing insurance markets, we want to put downward pressure on premiums, and we want to put upward lift on choice. We want to give States dramatic new tools that can drive a new era of improved health outcomes, especially for those most in need, and we want to put more affordable insurance in reach for Americans ObamaCare continues to leave behind.

If we sit on our hands, families will continue to suffer. If we let this opportunity to move beyond ObamaCare pass us by, what other options will there be? One idea from the Democratic leader is simply to throw money at insurance companies—no reforms, no changes, just a multibillion-dollar bandaid.

Another idea from many other Democrats is to quadruple down on ObamaCare with a government-run single-payer system. It is called single payer because there is just one payer—one payer: the government. Nearly every healthcare decision would be decided by a Federal bureaucrat. Taxes could go up astronomically. The total cost could add up to \$32 trillion, according to an estimate of a leading proposal.

Now, Americans deserve better than a massive expansion of a failed idea. Americans deserve better than a bandaid. Americans deserve better than ObamaCare. What they really deserve is better care, and we continue to work together to provide it. We are having productive discussions about the future of healthcare, just like we should be doing, and soon it will be time to move those discussions right out here to the Senate floor.

Once we proceed to the bill, Members—Republicans and Democrats alike—will have the opportunity to engage in robust debate and a robust amendment process right here on the Senate floor. I am sure Members will

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



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have other good ideas then, and I hope they will offer them. They will certainly have the opportunity to offer them, but if the Senate is prevented from even proceeding to the bill, none of us will have an opportunity—not Republicans, not Democrats, not anyone.

I regret that our Democratic colleagues made clear from the outset that they weren't interested in working seriously with us to pursue the kind of comprehensive reforms needed to truly move beyond the pain of ObamaCare, but they will have a new opportunity soon. Once we get on the bill, they will have another chance to offer their solutions. I hope they will offer more than just a bandaid. I hope they will offer more than just a \$32 trillion reup of a failed idea.

Whatever they would like to propose, I hope they will take the chance to open debate and advance the legislative process—for every Senator, for every American.

Leaving the American people to suffer under the ObamaCare status quo, I think, is unacceptable. We have seen the pain in our home States. We have seen the heartbreak all across our country. The American people are relying on us to bring them real relief, so we will keep working hard to deliver just that.

NOMINATIONS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, on another matter, yesterday I shared some data reflecting the historic level of obstruction Senate Democrats have displayed when it comes to confirming our President's nominees. I noted that the opposition they have shown to these nominees most of the time seems to have little to do with the nominees themselves, nor whether or not Democrats even support them. In many cases, our Democratic colleagues actually support the nominees.

Take the nominee before us today for a U.S. district court judge in Idaho. He was reported out of committee on a voice vote. Every single Democrat then voted for cloture on his nomination. Yet Democrats still chose to throw up procedural hurdles to a nominee for whom they have no objection.

In fact, Senate Democrats have continuously forced procedural hurdles more than 30 times, compared to only 8 cloture votes Republicans required on nominees at this point in President Obama's administration.

They are obviously bound and determined to impede the President from making appointments, and they are willing to go to increasingly absurd lengths to further that goal—like requiring 30 hours of debate time on a noncontroversial nominee after having just voted unanimously that debate on the nomination was unnecessary.

If our Democratic colleagues keep up this current rate of obstruction, only allowing about one confirmation every 3½ days, it will take the Senate almost 11½ years to confirm the remaining

Presidential appointments that must come before us.

I will say that again. At this rate, it would take us nearly 11½ years to confirm the remaining Presidential appointments. That is why I say to my friends across the aisle, this near total obstruction simply cannot continue.

As the Democratic leader once said himself, "Who in America doesn't think a president, Democrat or Republican, deserves his or her picks for who should run the agencies? Nobody." That is a direct quote from the Democratic leader.

He went on. He said: "The American people deserve a functioning government, not gridlock."

So I would again ask my friend the Democratic leader and his party to consider the consequences of their actions and chart a different path. That is the best outcome for the country and for the Senate.

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. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, yesterday my friend the majority leader announced he would be extending this work period by 2 weeks so the Republicans can have more time to finish their healthcare bill. With all due respect, time is not the issue. Two more weeks will not help Republicans fix this bill. Remember, the Republican leadership told everyone they would vote on the bill before July 4. Two weeks have gone by, and they don't seem any closer to having a bill that would actually improve healthcare in America. They seem even further away.

When you have a rotten product, time is not on your side. The longer you wait, the more people know about it, the fewer people like it, the less popular it is, and the harder it is to pass it. I don't even have to tell my good friend the leader that. He knows it.

I know why our colleagues are not so unhappy about what the leader said. We know why our Republican colleagues don't want to go home. They don't want to face the wrath of their constituents. If I were a Republican, I wouldn't want to go home either. I wouldn't want to face my constituents and try to defend this deeply unpopular and damaging bill.

Now, the most significant change proposed to their legislation over the

course of 2 weeks is an amendment by the junior Senator from Texas that would actually make the bill worse. By allowing insurers to sell cutrate plans that cover very few services, the Cruz amendment creates a very dangerous bait and switch. The bait is that the premiums would come down for a bit for some because insurance will not have to cover very much, and the switch is that deductibles and copays go way up to make up even more than the difference. Under the Cruz amendment, you could be paying a monthly premium for a healthcare insurance plan so threadbare, with a deductible so high that you will not get any benefit. For many, a Cruz policy could be worse than none at all. The Cruz policy leads to junk insurance, something nobody really wants, except maybe a few insurance companies.

Ironically, the Cruz amendment would cause exactly the kind of death spiral my Republican friends keep talking about. A group of patient advocates, including the AARP, the Cancer Action Network, and the American Heart Association—these are hardly political groups; these are patient advocates—said that if the Cruz amendment passed, "younger and healthier individuals would be allowed to purchase non-ACA compliant plans that have lower premiums but fewer benefits."

Without the younger, healthier people in the risk pool, the premiums for ACA-compliant plans would rise quickly and significantly. This same kind of risk pool segmentation occurred prior to the enactment of the ACA when 35 states operated high-risk pools . . . In that experience, most of those states . . . were forced to limit enrollment, reduce benefits, create waiting lists, and raise premiums and out-of-pocket costs to the point of unaffordability. Millions of patients lacked access to care and treatment.

That is not CHUCK SCHUMER, the minority leader, talking. That is the AARP, the Cancer Action Network, and the American Heart Association. Again, those groups said about the Cruz plan that it would "limit enrollment, reduce benefits, create waiting lists, and raise premiums and out-of-pocket costs to the point of unaffordability," because the Cruz plan is very similar to what we had before the ACA. Even the conservative American Action Forum said the Cruz amendment is "the definition of a death spiral." Higher costs, less care, waiting lists, death spirals—that is the Cruz amendment in a nutshell. How many are going to vote for that?

That is the most significant change Republicans came up with after an extra 2 weeks on the bill. Imagine, if they have another 2 weeks, what they will come up with.

My friends on the other side of the aisle should have no illusions. They can't distract our attention from this bill by phony complaints over nominations or any other issue. More time is not going to solve their problem on healthcare. It is much deeper than that. The problem is the substance of

the bill, which so cruelly exchanges healthcare for working Americans for a massive tax cut for the very wealthy.

The idea is so backward that the American people have revolted against this legislation. Even in the deeply conservative parts of my State, where I have met with my constituents, there is a revulsion to this bill. I am not surprised that some polls say that only 12 percent of Americans support it.

There is no fixing a bill as broken as this one. There is no tweaking a bill as fundamentally flawed as this one. An amended bill that only kicks 15 or 17 or 20 million Americans off their insurance, though less than the last CBO estimate, would still be a moral travesty. An amended bill that gives a slightly smaller tax break to the wealthy while still cutting Medicaid to the bone would still be gravely worse than the status quo. The only answer for my Republican friends is simple: Start over. Abandon cuts to Medicaid, abandon tax breaks for the wealthy, and abandon this one-party approach.

Democrats want to work with our Republican colleagues to actually improve our healthcare system, and, it turns out, that is what the American people want as well.

The Kaiser Family Foundation found that 71 percent of Americans favor a bipartisan effort to improve our healthcare system, as opposed to the Republican's partisan effort. That is, again, that 71 percent favor a bipartisan effort—72 percent of Independents and even 46 percent of Trump supporters.

When will my Republican colleagues start listening to the American people? Start over, drop this partisan process and this devastating bill, and work with us. We are willing to stay 2 weeks, 2 months, or 2 years to get a good healthcare bill for the American people, but we should be included in the process.

NET NEUTRALITY

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, today is the net neutrality day of action. So I wanted to add a few words to this issue.

We depend on a free and open internet to spur innovation and job creation, and our economy works best when innovators, entrepreneurs, and businesses of all sizes compete on a level playing field. Net neutrality, very simply, says that everyone—consumers, small businesses, startups—deserve the same access to and quality of internet as big corporations.

When I was growing up in Brooklyn, my father owned a small exterminating business. If his competitor down the street had received preferred electricity service, he would have been rightly outraged, and the law would have protected him from that unfair treatment. We don't reserve certain highways for a single trucking company, and we don't limit phone service to hand-picked stores. We shouldn't re-

serve high-speed internet for a favored few corporations, either, and that was the basis of the FCC's decision to preserve net neutrality back in 2015.

Now, of course, conservative and industry interests see an opportunity to roll back these protections and free access to a free and open internet in order to favor powerful corporations. That seems to be what they want.

President Trump's appointee to the FCC, Chairman Ajit Pai, has already taken several actions to undercut fair internet access. In his first 2 weeks on the job, Chairman Pai stopped nine companies from providing discounted high-speed internet to low-income individuals, and he jammed through nearly a dozen industry-backed actions, including some to begin curtailing net neutrality.

Once again, this administration favors the big, wealthy, special corporate interests over the average American. The American people should realize that is what the Trump administration is doing time and again. They talk like they are for working people, but when it comes to actions like this one on net neutrality, they favor the big special interests that, Mr. and Mrs. American Consumer, are going to make sure that in many instances you pay more. It is another example of the Trump administration sticking up for big corporations and special interests to the detriment of the people and small businesses—exactly the opposite of what President Trump promised in his campaign.

The Open Internet Order is working well, and it should remain undisturbed. If President Trump and Chairman Pai proceed down the path of dismantling net neutrality, they can expect a wall of resistance from Senate Democrats. We will fight tooth and nail to protect fair and equal internet access for all Americans. President Trump, our Republican colleagues, and Chairman Pai can expect a wall of resistance from the American people, as well, who are already making their voices heard in record numbers. So far, over 6 million—6 million—Americans have sent comments to the FCC on this issue. The fight has just begun, and we will not let up until the FCC abandons its wrong-headed plans.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will pro-

ceed to executive session to resume consideration of 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 PRESIDING OFFICER. All postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Nye nomination?

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

The result was announced—yeas 100, nays 0, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 158 Ex.]

YEAS—100

Alexander	Franken	Nelson
Baldwin	Gardner	Paul
Barrasso	Gillibrand	Perdue
Bennet	Graham	Peters
Blumenthal	Grassley	Portman
Blunt	Harris	Reed
Booker	Hassan	Risch
Boozman	Hatch	Roberts
Brown	Heinrich	Rounds
Burr	Heitkamp	Rubio
Cantwell	Heller	Sanders
Capito	Hirono	Sasse
Cardin	Hoeven	Schatz
Carper	Inhofe	Schumer
Casey	Isakson	Scott
Cassidy	Johnson	Shaheen
Cochran	Kaine	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Stabenow
Coons	King	Strange
Corker	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Tester
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	Markey	Udall
Daines	McCain	Van Hollen
Donnelly	McCaskill	Warner
Duckworth	McConnell	Warren
Durbin	Menendez	Whitehouse
Enzi	Merkley	Wicker
Ernst	Moran	Wyden
Feinstein	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Murphy	
Flake	Murray	

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. ENZI. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that with respect to the Nye nomination, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby

move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of William Francis Hagerty IV, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan.

Mitch McConnell, Chuck Grassley, Deb Fischer, Steve Daines, Luther Strange, Bob Corker, Thom Tillis, Tom Cotton, Tim Scott, Johnny Isakson, Richard C. Shelby, Michael B. Enzi, Richard Burr, John Hoeven, David Perdue, Roy Blunt, Todd Young.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of William Francis Hagerty IV, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk called the roll.

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 89, nays 11, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 159 Ex.]

YEAS—89

Alexander	Feinstein	Murphy
Baldwin	Fischer	Murray
Barrasso	Flake	Nelson
Bennet	Franken	Paul
Blumenthal	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boozman	Grassley	Reed
Brown	Hassan	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Cantwell	Heitkamp	Rounds
Capito	Heller	Rubio
Cardin	Hoeven	Sasse
Carper	Inhofe	Schatz
Casey	Isakson	Schumer
Cassidy	Johnson	Scott
Cochran	Kaine	Shaheen
Collins	Kennedy	Shelby
Coons	King	Strange
Corker	Klobuchar	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Tester
Cortez Masto	Leahy	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Crapo	Manchin	Toomey
Cruz	Markey	Van Hollen
Daines	McCain	Warner
Donnelly	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Duckworth	McConnell	Wicker
Durbin	Menendez	Wyden
Enzi	Moran	Young
Ernst	Murkowski	

NAYS—11

Booker	Hirono	Stabenow
Gillibrand	Merkley	Udall
Harris	Peters	Warren
Heinrich	Sanders	

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 89, the nays are 11.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of William Francis Hagerty IV, of Tennessee, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Japan.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about

what I saw happen over the Fourth of July in Wyoming while visiting with people, visiting with patients, doctors, and nurses. What I am seeing is that the pain of ObamaCare continues to worsen. The healthcare crisis we are seeing across this country continues to grow. The crisis is rising, the choices are disappearing, and the American people are desperate for Congress to step in and do something to help rescue them from the rising costs and collapsing choices of the Obama healthcare law.

It is interesting. When the Democrats passed ObamaCare, the Democratic leader at the time, Harry Reid, said that we would all get an "earful of wonderment and happiness." Those were his words about how great the law was. Well, every weekend at home in Wyoming and I am sure in the Presiding Officer's State of North Carolina, we get an earful, too, and it is not about wonderment and happiness over ObamaCare. What I hear from patients, doctors, and nurses at home is that ObamaCare is hurting them, hurting our communities, hurting our State. I hear about the rise in premiums. I hear about the declining number of options, the collapse of ObamaCare. We have one choice in Wyoming. We used to have two. Both lost money in spite of very high premiums. What we saw is that one ended up going out of business, and the one we have in business—the only one we have—is still losing money.

We are fortunate because we have at least one provider providing coverage. There are now 40 counties across America where no one will be selling ObamaCare insurance next year—no one, not a single company will be selling ObamaCare insurance.

In Nevada, where prior Senator Harry Reid is from, only three counties are going to have anyone selling on the ObamaCare exchange—only three of the counties in the entire State, the State that Harry Reid represented in the Senate for many years. People living everywhere else in his home State will have I think one choice, maybe more, but in terms of these counties, no one is selling ObamaCare insurance at all. The State health insurance exchange put out a statement in his home State that said that the people living in the rest of the State face what they described as a healthcare crisis.

Democrats predicted wonderment and happiness about ObamaCare, but there is a healthcare crisis all across the country. People in that State are going to have no access to the insurance plans the Democrats promised them under ObamaCare. A lot of Americans are not much better off or in better shape right now.

There was a headline in the Independence Day edition of USA TODAY that said "1,370-plus counties have only one ACA insurer." The article was about a study that was done by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. They found that people living in 1,300

counties have no choice when it comes to the ObamaCare plan; there is just one company offering the mandated coverage. Washington says you have to buy it; not many people want to sell it. Washington doesn't seem to care.

Democrats don't seem to care about the fact that what they promised was a marketplace and what we have ended up with is a monopoly. Remember when Democrats promised there would be more competition? Essentially there is none. When there is none, we end up with less competition and generally with higher prices, which is what people across the country are seeing. Prices have essentially doubled in ObamaCare marketplaces over the last 4 years. That is why a lot of people are finding out that while they may still have access to coverage, it is so expensive, they can't afford to buy it—because they are down to one choice.

Health insurance companies keep releasing information about how much higher they expect rates to go next year, which continues to be a problem. I have seen the headlines. "Another ObamaCare Rate Shock."

Look at what is happening in Tennessee. Earlier this year, Aetna and Humana both said they were dropping out of ObamaCare exchanges completely. Cigna is one of the last big companies that are still willing to sell these plans. Well, they say they are going to have to raise premiums by 42 percent next year.

Look at what is happening in Georgia, just across the border from Tennessee. Blue Cross Blue Shield is asking for an average rate hike of 41 percent in Georgia. The Atlanta Journal-Constitution had an article about it just last week. They said Blue Cross might charge as much as 75 percent more for one plan next year. That is ObamaCare.

Remember President Obama saying that if you like your plan, you can keep your plan? Those plans are gone.

Remember President Obama saying that rates would drop by \$2,500 a year for people? That is not what we saw. What we are seeing is what is continuing today.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution is saying that Blue Cross Blue Shield may charge as much as 75 percent more next year. They quoted one man as saying: "That's a breath taker." Another woman quoted in the article responded to these price increases by saying simply "Yikes!" That is what people are facing all across the country.

I remember President Obama, leaving office, forcefully defending it and being proud. There is very little to be proud of here.

People all across America are having the exact same reaction as they see how much their own insurance companies are raising their rates all across the country. That is not the wonderment and happiness the Democrats said we would be hearing about when this was passed. The high prices are a big

reason so many people are dropping their insurance coverage. They can't afford it. The people most likely to drop out, we find out, are, of course, the young people.

Gallup came out with the results of a recent survey on Monday, just 2 days ago, with big headlines all across the country. What they found is that 2 million fewer Americans, under ObamaCare, have insurance today than they did at the end of last year, just 6 months ago. There have been 2 million fewer over the last 6 months.

So, in just 6 months, 2 million people have gone off insurance. Most of them are young, and according to the survey by Gallup, they basically say they dropped it because it was just too expensive. They do not feel that they are getting value for their money. These 2 million people are not talking about the wonderment and happiness of ObamaCare. They are just leaving it behind.

Democrats said people would love ObamaCare. They said ObamaCare would bring down prices. It has not. They said it would increase competition, but they did not get that one right either. None of this is happening. Now the Democrats are starting to say that having Washington-mandated health insurance is not enough. They say we need health insurance to be run entirely by Washington. Apparently, they did not learn the lesson that said that the Washington-mandated insurance—having to buy a Washington product—would be good enough. Now they are recognizing that it is not good enough. They are saying that we need Washington in charge of all of it.

They call it single-payer healthcare, but let's talk about what it is. It is government-controlled healthcare—government-mandated, government-controlled, government-run, one-size-fits-all healthcare. It is a single payer, with the American taxpayers paying the bill.

We see what happened in California when its legislature passed a similar thing in the State senate. They asked: What is the cost? \$400 billion. What is the budget of the entire State of California? \$190 billion. So what they proposed in the State senate has passed in the State of California and costs twice what the entire budget is in the State of California. To give what the people of California have been promised by the State senate, they are going to have to raise taxes on people, and then you will get the rationing of care and the lines and the waiting time. It is what happens around the world with government-mandated, government-run insurance. We see that in Canada, and we see that in England.

I was practicing medicine prior to coming here to the Senate. I was an orthopedic surgeon in Wyoming. I knew we needed to do healthcare reform, but ObamaCare was the very wrong reform. Democrats were wrong then, and all of the talk about government-run healthcare is wrong today—wrong today for the people of this country.

Look, we understand that we need a better solution than ObamaCare. That is what I hear about every weekend in Wyoming. We need to put patients in charge, not the government. With the Democrats and the speeches they are giving and the bills that have been co-sponsored in the House by a majority of the Democrats, they want to put the government solely in charge of healthcare in this country.

We need to have people at home making their own decisions, making their own choices, and not have Washington, DC, imposing its one-size-fits-all approach. We need to give people options, not mandates. People deserve choices. That is what the American people want. That is what Democrats promised years ago, but they never delivered. That is what Republicans are committed to giving the American people today—doing it now so that patients can get the healthcare they need from doctors whom they choose and at lower costs so that patients can make the decisions, not Washington. That is where we are today as we continue to debate and discuss healthcare in this country at this time.

Just coming back from Wyoming, I visited with many folks—many former patients, a number of doctors whom I had worked with over the years, and nurses. I was at several hospitals. I just heard, unilaterally, across the State of Wyoming that ObamaCare continues to be a burden on the people of the State. They want freedom. They want choice. They want flexibility. They want to make decisions for themselves, not have Washington dictate to them and, certainly, not have government controlling healthcare in this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I have had the good fortune of being in both the House and the Senate during the period of passage and implementation of the Affordable Care Act and now the debate over repeal, and I have heard consistently from my Republican colleagues two things. One is that they did not think the Affordable Care Act was the right approach to fixing the problems of America's healthcare system. There were 60-some odd times that the House or the Senate voted to repeal all or parts of the Affordable Care Act. The second thing I heard consistently over that period of time, dating from 2009, is that the Republicans were prepared to offer a replacement to the Affordable Care Act that would be better, that would be an improvement over the Affordable Care Act—indeed, over the status of the American healthcare system when the Affordable Care Act was passed. The ground has shifted mightily since then.

The Congressional Budget Office tells us that, under the Republican plan either passed in the House or in the Senate, a humanitarian catastrophe will result in this country. Tens of millions of people would lose their healthcare.

That is not what Republicans said their replacement would do. They said their replacement would be better than the Affordable Care Act.

The CBO says that rates will go up immediately by 20 percent on almost everybody. Then, after that, if you are young and healthy, rates will probably go down, but for everybody else, the amount of money you have to pay in premiums, copays, and deductibles will go up. There is nothing in the Republicans' bill about cost—nothing that addresses the underlying issues with an American healthcare system that, procedure by procedure, costs twice as much as in most other countries—and nothing about quality. There is not a single provision in the bill that encourages higher quality.

As we get ready for Republican repeal bill 3.0 or 4.0—whatever this next version will be that will be released secretly to Republicans tomorrow—I think it is just worth reminding everybody what Republicans said would happen. I will just use our President's words. I understand that many of my Republican colleagues here do not ascribe to all of the beliefs and statements of our President, but he is the leader of the Republican Party. All of my colleagues did support him, and they stood with him in the House of Representatives, arm in arm, when they passed the Republican House's repeal and replacement bill.

President Trump wrote this:

I was the first and only potential GOP candidate to state there will be no cuts to Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. Huckabee copied me.

So no cuts to Medicaid was the promise. Yet the bill that the President has endorsed and is trying to help Leader MCCONNELL push through the Senate involves debilitating cuts to Medicaid—\$700 billion to \$800 billion worth of cuts to Medicaid—resulting in millions of people being pushed off of that benefit. The cut to the State of Connecticut would be \$3 billion. We are a tiny State. Our Medicaid Program is somewhere in the neighborhood of \$8 billion. We would lose \$3 billion of that. The promise was that we would not cut Medicaid. This bill cuts Medicaid.

President Trump wrote:

If our healthcare plan is approved, you will see real healthcare, and premiums will start tumbling down. ObamaCare is in a death spiral!

There is always one long sentence and then one very short sentence.

Here are the two claims: "Premiums will start tumbling down." That has been the promise, and that has been a consistent promise—that costs will go down if the Affordable Care Act is repealed and replaced with a Republican plan. The CBO debunks this from beginning to end. It says that premiums will go up. They will start tumbling upwards immediately at rates of 20 percent. If you are older or if you have any history of preexisting conditions, your premiums will continue to go up. The danger, of course, is in thinking

that the only thing that you pay in the healthcare system is premiums. I could pretty easily construct a healthcare reform proposal in which your premium would go dramatically down. How would I do that? I would just shift all of the payments onto deductibles, onto copays, and I would give you nothing with regard to the actuarial benefit of the plan. It is easy to get premiums to go down if you do not care about what you are actually covering and the size of your deductibles and the size of your copays.

Then, "ObamaCare is in a death spiral!" The CBO debunks that as well. The CBO says that, if you leave the Affordable Care Act in place over the course of the next 10 years, 2 or 3 million people will lose healthcare insurance. If you pass the Republicans' healthcare bill, that is where the death spiral occurs. There are 23 million people who will lose insurance if you pass the Republicans' bill, but 2 to 3 million people will lose insurance if you do not pass it.

Again, President Trump writes:

Healthcare plan is on its way. Will have much lower premiums and deductibles—

Here, he is making a commitment on deductibles. Once again, the Congressional Budget Office says that premiums will go up and deductibles will go up, especially for individuals who are older or individuals with pre-existing conditions—

while at the same time taking care of pre-existing conditions!

This bill does not take care of people with preexisting conditions. Why? Because it allows for any State to allow insurance companies to get out from the minimum benefits requirement. If you have cancer, technically, the Senate Republicans' bill says that you cannot be charged more, but you may not be able to find a plan that covers cancer treatments. So that is not protecting people with preexisting conditions. The CBO says this specifically. It says that, especially for people with preexisting mental illness and preexisting addiction, they will be priced out of the marketplace because they will not find plans that cover their illnesses. You cannot just protect people with preexisting conditions by saying that insurance plans have to cover them. You actually have to require insurance plans to offer the medical benefit they need.

Once again:

Our healthcare plan will lower premiums and deductibles—and be great healthcare! Insurance companies are fleeing ObamaCare—it is dead.

I have already covered the part about premiums and deductibles, but let's remember that insurance companies were not fleeing ObamaCare until President Trump was sworn into office. The period of open enrollment covered a period prior to his inauguration and a period after his inauguration. Before President Trump's inauguration, open enrollment was on pace to enroll a record number of Americans in ex-

change plans and Medicaid plans—record enrollment. Enrollment fell off a cliff after President Trump was sworn into office and signed an Executive order that told all of his agencies to unwind the Affordable Care Act. People listened to President Trump, who said that he was going to kill the Affordable Care Act, and they stopped signing up for those plans.

It got worse when he refused to pay insurance companies. Right now, the President will not commit to paying cost-sharing subsidies to insurance companies more than 30 days ahead of time. He stopped enforcing the individual mandate, and it is no surprise that insurance companies are saying they do not want to participate in these exchanges because the President is trying to kill them. He has made it very clear from day one.

I have had the benefit of being on the floor a number of times with Senator BARRASSO, who often came down to the floor, following my remarks, during the period of the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. I heard him talk about the fact that there will be freedom for Americans to have or not to have insurance if this piece of legislation is passed. It is a wonderful idea that people will be free to not be able to afford insurance. The reality is that, yes, some individuals buy insurance today because they are compelled to by the individual mandate, but there is a reason for that. If you do not compel people to buy insurance who are healthy, then you cannot protect people who are sick.

I sat where the Presiding Officer is during Senator CRUZ's 24-hour filibuster. In the middle of that filibuster, he said exactly that. Senator CRUZ, in the middle of his filibuster, said that we all understand that you have to have the individual mandate in order to prohibit companies from charging higher premiums for people who are sick, and my Republican colleagues know that because they kept the individual mandate in their bill.

So this nonsense about no one's being required to buy insurance is belied by the text of the legislation we are considering. There is a mandate in this bill. There is a penalty in this bill. It is just a far meaner and crueler penalty than was included in the Affordable Care Act.

What do I mean by that?

So the Affordable Care Act doesn't mandate that you buy insurance in the sense that if you don't buy it, you will be locked up in jail; it says that if you don't buy insurance, you will pay a penalty on your income tax. If you don't buy insurance, there will be a penalty.

That is exactly what the Republican Senate bill says. It says that if you don't buy insurance, you will incur a penalty. In their bill, the penalty is that you will be locked out of buying insurance for 6 months. If you are sick, or even, frankly, if you are healthy and you need to go see a doctor for some-

thing, you will have to pay for that out of your pocket for those 6 months. If you are sick, and you have a serious condition and you are legally refused healthcare because of this legislation, the consequences could be dire, but whatever the scope of the consequences, it is still a penalty, just like there was a penalty in the bill that the Democrats supported and passed in 2009 and 2010.

So it is just not true to say that now Americans have the freedom not to have healthcare. You don't because you are going to be penalized if you let your health insurance lapse. If you don't make payments for a couple months, you are locked out of the insurance market. That is just a different kind of penalty than the one that is in our bill.

The truth is that while I admit there are some people who buy insurance today because they fear that penalty, it is necessary, as Republicans realize, in order to make sure the markets don't spiral out of control, because if you say that you can't charge people with preexisting conditions more and you don't require healthy people to buy insurance, then why would any healthy person buy insurance? They will just wait until they are sick because they know that once they are sick and need very expensive care, they can't be charged any more for it.

The nature of insurance is that people who have the good fortune to be healthy or to be free of accident or natural disaster subsidize individuals who are not so fortunate—who are sick, who do have an accident occur to their home or who are subject to a natural disaster. That is how insurance works.

Republicans realize that because they put a penalty in their bill, but for as many people who buy insurance because they are forced to, most people buy insurance because they want it because they recognize it is better to have insurance in the case that they or a loved one gets sick, and that is whom we are talking about here. Of the 23 million who lose insurance, according to CBO, under the Republican bill, millions and millions of those are those people who want insurance but will not be able to get it because they are priced out by the Republican bill. I can see there will be some people who will make that choice, but there will be millions more who had insurance today who will not be able to get it moving forward.

As Republicans finish up this latest round of secret negotiations, I just want to make sure we are on the same page about what this bill does. It mandates that you buy insurance, just in a different way. It has a penalty just like the Affordable Care Act has a penalty.

I want to make sure we remember what Republicans stated as their goals for this replacement. The goals were that the system would be better, but by every single metric, this proposal will result in worse healthcare for people. Less people will have insurance. Rates

will go up for everyone except for young, healthy people. Costs will continue to spiral out of control, and no additional measures will be taken to make quality better. Every single problem that Republicans address in the existing healthcare system gets worse.

Senator BARRASSO complains mercilessly about these exchanges. CBO says the exchanges will shed even more people. The costs will go even higher. Senator CORNYN regularly tweets out that the Affordable Care Act still left 28 million people uninsured, but this bill you are debating will double the number of people who don't have insurance.

For all of my Republican colleagues who rightly come to the floor and talk about the fact that the cost is too high for individuals in our system, there is not a single provision in this bill that deals with the actual cost of the service, of the procedure, of the visit, of the surgery.

I am deeply worried that this next version of the Republican repeal and replace bill will result in premiums going up by 15 percent and only 17 million Americans losing healthcare and it will be declared a victory, but that is not what Republicans promised. They promised to repeal the Affordable Care Act and replace it with something that is better, not something that is less bad than the original version of the replacement plan they introduced.

I think the reason that to many people it appears this bill is falling apart is because when my colleagues went home this weekend, they heard an earful from their constituents—from real folks who will be affected by this piece of legislation.

Alison is 28 years old. She is from Milford, CT. She was in my office this week. She came to DC this week, she and her boyfriend, I think—I don't want to ascribe an engagement to them that is not true; I think her boyfriend. They came down here this week. They were supposed to be on vacation this week, and they decided to spend some of their vacation coming to Washington so Alison could tell her story to Members of Congress.

When she was 9 years old, she was diagnosed with a rare liver disease. At the time, she and her family were told that they would need to find a liver transplant in roughly 10 years or she wouldn't survive.

At the start of her sophomore year at Sacred Heart University in Connecticut, she was starting to have symptoms of a condition that results from a buildup of ammonia in her brain. She was having a hard time concentrating, abdominal pain, nose bleeds, nausea, vomiting, and joint pain. Her doctor said it was time for her to get that transplant, that she was at that critical moment when she needed it.

Unfortunately, none of her family or 8 other candidates—friends, I think, of the family—were a match. So in desperation, her parents wrote an email and just sent it out to people who lived

in Trumbull and in the Sacred Heart University community. From that email, an anonymous young man stepped forward. He was tested and determined to be a match. The surgery was a success. When she walked on stage to receive her diploma from Sacred Heart University, she was joined by that anonymous donor, and her fellow graduates gave her a standing ovation.

Now, her family was lucky because she had insurance through her father. She is, because of the Affordable Care Act, allowed to do that, at the time being under 26 years old. Her insurance paid for virtually everything that was necessary, but, she says, had my dad not had the healthcare benefits he did, I know my family would not be in the place we are today because my parents would have lost everything they worked so hard for. There was no way we could have afforded to pay for all of those burdens.

Today she worries that if this bill is passed, she, as a young woman with a preexisting condition, will be destined to a life of discrimination because she may not be able to find a plan that covers her condition because of the withdrawal of protection with respect to the minimum benefits requirements. Even in Connecticut, she is vulnerable to that withdrawal of protection, not because Connecticut is likely to allow insurance plans to offer coverage that doesn't include the minimum benefits but because if you work for a big company, and even if you are housed in Connecticut, if that company anchors their plan in a State that does strip away the insurance protections, then you lose the protections even as a resident of Connecticut.

Alison is now a nurse in the neonatal intensive care unit at Yale University Children's Hospital. She is contributing in a big way to our State and to the healthcare system. Yet she is living in fear of this legislation being passed. So she took some of her vacation to come to Washington to share her story with us.

I am with Senator COLLINS. I think the Republicans should scrap this garbage piece of legislation. I hope they understand our offer is sincere—it is not political—that Democrats do want to sit down with Republicans and try to provide some reasonable fix to what still ails our healthcare system.

I will end with this thought: It doesn't have to be like this. Healthcare does not have to be a political football that is just tossed from one side to the other every 10 years. That is what has been happening here for my entire political lifetime. I was elected to Congress in 2006, in part because of the tempest of popular frustration with the way in which Republicans passed the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act, which included the new prescription drug benefit that Democrats saw—and sold—as a giveaway to the drug and insurance industries. Democrats used healthcare as a political cudgel to

bludgeon Republicans after the 2003 Medicare Modernization Act. Its implementation was very rocky, just as the implementation of the Affordable Care Act was. The Democrats used it against Republicans.

In 2009, it was the Republicans' turn to bludgeon Democrats. Democrats lost a lot of seats in 2010, in part because Republicans used the passage of the Affordable Care Act to politically harm Democrats. Now, once again, it is the Democrats' turn to politically bludgeon Republicans.

Whether this bill passes or not, the fact that Republicans have walked out on a plank with a partisan piece of legislation that takes insurance from 23 million people across the country and, as every poll shows, is widely unpopular will be a political liability for Republicans.

What if we decided to stop tossing healthcare back and forth? What if we decided to jointly own one-fifth of our economy? What if we decided to sit down and give a little bit, from our side to yours, from your side to ours? What if I said that I understood you cared about flexibility in these marketplaces, that I understood your desire for more flexibility for Governors and State legislatures under Medicaid? What if you said you understood our interest in providing long-term stability in these marketplaces, that you understood our desire to try to get at some of the costs of the actual services and devices and prescription drugs that are sold? What if we sat down and fixed the things that aren't working, kept the things that are working, and held hands together and said that we are going to jointly own the American healthcare system?

It would leave plenty of things to fight over. There would still be no shortage of disagreements that we could run elections on. Whether it be immigration or taxes or minimum wage, there will still be lots of things we could disagree on, but for as long as I have been in politics, this issue has just been thrown back and forth, to hurt Democrats, to hurt Republicans. In the process, we have injected so much uncertainty into the healthcare system and into the economy at large, that we make it impossible for private sector reform to take hold.

Hospitals and healthcare providers have been doing really innovative things since the Affordable Care Act went into effect because they got a signal from the Federal Government that we wanted them to start building big coordinated systems of care, that we were going to reward outcomes rather than volume. So they started making all of these big changes, and then, about a year ago, they stopped because Republicans said they were going to blow up that model and pass something new. We frustrated innovation because we telegraphed that healthcare policy is just going to ping-pong back and forth between left and right. We hurt ourselves politically, we frustrate the

private sector innovation, and get no benefit to us on the economy.

My offer, and I think the offer from most of my colleagues, is sincere. If my Republican friends do choose to throw away this piece of legislation because it doesn't comport with the goals that Republicans have long said were at the heart of their effort to repeal this bill, there is an important bipartisan conversation about keeping what is working in our healthcare system and admitting together that there are big things that aren't working and fixing them together.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, the most important three words in our Constitution are the first three words: "We the People."

Our Founders chose to write those words in supersized font so that we could, from some distance away, know exactly what the mission statement was. Their goal wasn't to write a structure for government that would repeat the governments of, by, and for the powerful of Europe but to pursue differently a vision in which the will of the people would be enacted; that government would work not just for the benefit of the citizens at large but also empowered by the citizens at large. This is a vision we have been very concerned about as we see the influence of the concentration of money in American politics.

Indeed, we have five members of the Supreme Court who don't understand the basic, fundamental nature of the first three words of our Constitution. They adopted a court case, *Citizens United*, which was the opposite of the vision of our Constitution. That vision was articulated by Thomas Jefferson, who said that the will of the people will be enacted only if each and every citizen has an equal voice. But *Citizens United* gives a dramatic, stadium-sized megaphone to the individuals who are the richest and most powerful in the country, at odds with that fundamental vision that Lincoln so well summarized as government of, by, and for the people.

We have certainly seen the case of government by and for the powerful in the context of the recent TrumpCare bill—the Senate version thereof—crafted in secret by 13 of my colleagues from across the aisle, hiding from the press, hiding from the healthcare stakeholders and experts, hiding from their own citizens. In fact, during this last break, of the 52 Members of the Republican caucus, apparently—reportedly—only a couple had townhalls be-

cause they were terrified of what their citizens would say about the bill they have been crafting in secret—the secret 13.

This bill is also known as the zero, zero, zero bill—zero committee meetings, zero amendments considered in committee, zero months of opportunity for Senators to go back and consult with their citizens back in their home States.

Then what do we find as a result of this secret process of government by and for the powerful? A bill to rip healthcare from 22 million Americans in order to deliver hundreds of billions of dollars to the richest Americans. In fact, if you want to summarize it, you can say that this bill gives \$33 billion—not \$33,000, not \$33 million but \$33 billion—to the richest 400 Americans while ripping healthcare away from 700,000. That is the number who could be funded by that same \$33 billion. That would cover all of the Medicaid recipients in Alaska and Arkansas and West Virginia and Nevada. This has incredibly grave consequences for the peace of mind and the quality of life for these millions of Americans. It rips \$772 billion out of Medicaid.

We know the Medicaid expansion in Oregon has enabled 400,000 people to acquire healthcare in my home State—400,000. If they were holding hands, they would stretch from the Pacific Ocean to the State of Idaho, across the entire east-west breadth of my State.

Think about how much of an impact this has on rural Americans. One out of three Oregonians in rural Oregon are on the Oregon Health Plan, Oregon's Medicaid Program. It has a big impact on our seniors—our seniors in long-term care.

Oregon is a leader in helping families, helping individuals stay in their homes as their healthcare deteriorates. But when they can no longer stay in their home because of the extensive nature of their care, many then are, through Medicaid, able to go and get care—long-term care—in a nursing home. That long-term care, paid for by the Oregon Health Plan, covers about 60 percent of the individuals in long-term care, but in rural Oregon, it is much higher.

I was in Klamath Falls at a nursing home. I was citing the national statistic, 60 percent, and the head of the nursing home said: Senator, here, it is virtually 100 percent.

I looked at those residents down that long hallway who needed intensive nursing healthcare, and one woman asked why I was there. Her name was Deborah. When I explained it, she said: I am paid for by Medicaid. If Medicaid goes away, I am out on the street. That is a problem because I can't walk.

It is not just a problem for Deborah. It is a problem for all of our residents in long-term care who need extensive nursing care. It is a challenge. It is a real challenge. It is a real problem for our mothers. One out of three women in maternity care are paid for by Med-

icaid. Don't we want our children to get a good, strong start in life? Don't we want maternity care from the moment a woman knows she is expecting a child? Don't we want that? Then why do so many of my colleagues support a bill to tear that care away from our expecting mothers?

It is a problem for our older Americans, our older Americans whose rates would go way up. For example, a man who is 60 years old, earning \$20,000 a year, who currently pays about \$80 a month for healthcare—an affordable policy. Under the Republican TrumpCare bill, that would go to \$570 a month.

I challenge my colleagues, find me someone earning \$20,000 a year who can pay \$570 a month for healthcare. Find that individual and defend your plan on the floor of the Senate as to why that isn't equivalent to just taking healthcare away from that individual.

Then, of course, we have the issue of preexisting conditions. People sometimes have an injury in high school football or maybe it is in softball or gymnastics or in wrestling that they carry with them their entire lives. Maybe it is something that develops further on in life. Maybe it is asthma, diabetes, or an episode of cancer. Now they have a preexisting condition. Under our old healthcare system, prior to 2009, 2010, they couldn't acquire insurance unless they were fortunate enough to get it through that job, which millions of Americans do not get it through their workplace. They were out in the cold, out on the ice.

Now we have this Republican TrumpCare bill. They want to throw those citizens back on the ice who have preexisting conditions, not their friends who are wealthy enough to buy healthcare on their own or heads of corporations who get big benefit packages—not them, no, just the struggling working Americans.

Don't we care about struggling working Americans? Aren't we a "we the people" nation, not a "we the privileged" nation? I encourage my colleagues to read up on the first three words of our Constitution and what it means.

Then we have the plan my colleague from Texas has presented. It is referred to as the Cruz amendment. The Cruz amendment—the Cruz amendment for fake insurance. It works like this. It says, if an insurance company provides one policy with extensive benefits—that is, benefits essential to ordinary healthcare like maternity care and the ability to go to a hospital, the ability to get a broken bone repaired, the ability to get affordable drugs, just the basics of healthcare—they have one policy with these essential benefits. They can offer policies that cover virtually nothing. These are known as fake insurance.

We have a President who likes to talk about fake news virtually every day. Why do we have a President who

hates fake news but loves fake insurance? Why do I have 52 colleagues here who apparently love fake insurance?

Here is what it does. It means the young and the healthy get those policies because they cost very little, and they make a bet that they aren't going to get hurt and they are not going to get sick. That means that those who are older and those who have pre-existing conditions have to go for the policy that has those essential benefits, but now because only the older individuals and the sicker individuals are getting that policy, it is way beyond reach.

Earlier I described how a 60-year-old at \$20,000 has a policy that increases seven times, from \$80 a month to \$570 a month. The Cruz amendment would make that much worse. It makes fake insurance for the young or the wealthy and unaffordable policies for those who are older and have preexisting conditions.

Our President said the House bill is mean, but the Senate bill is meaner. The House bill would knock 14 million people out of healthcare within a single year. The Senate bill, that is 15 million people.

The American Medical Association has long operated under the precept of, first, do no harm. Wouldn't that be a good principle for legislation on healthcare? Is it any wonder that the USA TODAY poll says only one out of eight Americans likes this Republican TrumpCare bill. We can turn to the PBS NewsHour poll, 17 percent. That is quite a small number of Americans who understand that ripping healthcare from 22 million people in order to give hundreds of billions of dollars to the richest Americans is one of the biggest takings this country has ever seen proposed and one that so deeply and profoundly damages the quality of life for these Americans.

Our Presidents—Republican and Democratic—over time have understood this. President Eisenhower said:

Because the strength of our nation is in its people, their good health is a proper national concern; healthy Americans live more rewarding, more productive and happier lives.

He continued:

Fortunately, the nation continues its advance in bettering the health of all its people.

Today, on the floor of the Senate, we have a different philosophy, not the Eisenhower strategy of advancing the bettering of the health of all of our people but in fact the Trump policy echoed by so many of my colleagues that is about destroying the healthcare for millions of people, taking us back in time to a place where peace of mind was missing for millions of Americans because they couldn't either afford healthcare or because their policies didn't cover anything. Other Presidents over time have weighed in with very similar sentiments to that which President Eisenhower put forward.

Let's hear it from the citizens back home. Kathryn, from Springfield, has

battled cancer three times over the last 12 years. Kathryn says that during her last two bouts with cancer, in 2010 and 2011, she was "blessed enough to have qualified for the Oregon Health Plan" and that without it she would not be here today.

Indeed, healthcare coverage has been a blessing to so many. Let's not rip those blessings away.

Let's go to Beth in Bend and her 34-year-old son who is living with a rare genetic condition and relies on the Oregon Health Plan to survive. In 2012, doctors found tumors along his spine and areas of concern in his brain and his lungs. They are benign now but could turn into cancer at any time. Beth's son's life depends on regular, expensive MRIs to monitor them. He is only able to afford those MRIs because of the Oregon health plan.

As Beth says, "If the ACA is repealed and replaced with TrumpCare, my son will most likely lose his current health insurance . . . the loss of access to affordable insurance is a potential death sentence for my son."

Medical professionals like Caitlin, a nurse in Portland, tell us how significant this is, and she writes:

With the passage of ObamaCare, I saw people were finally able to come and be seen by our medical teams. Often their disease processes were so advanced that we would have to take very extreme measures to try to halt or reverse these disease processes.

But as time has passed, we're able to catch things sooner and people can actually go to primary care rather than waiting until it's a matter of life or death and having to be seen in the Emergency Department.

I am struck by Liz from Enterprise, who works at a clinic and told me that the clinic has expanded in this very small, remote town in Northeast Oregon from 20-something employees to 50-something employees. It has doubled in size, which means an incredible improvement in healthcare. She went on to say that they have been able to take on mental health as well, which they never were able to do before. Why could they afford to do this? Because the uncompensated care dropped so dramatically that their finances improved, and they were able to hire more staff.

Let's ask about John in Sherwood. John wrote about his grandmother. He lost his grandmother to Alzheimer's a few months ago, but thanks to the Oregon Health Plan, his grandmother was able to live in a nursing home and get the care she needed 24 hours a day right up until the end.

As John says, "I'm forever thankful for the work of President Obama and Congress for passing the ACA. If they wouldn't have passed this bill, my grandmother wouldn't have gotten the care she needed from those great men and women at the nursing home."

These stories go on forever. Over this last weekend, I did a series of townhalls in rural Oregon, parts of Oregon that would be painted red on a political map. I held those townhalls and then went to a series of other Main Street walks with mayors and small incor-

porated cities. What I heard everywhere I went—inviting the entire community to come to the townhall and talk—was enormous anxiety, enormous anxiety and disappointment that the leaders they are counting on here to make our healthcare system work better care more about giving more American tax dollars away to the richest Americans than they do about fundamental healthcare for struggling working families across our Nation.

Let's listen to those individuals. I know most of my colleagues didn't go home and listen to their constituents. As I mentioned, it has been reported that only a couple of my Republican colleagues held a townhall, even though this bill would affect them so profoundly. Still, their voices are echoing through this building, through the emails, through the phone calls, through the individuals who are coming and visiting our offices both here and back home. Let's listen to those voices. Let's be a "we the people" nation that works in partnership with the American people to make this world, this Nation, provide a foundation for every family to thrive.

That means we have to take an oak stick and pound it through the heart of TrumpCare and bury it 6 feet under and then work together in a bipartisan fashion. Think of all we could do. We know that when you strip away reinsurance, you destroy the market for insurance companies to go into new areas and compete. Let's restore that reinsurance.

We know that when the President holds on to the cost-share payments and will not say whether he is releasing them, our companies don't know how to price their policies, and they are dropping out of the exchanges across this Nation. County after county health insurance companies are fleeing because the President will not tell them whether he is releasing these cost-share payments. We can fix that.

We know we have a meth and opioid epidemic across this country. I have heard my colleagues on both sides say we have to take this on in a more courageous, more substantial fashion. We passed authorizing legislation, but let's put funds behind that. Let's do that, and let's take on the high cost of pharmaceuticals.

These four things we can do together. The country would love to see Democrats and Republicans working together to make our healthcare system work better. That is exactly what we should be doing in representing the citizens of the United States of America in a "we the people" democratic republic.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Utah.

TAX REFORM

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise to once again discuss the ongoing effort to reform our Nation's Tax Code. Over the past several years, I have come to the floor often to make the case for tax reform by highlighting the many shortcomings of our current tax system and

discussing the benefits we could reap by making the necessary changes.

Over the last years while I have been serving as chairman or the lead Republican on the Senate tax-writing committee—both as ranking member and as chairman—I have made tax reform my top priority, and right now, I believe there is more momentum in favor of tax reform than we have seen in decades.

To capitalize on that momentum, reform advocates like myself need to continue to make the case for updating and fixing our broken tax system. Toward that end, I intend to come to the floor often in the coming weeks and months to discuss various aspects of our tax system and make the case for reform. In my view, we need to go back to the drawing board and fundamentally rethink our entire tax system. This includes both the individual, as well as the business side of the tax ledger.

Today, I want to talk specifically about our Nation's business tax system, with a particular focus on the corporate tax.

Let's get the obvious out of the way first: The United States has the highest statutory corporate tax rate in the industrialized world. Looking at the effective corporate tax rates tells an equally gloomy story of the lack of American competitiveness. I will have more to say on that in a minute.

I know some like to rail on corporate America and claim they aren't paying their fair share, but the facts tell a different story. Companies doing business in the United States are saddled with statutory tax rates that are higher than any other industrialized country. This isn't just a Republican talking point; Members and commentators from both parties and across the ideological spectrum have acknowledged that this is the problem.

For example, just last year, former President Bill Clinton argued for a reduction in corporate tax rates, noting that he had urged for the corporate tax to be raised to 35 percent when he was President because "it was precisely in the middle of OECD countries. It isn't anymore."

Early in his Presidency, President Obama said: "Our current corporate tax system is outdated, unfair, and inefficient." He also said that our corporate tax system "hits companies that choose to stay in America with one of the highest tax rates in the world." I might add, he did nothing about it, though.

In addition, my counterpart in the Senate Finance Committee, Senator WYDEN, has introduced legislation that would reduce corporate tax rates by more than 10 percent.

In a Finance Committee report in 2015 on international tax reform, put out by a working group cochaired by my friends and colleagues Senators PORTMAN and SCHUMER, it was clearly stated that "no matter what jurisdiction a U.S. multinational company is

competing in, it is at a competitive disadvantage."

There are plenty of other examples of prominent Democrats who recognized the impact of our obnoxiously high corporate tax rate.

I want to turn back to Bill Clinton's point, though, because it is an important one. We must always remember that businesses are, by and large, rational actors, making decisions based on what will help grow their business and what will cause their businesses to stagnate or move backward. Such decisions inevitably include where a company will do business and where it will be incorporated.

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, or OECD, businesses contemplating investment and other similar matters—especially incorporation in the United States—must first come to terms with the largest combined corporate tax rate among OECD member countries, which is currently at 39.1 percent.

Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle like to counter these inconvenient facts by acknowledging the difference between effective tax rates, which are rates after accounting for deductions and credits, and statutory tax rates. Of course, even when taking those differences into account and focusing solely on effective rates, the United States only falls from the highest to the fourth highest corporate rate among countries in the G20—and that is according to 2012 data that doesn't yet capture recent tax reforms in the UK and elsewhere.

In other words, whether we are talking about effective rates or statutory rates in the United States, we are talking about some of the highest corporate tax rates in the world, and, as the working group cochaired by Senators PORTMAN and SCHUMER made clear, this translates into American companies constantly being put at a competitive disadvantage. It doesn't take a Ph.D. in economics to recognize that this has had a major, negative impact on our economy and the ability of the American job creators to compete on the world stage.

As a result of the astronomically high corporate tax rates in our country, we have seen companies—that, keep in mind, have duties to their shareholders—engage in inversions, earnings stripping, and profit shifting, all of which erode our tax base and drive away American ingenuity and innovation. These types of activities ship jobs, economic activity, intellectual property, and capital offshore, rather than keeping them right here in America. The primary driver behind most of these practices—practices that have been decried in the harshest rhetoric by some of our friends here in the Senate—is the desire to avoid or at the very least mitigate the impact of the U.S. corporate tax.

While I am no fan of inversions or foreign takeovers or aggressive tax-

planning techniques that shift profits around the globe in search of low taxes, and I don't want to see any unnecessary erosion of the U.S. tax base, I can hardly fault any company for simply responding to the incentives created by our business tax system and the competitive actions of other countries that have been lowering their corporate tax rates.

Unfortunately, instead of recognizing the perverse incentives of our current tax system, coupled with companies' duties to their shareholders, many of my Democratic friends—most notably, prominent officials in the previous administration—have derided the executives and board members making these decisions, claiming that they lack, in the words of our previous U.S. Treasury Secretary, "economic patriotism." The truth is that when it comes to our business tax system, some of our friends have buried their heads in the sand.

Let's take a quick stroll through recent history. In the 20 years between 1983 and 2003, there were just 29 corporate inversions in the United States. In the 11 years between 2003 and 2014—a period spanning both Democratic and Republican Presidencies—there were 47 tax inversions—nearly double the number in half the amount of time. A quick review of changes in other industrialized nations' tax schemes will show that while the United States has stubbornly maintained the same corporate tax rate for more than three decades, other countries have nimbly adapted to the growing competition in the global marketplace.

I have spoken at length about inversions before, so I will not belabor the issue now. What I do want to say is that when I talk to board members and CEOs of some of the largest companies in the country, they tend to be unequivocal when asked why they feel pressure to invert. Almost uniformly, their answer is our outrageously high corporate tax rate.

Personally, I think this is one of the reasons why my friends and colleagues who sit on committees that regularly engage in these topics have come to recognize the level of our corporate tax rate as the major problem that it is.

When I talk to constituents in Utah and Americans across the country, I hear of stagnant growth in wages and income, concerns over lack of opportunities and jobs, and worries about whether their employers will continue to operate here in the United States of America.

Of course, the problem with our corporate tax system isn't just that it incentivizes companies to move offshore or discourages businesses from forming here in the United States in the first place; the problems actually run much deeper.

Since 1947, the average growth of inflation-adjusted GDP in the United States has been 3.2 percent. Unfortunately, in the 8 years of the Obama administration, the growth rate was an anemic 1.8 percent.

I know that several of my colleagues would, in response to those data points, argue that much of that is due to the great recession that took place at the initial stages of President Obama's time in office; however, a quick review of the quarterly growth rates since 1947 will show that there are normally periods of growth following recessions as the economy rebounds and the values of assets normalize again. In the case of the great recession of 2008 to 2009, that normal rebound did not occur, and a big reason why is the downward pressure imposed by our outdated tax scheme. Let's remember that the recession ended in June 2009—more than 8 years ago.

Others still might argue that this is all academic. They might even be brazen enough to claim that when we talk about the corporate tax rate, we are talking about the problems of the rich and not the middle class. Again, anyone making such an argument would simply be ignoring the facts and could be considered an idiot. Make no mistake—the crippling corporate tax rate in our country has stifled growth and investment in American businesses. This doesn't just impact Wall Street investors or rich CEOs, it has a negative effect on the middle class and on lower income workers. That effect comes in the form of fewer jobs, less investment in America, and sluggish growth and productivity that fuels wage and income growth.

Since 1953, real median family income in the United States—meaning that half of the country earned more and half of the country earned less—has grown at an average rate of 1.3 percent. Under the Obama administration, that same indicator—one of the best indicators of the true status of the middle class—grew at approximately half that rate, or 0.7 percent. The growth of the average hourly earnings of production and nonsupervisory workers during the Obama administration was half of the historic long-run average. What is more, labor force participation was set firmly on a downward trajectory throughout the Obama administration and has yet to recover.

As you can see, there is clear evidence that the economy is not working well for many American workers and middle-class families. Anyone arguing that our current tax system is a benefit to the middle class is, in my view, sadly misinformed or being deliberately misleading.

Over the years, I have seen many of my friends on the other side come to the Senate floor demanding new standards, higher wages, and increased protections for middle-class workers. Yet many of the tax policies they tend to support would have the opposite effect.

There is almost universal agreement among economists that the corporate tax is the most inefficient tax in existence. In addition, a large percentage—some economists say as much as 75 percent—of the burden imposed by the corporate tax is borne by a corpora-

tion's employees. In other words, our high corporate tax rate isn't just a burden on faceless corporations or rich shareholders, the burden is disproportionately borne by the factory workers and scientists and even the janitors who work for corporations, large and small.

A reduced corporate tax rate would allow American companies to compete with their international counterparts on a more level playing field. A reduced corporate tax rate would mean fewer businesses would move offshore, taking their jobs and investments elsewhere. A reduced corporate tax rate would incentivize more new companies to set up shop in the United States and lead more established companies to invest their capital and hire workers here rather than in lower tax jurisdictions found in places like Canada, the UK, Ireland, or elsewhere.

Mr. President, our shared goal should be to make the United States an inviting place to locate a business, invest, hire workers, and create new ideas and products, but that will not be the case so long as we cling to our punitive corporate tax system.

Now, of course, when it comes to tax reform, our focus needs to move beyond the corporate tax rates. We need to talk about making the individual tax system simpler and fairer and offer tax relief to the middle class and small, passthrough businesses. We need to talk more about fixing our international system to further improve the competitiveness of American job creators and prevent further erosion of our tax base. And we need to remove burdens on savings and investment that keep middle-class Americans from generating and accumulating wealth for the future.

I am going to talk more about all of these topics and others in the coming weeks and months.

All of the improvements that we can make on these tax issues will become key elements of an effective tax reform package. In addition, I believe they are all areas where Republicans and Democrats can find agreement if we are all committed to the same goal—growing our economy to benefit the middle class.

As I have said here on the floor many times, tax reform does not have to be another partisan exercise. I hope my Democratic colleagues will opt to join Republicans in this effort. As they have acknowledged the problems with our current tax system, I sincerely hope they will want to work with us to find a way to fix that tax system.

As I said, I will have more to say in the near future, but these issues—our outdated business tax system and profanely high corporate tax rate—will not simply go away. I personally am committed to fixing these problems and will work with anyone who is willing to join the effort in good faith.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). Without objection, it is so ordered.

NET NEUTRALITY

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I come to the floor this afternoon with my colleague, the Senator from Hawaii, who has been leading our efforts on coordinating a very loud and resounding voice on trying to stop the FCC from running over an open internet, and I thank him for his organization for today. I know we will be joined by our colleague, Senator WYDEN from Oregon—and perhaps the other Senator from Oregon and several others—to talk about this important issue.

We are here today to try to draw attention to one of those important economic issues before us: the need to preserve an open internet with strong net neutrality laws.

We are facing a pivotal moment in the fight to preserve an open and fair internet. A strong and open internet is, without question, one of the great innovations of our time and one of the great job creators of our time. Yet the Trump administration stands poised to undo the bedrock principle of net neutrality in the face of evidence it would undermine our economy and undermine future job growth.

The FCC has announced its intention to go against the demands of 5 million American consumers and reverse what is an existing rule so that big cable companies and telecom providers can erect toll lanes; that is, if you want fast internet speed, you have to pay more. This would threaten the fundamental nature of our internet and the innovation economy.

Last week, FCC Commissioner Clyburn and I held a townhall meeting on net neutrality in Seattle. More than 300 people attended, and not one was in favor of paying higher prices to their cable company for worse or inhibited internet services.

Many people shared their personal stories about how an internet with toll lanes would affect them negatively. We heard from many small businesses and startups that they were afraid of losing business because they might have to charge higher prices to their customers if these important protections were reversed.

I heard from people with health problems and their concerns about health emergencies while away from home. The absence of net neutrality rules would mean that a doctor in their small hometown could not get critical information to the medical practitioners who are dealing with a patient in an emergency so that they could get important lifesaving treatments. Whether you are a doctor examining a patient via telemedicine or in an emergency room in Seattle or a student in a rural community trying to access the

internet to get information, take a test or do research, a fast connection is necessary. Your ability to have a fast connection is something you are more than just a little concerned about. Being artificially slowed down in favor of big companies that buy faster lanes would turn our economy in the wrong direction.

Our economy is in the midst of a massive technological transformation. As technology advances, incredible opportunities and new jobs are created. Every business plan of every startup relies on the ability to get content to consumers.

Largely as a result of innovation and the proliferation of hundreds of startups in the United States, the internet economy today is now worth \$966 billion and accounts for almost 6 percent of our U.S. GDP. This is a higher percentage of the U.S. economy than many other industry sectors, including construction, mining, utilities, agriculture, and education.

Net neutrality—meaning you have an open internet that is not artificially slowed down unless you pay a ransom—is important for small businesses and startups and entrepreneurs who rely so much now on an integrated business model where internet access, marketing, and advertising their products and services to reach customers is critical. We need an open internet. We need it to foster job creation, competition, and innovation for the almost 3 million Americans workers who already rely on the internet economy today.

When net neutrality was implemented a year-plus ago, we were protecting and making sure there was no uneven playing field. Basically, because of the regulations, we were able to help small businesses and entrepreneurs thrive. But our internet providers are internet gatekeepers, and without net neutrality, they would seize upon the opportunity to change that.

One slice of the internet economy—the app economy, which is growing every single day—consists of everyone who makes money and has a job, thanks to mobile apps powered by an open internet. Today, 1.7 million Americans have jobs because of this economy. Nearly 92,000 of those jobs are in my State of Washington.

Over the past 5 years, the app economy jobs have grown at an annual rate of 30 percent. I don't know of another sector that is growing that fast. The average growth rate for all other jobs is about 1.6 percent. By 2020, the app economy could grow to over \$100 billion. Why is this so important? Because we all know that these various applications and apps make our lives better. They make it easier. In a busy world, they are helping us do the things that are so important to us with more ease and more certainty.

The internet economy is dynamic and supercharged in creating job growth. This phenomenon of economic growth trajectory would not be pos-

sible without the internet as a platform for economic activity. This is why it is so important that the FCC not, in the dark of night, put down a rule without public comment to try to stop and change this direction that has already been protected by past FCC Commissioners. This is why my colleagues and I are here today on a date when everybody is trying to raise awareness—because the FCC could act as early as August 18 to try to change these rules.

It is important that we oppose any new FCC actions trying to dismantle an open internet. We need to make sure we are talking about the harm to consumers, the harm to innovation, and the fact that internet speeds for American consumers are important and consumers shouldn't be burdened by a cable company holding you at ransom to pay more just to get faster speeds.

Consumers are already struggling with high prices. Cable bills rose 39 percent from 2011 to 2015, eight times the rate of inflation. In 2015, the average consumer cable TV bill was \$99 a month; just a year later, the average consumer cable bill had risen by 4 percent to over \$103. My guess is a lot of people listening to this now are probably thinking, boy, where are we today?

One of the most popular arguments by the enemies of an open internet is that it suppresses investment and leaves consumers with poor broadband infrastructure. That is a false claim. Data shows that investment by publicly traded cable companies and big telephone companies was 5 percent higher during the 2-year period following our protection of an open internet. Clearly, people are continuing to make investment.

I want to make sure people understand that we do not want to see a change in this policy. We do not want to see American consumers run over by large cable companies that are demanding higher rates. We want to make sure that we don't end up with a two-tiered internet system—one for big companies who will pay and pay and pay for faster rates, and consumers who are left with a very slowed-down, challenging to use internet, which makes it hard for us to continue to innovate.

I encourage the American consumer to go out and contact the FCC. Yes, your voice can be heard. The FCC has already received 5 million comments, and they have until August 17 to hear more. Today, we are asking everybody in America to say: Please don't slow down my internet connection. Don't hurt our economy; don't hurt American business. Invest in innovation, and keep an open internet for the future.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Washington for her leadership on tech and technology issues and, in particular, on net neutrality.

I would like to amend one thing she said. She said that we got about 5 million comments in favor of net neutrality on this question. It is true. Yesterday we had 5 million and change, but I just checked, and we are at 6.728 million, and more and more people are weighing in on this important issue.

As of today, it is important to point out that net neutrality is the law of the land. We are not asking for a change in the way that the internet operates. We are asking for the internet, as we know it, to be preserved.

What does that really mean? It means you have an arrangement with your ISP. You pay your internet service provider for access to the internet, and you get the whole internet. Your provider does not get to decide what you access. You do. Whether it is NBC or ABC, Hulu or Netflix or Breitbart or Google or Yahoo or Facebook or the New York Times or RedState or HotAir or whatever you want, you get to go there, and everything comes down from the internet at whatever speed it comes down. But without net neutrality, that arrangement could change.

The free and open internet, as we understand it, is a premise of the way we use the internet. It is a premise of the internet economy. It is a premise of Silicon Valley. It has now become a premise of car companies and real estate companies and anybody who does business online that, of course, you wouldn't have to pay money to an ISP to make sure your website loads fast enough so that consumers can see it. But that freedom, that free and open internet, really is in danger.

Here is what is happening: The FCC, the Federal Communications Commission, is trying to change the internet by ending the net neutrality rules that were put in place. If they succeed, your ISP will have the power to stop you from seeing certain kinds of content. They will be the ones that get to make decisions about what you can access and how fast—not you. It is a foundational change in the way the internet operates.

Now, some people—including the internet company lobbyists and their CEOs—will say: Look, the companies aren't going to change the internet even if the law goes away. In fact, we are committing to voluntary net neutrality. That is what they say.

But I want you to think about how likely it is that a publicly traded company will not at least explore the possibility of different business models, and here is the problem: There may be opportunities without net neutrality for them to make more money.

Right now I have basic cable in my apartment. I don't have HBO. Back in Hawaii I have HBO and the whole deal, but in my apartment here I have more basic cable. I pay for a certain number of channels. I don't get access to the entire TV universe. I pay for packages. There is no reason under the law, should they repeal net neutrality, that

an ISP couldn't give the liberal package, which you could pay \$75 for, or the conservative package, which you could pay \$75 for, or the NBC-related families package, which you could pay \$120 for—or maybe it is free because it is part of a vertical, which is included in your ISP.

The whole idea is that there is nothing preventing them—except these net neutrality laws—from deciding whom you get, where you get to visit, and how fast the downloads come. This is especially important, of course, in the entertainment space, when we are all streaming TV, news, movies, and even gaming online so the relationship between the person who creates the content and you is going to be intermediated by an ISP.

If you have a great app idea, right now you just have to have a great app idea. If you have a great website, people can log on to your website and you are in business. If you have the next great website, if you have eBay or Craigslist or Amazon, but it is post-net neutrality and the FCC goes through with this, you will not need a bunch of engineers but a bunch of lawyers and business sharks to try to negotiate with the ISP to even get in the door.

Students could have less access to online resources, including online classes. Realtors would be stopped from using online tools to sell their homes. Patients might not be able to use the internet to communicate with their doctors or monitor their health. Musicians, photographers, entrepreneurs will use the tools everybody depends on to make a living or share their art online.

I was talking to somebody I know in the tech community, and they were saying that this is a parade of horrors. None of this is going to come true.

I asked: Why do you think that is true? Why do you think this is just some apocryphal scenario I am describing? If you were an ISP, why wouldn't you slice up the internet and sell it for more? If you are the one controlling the access to it and you are a publicly traded company, you have no duty to a free and open internet. You have a duty to maximize shareholder profits.

If your board of directors comes to you and says: You know what, this whole "you pay a flat fee and you get the whole internet," that is not the right business model. Look at these areas where ISPs are the only provider in many communities. The idea that the consumer has a choice in lots of rural communities, you have only one broadband provider in the first place.

Why wouldn't a broadband provider slice and dice up the internet and charge you a la carte? They can get more money for this. It is not that they are bad people. It is that they are duty bound to maximize profits.

Today, July 12, is the day of action. The internet is pushing back. Today we stand up to the FCC so the internet remains free and open. As we speak—I

mean literally as we speak—thousands and thousands of people across the country by the minute are logging on to the FCC website to express themselves.

I have to say, this has become a Democratic issue. This has become a progressive issue, but it wasn't so long ago that people in the conservative movement were worried about media consolidation and the conservative movement was saying: Hey, listen, I don't know who is going to own my media company, but I want to get to my websites to get my content at whatever rate it comes down. Don't tell me what information I get to have access to.

Everybody uses the internet. Many people are spending dozens of hours a week on the internet via their phones, via their television, via their broadband connection at home, and the innovation economy that underlies our economic growth is really in jeopardy.

I know it is an arcane process. I know most people probably haven't even heard of the FCC. To talk about net neutrality and lay all this jargon on you, it is concerning that the free and open internet is really in danger. We have this unique opportunity because unlike what happened a few months ago with consumer privacy, where very quickly this body reversed a rule that provides for privacy so your broadband providers can't resell your personal browsing data to a third-party advertiser or any other company—that happened very quickly and without any public input.

Here is the really good thing about the FCC process. The statute provides for public input. We are in a public comment period, and July 17 is the deadline. There is an opportunity for people to let their voices be heard. The internet should be in the hands of people, not in the hands of companies.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). The Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I join with the Senator from Hawaii, the Senator from Washington State, and I know the Senator from Oregon is going to be joining us very soon and taking this long, hot summer day in Washington and turning up the heat on the Trump administration and the big broadband companies.

Today the internet is having a protest. More than 80,000 websites are participating in today's national day of action on net neutrality to stand up for the fundamental right for a free and open internet.

Today's action involves some of the internet's biggest names: Netflix, Twitter, Amazon, Snapchat, Mozilla, Yelp, Airbnb. It also includes many others. My own website and other Democratic Senators and House Members have joined in today's protests.

Earlier today, right outside on the Capitol lawn, I gathered with many of my Senate and House colleagues, along

with businesses and advocacy, consumer protection, nonprofit, and political organizations to send a singular message: We will defend net neutrality.

Net neutrality is the basic principle that says that all internet traffic is treated equally. It applies the principles of nondiscrimination to the online world, ensuring that internet service providers—AT&T, Charter, Verizon, Comcast, among others—do not block, do not slow down, do not censor or prioritize internet traffic.

Yet today, the internet—this monumental, diverse, dynamic, democratic platform—is under attack. President Trump and his FCC Chairman, Ajit Pai, are threatening to disrupt this hallmark of American innovation and democracy by gutting net neutrality rules. They have put internet freedom on the chopping block. We are facing a historic fight.

If Trump's FCC gets its way, a handful of big broadband companies will serve as gatekeepers to the internet. We cannot let this happen. That is why millions of Americans are standing up and making sure their voices are heard at the Federal Communications Commission.

They know the internet—the world's greatest platform for commerce and communications—is at stake. It is net neutrality that ensures that those with the best ideas, not merely the best access, can thrive in the 21st century economy; that a garage-based startup in Malden, MA, can have the same online reach and scope as a major tech firm in Silicon Valley.

It is net neutrality that has made the Internet an innovation incubator and job generator for the entire Nation. It is net neutrality that has been the internet's chief governing principle since its inception.

Consider that today essentially every company is an internet company. In 2016, almost half of the venture capital funds invested in the United States went toward internet-specific and software companies. That is \$25 billion worth of venture capital funding in our country. Half of all venture capital went into that sector, this innovation sector that continues to transform not only our own economy but the whole world's economy. At the same time, to meet America's insatiable demand for broadband internet, U.S. broadband and telecommunications industry companies invested more than \$87 billion in capital expenditures in 2015. That is the highest rate of annual investment in the last 10 years by the broadband companies.

We have hit a sweet spot. Investment in broadband and wireless technologies is high. Job creation is high. Venture capital investment in online startups is high. That is what we want. We want both the broadband companies and all of these smaller companies—whose names escape us because there are tens of thousands of them—to have a chance to coexist and have the innovation continue, even as the large companies continue to invest in broadband expansion.

It is the free and open internet that has allowed us to enter a new phase of the digital revolution—the internet of things era—where our devices, our appliances, and everyday machines now connect with one another.

The digital revolution is a global economic engine, and net neutrality is its best fuel. Taking these rules off the books makes no sense. With these net neutrality protections in place, there is no problem that needs fixing. It is working right now perfectly.

In May, Chairman Ajit Pai and the Republican FCC voted to begin a proceeding that will effectively eliminate net neutrality protections, allowing a handful of broadband providers to control the internet. Chairman Pai's proposal would decimate the open internet order and the net neutrality rules that are protecting the free flow of ideas, commerce, and communications in our country.

Now the big broadband barons and their Republican allies say we need a light-touch regulatory framework. Let's be honest. When the broadband behemoths say "light touch," what they really mean is "hands off"—hands off their ability to choose online winners and losers.

We are not fooled when AT&T engages in alternative facts and says they support net neutrality and today's day of action. They don't support title II, and they don't support net neutrality. We must shine light on this kind of corporate deception.

What the broadband providers really want is an unregulated online ecosystem where they can stifle the development of competing services that cannot afford an internet easy pass.

Chairman Pai says he likes net neutrality but simply wants to eliminate the very order that established today's net neutrality rules. That is like saying you want to have your cake and eat it too. It makes no sense.

President Trump and his Republican allies are waging an all-out assault on every front that they can on our core democratic values. Whether it is healthcare, immigration, climate change, or net neutrality, they want to end the vital protections that safeguard our families and hand over power to corporations and special interests. We know better.

We need to make our voices heard. A political firestorm of opposition will protect our economy, protect our free speech, protect our democracy. We must protect net neutrality as a core principle in a modern 21st century America, in a modern America where the smallest company online can aspire to reach all 320 million Americans in a nondiscriminatory way, where the smallest company can raise the capital in order to accomplish that goal, where the smallest company doesn't have to ask for permission to be able to innovate in our society, where the smallest doesn't have to first raise the money to ensure they can pay to have access to this incredible economic engine of en-

trepreneurial expression that has been the internet for this last generation, where free speech, the First Amendment, this ability to be able to speak unfettered, uncontrolled by corporate America and whether or not you can afford to speak, is something that continues to be protected in our country.

That is what net neutrality is all about. The principles of nondiscriminatory access is what gave us Google and eBay, Amazon and Hulu, YouTube and Etsy, Zulily, Wayfair, TripAdvisor, and company after company that knew they could access every single potential consumer in our country and could, as a result, raise the capital necessary to ensure that engine of economic entrepreneurial innovation could be deployed from their minds in changing fundamentally the economy of our country and the economy of the world.

In 2017, every company is an internet company. Every company depends upon free and open access to the internet. That is what we have been transformed into in just the last 20 years.

I was the Democratic coauthor of the Telecommunications Act of 1996. In 1996, not one home in America had broadband. Can I say that again? Just 20 years ago, not one home in America had broadband. But we changed the rules to create this chaotic entrepreneurial world where all of a sudden all of these companies whose names are now common household names could be created, transforming our economy.

There is no problem. They are trying to fix a problem that does not exist.

We need to give the next generation of entrepreneurs the same opportunity to innovate that the last generation had—not to get permission, not to ask: Pretty please, may I reach all 320 million Americans? No, ladies and gentlemen, that is not what this revolution is about. That is not what young people all across this country—with brilliant new ideas to further transform our American economy online—want to have as an obstacle.

What will happen now is you will have an idea, but if you can't raise the money to pay for this fast-lane broadband access, that is going to throttle back your ability to be able to move in this agile way that the internet provides. Instead of agility, it will be hostility that you will be feeling as an entrepreneur, feeling you can't take the risk—you are not sure you can reach your customers; you are not sure you can pay the broadband company—rather than ensuring that you can reach all these consumers for your revolutionary idea.

This internet day of action we are having across the country is going to raise from 5 million, to 6 million, to 7 million, to 10 million, to 15 million, to 20 million, the number of Americans who are going to be saying to the Federal Communications Commission and to the U.S. House and Senate that something is fundamentally wrong with this FCC and its potential change of the internet—Open Internet Order.

If they do move, we are going to court. If they do move, we are going to be taking this all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States of America because that is how important this issue is. It goes right to the fundamental nature of what has happened to our economy in the last 20 years. And that is all it took. We moved from the black rotary dial phone to a world where everyone is carrying a computer in their pockets. It happened just like that. It could have happened before that, but it wasn't possible because the broadband companies didn't even exist. There were just telephone companies and cable companies that did not have a vision of the future. Their vision of the future is a lot like their vision of the past before that law passed, which is, let's go back to total control by a small handful of companies in our communications cocktail, rather than thinking of the future, as tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of smaller companies can be started up in dorm rooms and garages across our Nation.

This is a dangerous and harmful plan the FCC has on the books today. Today's day of internet action will be increasing as each moment goes by between now and the day they make that decision at the FCC.

Mr. President, I yield back the remainder of my time.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

MR. BLUMENTHAL. Mr. President, I want to build on the last point my colleague—a great advocate and champion of net neutrality—made about the rule of law and about the need to go to court when there is utter disrespect and contempt for the rule of law, which is reflected in the prospective plan of the Chairman of the FCC to undo that agency's net neutrality rules. It reflects an astonishing lack of respect and care for that agency's rules—in fact, the rules that apply to all agencies under the Administrative Procedure Act.

Chairman Pai wants to overturn a rule that was established after a fact-finding—an elaborate process of comment and response—without going through that same process that is required under the Administrative Procedure Act, a fact-based docket that requires him to show that something has changed—not a little bit; something significant has changed—in the market since the Open Internet Order was established in February 2015. The burden is on the FCC to make that finding. That finding is impossible, which is why they are avoiding the attempt to do it.

The fact is, the Open Internet Order was established based on 10 years of evidence about how internet access service provides people with broadband. It has been upheld by the DC Circuit Court of Appeals twice over the last year. The thicket of law that the Chairman wants to simply leap over—it is not within his discretion to do.

The most recent evidence shows that net neutrality has not inhibited network investment at all, in contrast to Chairman Pai's claims. According to statements this year by the internet service providers—AT&T, in fact, is expanding fiber deployment and calling fiber a growth opportunity. Comcast is saying that it doubles its network capacity every 18 to 24 months. Verizon is announcing a new \$1 billion investment in cable. That is why we are here saying we will not and we cannot allow Chairman Pai to succeed in this plan to gut neutrality at the behest of big cable companies.

I am proud to speak today in support of the Day of Action to Save Net Neutrality and against the FCC proposal to undo the Open Internet Order because it is really a consummate pro-consumer measure. The Open Internet Order serves the best interests of consumers directly but also the best interests of competition in promoting innovation, new ideas, and insights—an open platform that is necessary for innovation and insights that benefit consumers, as well as the products and services that companies generally provide.

The Open Internet Order created three bright-line rules: No blocking, no throttling, and no pay prioritization. These rules apply to both fixed and mobile broadband service, which protects consumers no matter how they access the internet, whether on a desktop or a mobile service. Consumers deserve equal access, an open platform—no walls benefiting the companies that may want their gardens walled in. The walls are against consumer interest, and breaking down those walls is what the open internet rule sought to do.

It also has real First Amendment significance. In one of the most recently proposed megamergers—AT&T and Time Warner—clearly content, access, and neutrality are at stake. This merger gives the combined company, if the merger is approved, both the incentive and the means to throttle First Amendment expression. There have been reports that the White House will use this merger, in fact, to throttle the First Amendment rights of CNN, which is owned by Time Warner. This would be a direct threat to all First Amendment liberties.

Using antitrust policy and power to diminish or demean the rights of free expression would be a grave disservice to this country, as well as the rule of law. That is why I have written to the nominee for the Department of Justice Antitrust Division chief, the Assistant Attorney General for Antitrust, Makan Delrahim, and asked for a meeting so he can ensure us that, in fact, antitrust policy will be independently enforced, that these reports do not reflect his view or the administration policy. I want him to assure us that this merger will in no way be used to influence or impede any media outlet.

But access and an open internet are principles that go beyond the enforce-

ment of antitrust law; they are principles enforced by the FCC for the public good. That is why this Day of Action to Save Net Neutrality is so critically important, because the grassroots movement here is what will save the day. The grassroots and consumer-driven impetus to make sure that the internet remains a free and open platform for consumers and innovators, not a walled garden for wealthy companies, is what we seek today.

That is why I am proud to stand with other colleagues who have spoken and to continue this battle and to say to all of our colleagues that we will go to court, because the rule of law and the Administrative Procedure Act are not technical, abstruse, arcane, unimportant rules; they are at the core of fairness and administrative regularity, not just regulation, the rule of law.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Oregon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, before he leaves the floor, let me just commend my friend from Connecticut on a very thoughtful statement. He has worked on these issues for many years since his days as attorney general in Connecticut. He is, in my view, the Senate's best lawyer. So it is great to have a chance to team up with him and our colleagues.

I think this issue can really be summed up in a sentence, and that is this: Without net neutrality, you do not have a free and open internet because the essence of the internet—and I will explain what we have today—would simply not be the same.

Today—and this is what net neutrality is all about, in a sentence—after you pay your internet access fee, you get to go where you want, when you want, and how you want, and everybody is treated the same. From the most affluent person in America to those who are walking on an economic tightrope every single day, they all can use the internet to get access to those fundamental opportunities that are so essential to increasing the quality of life for our people. This, for example, is how a young person will have a chance to learn. If they are in a small, rural community in Colorado, Oregon, or elsewhere, this is how they get access to the kind of information that affluent kids get, who might live in Beverly Hills or Palm Beach or in any one of a number of communities where there are affluent people. This is what puts that youngster on the same plane as the affluent person. This is how, for example, those who are searching for jobs can go to the net and quickly get access to information where they will have a chance to get ahead.

The internet—and a free and open internet—is particularly important to our startups, the innovators, and the small businesses that we are all counting on to have a chance to grow big. When you talk, particularly, to the

small tech startups, they will say: Our goal is to be Google or Facebook. Innovation is what makes it possible to have those kinds of dreams. If you are starting small, with real net neutrality, as I have described it, you have the same chance to succeed as everybody else in America.

Now the challenge here is that very powerful interests—the cable companies, for example—want to change that. They want to change what I described as net neutrality. They would like to set up what they call priority lanes, special lanes, or toll lanes, where, if you pay more, you can get access to more. You can get access to more content, and you can get access to data and information more quickly.

What this really does is that it means those other people I was talking about—that startup trying to come out of the gate and be a success in the marketplace, students, and people who need information about healthcare and jobs and the like—are not treated the same way as the people with the deep pockets. All of a sudden their access to data and information is going to be different. It might be slower. Maybe they will not get it at all.

The big powerful interests aren't going to tell everybody in America that they are against net neutrality. They will not be holding rallies saying: We have gotten together to oppose net neutrality. They will not be showing up in Denver, Minneapolis, Portland, or anywhere else and saying: We are against net neutrality. The reason they can't is because the public overwhelmingly supports net neutrality, as I have described it.

They are going to say things like this: They are for net neutrality, but they just don't want all this government associated with what they have. They will be for voluntary net neutrality.

I know the Presiding Officer of the Senate has young children as well. I can tell you that we are about as likely to make voluntary net neutrality work as we are to get William Peter Wyden, my 9-year-old son, to voluntarily agree to limit himself to one dessert with his deciding whether he has met his limit. It is not going to happen.

Voluntary net neutrality isn't that different than what we have had in a lot of instances before we had real net neutrality. The big cable companies and others were always looking for dodges and loopholes, and they found ways to tack on fees and the like because that has always been their end game. Boy, it is a lawyer's full employment program because they have the capacity to litigate this.

So this idea that people are going to hear a lot about in the next few weeks—that they are really for net neutrality, but we will just make it voluntary—I want people to understand that the history of those kinds of approaches is not exactly sterling. I think it is about as likely to be successful as limiting my kid to voluntarily holding back on dessert.

I also want to make clear what our challenge is going to be about because the Federal Communications Commission—Senator BLUMENTHAL talked about it and others—is going to be making decisions on this before too long. We know where the votes are. This is going to be a long battle, but one of the reasons I wanted to come to the floor today is to say that this is another one of these issues that is going to show that political change doesn't start in Washington, DC, and then trickle down to people. It will be bottom-up, as more and more Americans find out what is at stake here.

A few years back, I would say the Presiding Officer of the Senate—and I see my colleague from the Finance Committee here, as well—and my colleagues will remember the PIPA and SOPA bills. These were the bills, PIPA and SOPA, that were anti-internet bills. As with so much, people can have a difference of opinion, and the sponsors said: We have to fight piracy. We have to fight piracy, people ripping everybody off online. To fight piracy, we will use these two bills to kind of change the architecture of the internet, particularly the domain name system, which is basically the phone book of the internet.

I looked at it, and I said: We are all against piracy. We are against people selling fake Viagra, or whatever it is online, but why would we want to wreck the architecture of the internet in order to deal with it? There are other kinds of remedies.

So I put in a bill with a conservative Republican in the other body to come up with an alternative approach, and I put a hold on PIPA and SOPA. Here in the Senate, at that time, 44 Senators were cosponsors of that bill. That is an army—out of the 100, 44 Senators.

Everybody said: You know, RON is putting a hold on it, and, well, he is a nice guy and, you know, he is from Oregon.

Everybody smiled, and I said: OK, I understand that you think this is going to be a slam dunk, but I think I will tell you that you should know that there are more Americans who spend more time online in a week than they do thinking about their U.S. Senator in 2 years, and they aren't going to be happy with a whole bunch of powerful interests messing with the internet, just as we are doing with this situation where people want to unravel real net neutrality.

So a vote was scheduled on whether to oppose my hold—in effect, lift my hold—on this flawed bill, and 4 days before the vote, more than 10 million Americans called, texted, tweeted, and logged in to say to their Senator: Do not vote to lift RON WYDEN's hold.

About 36 hours after Americans had weighed in, the Senate leadership called me, not very happy, and said: You won. We are not going to have a vote. Your hold has prevailed.

I bring this up only by way of saying that it is going to take that same kind

of grassroots uprising for Americans who want to keep real net neutrality, which is what you have after you pay your internet access fee, and you get to go where you want, when you want, and how you want, and everybody is treated equally in those efforts. For all of us who want to keep that, we need to understand that we are in for a long battle. We know where the votes are at the Federal Communications Commission, but that is just the beginning. That is just the beginning.

So now is the time to make your voice heard. Go to battleforthenet.com so your voices can be heard. Make sure that Donald Trump's FCC Commissioner knows your view that the internet is better and stronger with real net neutrality protections. Americans have only until July 17 to do this.

I have already been speaking out in other kinds of sessions. So I think I will leave it at that.

I wish to close by saying again that without real strong net neutrality, which is what we have today, we will not have a free and open internet for all Americans to enjoy. So I come to the floor to say this is going to be a long battle. Nobody thought we had a prayer to win the fight to protect the internet that was PIPA and SOPA, and I am sure a lot of people are saying that this is another one where the powerful interests are going to win.

I say to the Senate again: Not so fast. You are going to see the power of Americans speaking out. I urge all the people of this country who are following what goes on in the Senate today and in the days ahead to be part of this effort, because I think if they do, if we show that political change isn't top-down but bottom-up, it is going to be a long battle, but we will win, and our country will keep a bedrock principle of the free and open internet, which is real net neutrality.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE).
The Senator from Texas.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, as we continue to discuss the Better Care Act, which is an alternative bill that we will propose next week and vote on, which takes the disaster known as ObamaCare which for millions of Americans has led to sky-high premiums and unaffordable deductibles, if they can even find an insurance company that will sell them an insurance product—we will propose a better care act, as we call it, not a perfect care act but a better care act.

It would be even better if our Democratic colleagues would join us and work with us in this effort, but as we have come to find out, they are unwilling to acknowledge the failures of ObamaCare. So we are forced to do this without their assistance. It would be better if it were bipartisan, if they would work with us, but they have made it very clear that they are not interested in changing the broken structure of ObamaCare. What I predict is

that what they would offer is an insurance company bailout, throwing perhaps hundreds of billions of dollars at insurance companies in order to sustain a broken ObamaCare that will never work—no matter how much money you throw at it. So people will continue to suffer from the failures of ObamaCare unless we will have the courage to step forward and to say we are going to do the very best we can with the tough hand we have been dealt to help save the American people who are being hurt right now.

Basically, there are four principles involved. One is we want to stabilize the individual insurance market, which is the one that insurance companies are fleeing now because they are bleeding red ink. They can't make any money, and they are tired of losing money so they basically pull their roots up and leave town, leaving customers in the lurch.

Secondly, we want to make sure we actually lower insurance premiums. Under the original discussion draft bill that we introduced about a week or so ago, the Congressional Budget Office said we will see premiums go down as much as 30 percent over time. Now, I wish I could say we were going to be able to have an immediate effect on those premiums, but the truth is this is much better than our friends across the aisle have offered us with the offer to basically sustain a broken ObamaCare system.

The third thing we want to do is protect people who might have their health insurance hurt or impeded by preexisting conditions. We want to maintain the current law so people are protected when they leave their work or when they change jobs.

The fourth is, we want to put Medicaid on a sustainable path. Medicaid is one of the three major entitlement programs, and now we spend roughly \$400 billion on Medicaid in this country. Our friends across the aisle don't want to do anything that would keep that from growing higher and higher and higher, to the point where basically the system collapses. We believe that is not the responsible choice. What we propose is to spend \$71 billion more on Medicaid over the budget window and to work to transition those States that have expanded Medicaid and offer their people a better option in the private insurance area, but I just want to mention that I have shared a number of stories about, for example, a small business owner in Donna, TX, who was forced to fire their employees so they could afford to keep the doors open and provide health insurance for the remaining people. You have to ask: What in the world could lead us to a system which would discourage people from hiring more folks and basically put them in a position where they had to fire them in order to make ends meet? But that is what the employer mandate did under ObamaCare. If you have more than 50 employees, you are subject to

the employer mandate. You get punished unless you make sure your employees are covered with insurance, and many times it is unaffordable so it had the perverse impact of small businesses saying: We can't afford to grow the number of people who are working in our business or we are going to need to shrink it in order to avoid that penalty. Stories like this remind me of just how important our efforts are to repeal and replace ObamaCare.

The status quo is not working. In fact, every year ObamaCare gets worse for the millions of people in the individual market in particular. It is important that ObamaCare is not just about insurance. ObamaCare is about penalties that are being imposed on businesses that hurt their ability to grow and create jobs. That is one reason I believe that since the great recession of 2008, where ordinarily you would see a sharp bounce up in the economy, that the economy has been largely flat and has not been growing, in part, because of the penalties, mandates, and regulations associated with ObamaCare.

Not only has ObamaCare made health insurance more expensive while taking away choices, it also has compounded fundamental problems with important safety net programs like Medicaid. I wish to share a story from an emergency room employee in Lake Granbury, TX, who wrote to me about the alarming trend she has noticed in the hospital where she works. She says, because fewer and fewer physicians will see a Medicaid patient, she has seen an influx of these Medicaid patients who ostensibly have coverage coming to the emergency room for their primary care. As she points out, this is not a good situation for patients and hospitals. In my State, according to the latest survey of the Texas Medical Association that I have seen, only 31 percent of doctors in Texas will see a new Medicaid patient. That may sound crazy, but let me explain why. Because Medicaid basically pays a physician about half of what private insurance pays when it comes to see a patient, many of them simply say: Well, I can't afford to see a lot of Medicaid patients. I need to balance that or at least make sure I see enough private insurance patients to make sure I can keep the doors open and meet my obligations. What happens when fewer and fewer doctors actually see Medicaid patients is, people end up showing up in the emergency room for their primary care because they can't find a doctor to see them. The truth is, medical outcomes based on many studies that have been done in recent years are that Medicaid coverage in those instances can be no worse and no better than not having insurance at all. ObamaCare was put in place ostensibly to avoid reliance on emergency rooms for access to care, but as we all know, ObamaCare hasn't lived up to many of its promises and unfortunately making stories like this one commonplace.

I mentioned this earlier, but just to see the trend line, in 2000, 60 percent of Texas physicians accepted new Medicaid patients; today that number is 34 percent. I think I may have earlier said 31 percent. It is actually 34 percent, due to lower rates of provider reimbursement, leaving places like Lake Granbury in the lurch and causing them to have to turn to the emergency room for their primary care as a last resort.

Every 2 years, Texas doctors fight with the Texas legislature to raise payments for the Medicaid system, but the reality is, there is not enough money to go around, even though it is the No. 1 or No. 2 budget item in the Texas legislature's budget every year, and it is growing so fast it is crowding out everything from higher education to law enforcement and other priorities.

Across the country, Medicaid spending has ballooned out of control. In Texas, 25 percent of the State's budget, as I indicated, is dedicated to this program, 25 percent of its overall budget—usually No. 1 or No. 2.

So we have to be honest with ourselves and the people we represent that this situation is not sustainable. We owe it to the millions of people to make sure the people who really need it—the fragile, elderly, disabled adults and children—that it is there for them, not only now but in the future. That is why we have been discussing ways we might strengthen the sustainability of Medicaid to ensure that families who actually need it can rely on it, and they don't have the rug pulled out from under them. This requires doing some hard work of reforming the way States handle Medicaid funding.

For example, Medicaid, as is currently applied, States are only allowed to review their list of Medicaid recipients once a year, but a lot can happen in a period of a year. Somebody can get a job, and they may be no longer eligible based on the income qualifications for Medicaid. If they can only check once a year, then people remain on the rolls, even though they may no longer qualify. Regardless of whether somebody gets a job or moves or passes away or no longer needs Medicaid, they are still in the system, and there is nothing the States can do about it. We would like to change that. While it sounds like a simple matter, when the average Medicaid patient costs the State more than \$9,000 each and as high as almost \$12,000 per elderly individual, it adds up.

One of the things we saw that ObamaCare did in the States that expanded Medicaid coverage is that those States decided to cover single adults who are capable of working. This bill would also allow States to experiment with a work requirement as part of the eligibility for Medicaid. We are not mandating it, saying they have to do it, but if the State chooses to do it, then they can do so. We need to give the States the flexibility they need so they can use the Medicaid funding they

have more efficiently so more people can get access to quality care.

I want to be clear: 4.7 million Texans rely on Medicaid. Of course, those rolls tend to churn based on people's employment and their family circumstance, but it is not going anywhere. We want to make sure we preserve Medicaid for the people who actually need it the most. We are working to make it stronger, more efficient, and, yes, more sustainable. I guess some people live in a fantasy world, where they think we can continue to spend money we don't have and there will never be any consequences associated with it. The fastest items of spending in the Federal budget are entitlement programs including Medicaid. Right now we are at \$20 trillion. We have done a pretty good job—I know we don't get much credit for it—we have done a pretty good job of controlling discretionary spending, but the 70 percent of mandatory spending, including Medicaid, has been going up, on average, about 5.5 percent a year. That can't happen in perpetuity. Right now, we know we have \$20 trillion, roughly, in debt—\$20 trillion. It is frankly immoral for those of us who are adults today to spend money borrowed from the next generation and beyond because somebody ultimately is going to have to pay it back, and it is going to have real-world consequences.

We know that since the great recession, the Federal Reserve has kept interest rates very low through their monetary policy, but we know as well that as the economy tends to get a little bit better and unemployment comes down, they are going to begin inching those interest rates up little by little, which means we are going to end up paying the people who own our debt, our bondholders, more and more money strictly for the purpose of giving them a return on their investment for the debt they buy. This is an opportunity for us not only to put Medicaid on a sustainable path, to do the responsible thing, to give the States ultimate flexibility in terms of how they handle it, it is also a matter of keeping faith with the next generation and beyond when it comes to this unsustainable debt burden.

I hear people talk about slashing Medicaid despite the fact that the Congressional Budget Office estimates that Medicaid spending will grow by \$71 billion over the next 10 years. Only in Washington, DC, is that considered a cut, where spending next year exceeds what it is this year and the next and so on, and it goes up by \$71 billion. Yet you will hear people come to the Senate floor and say that is a cut and that we are slashing Medicaid. It is nothing of the kind.

To me, the choice is clear. Do we want to continue with the failures of ObamaCare or do we want to do our very best to try to provide better choices and better options?

Do we want to continue to allow the status quo, which is hurting families,

putting a strain on doctors and our emergency rooms and hospitals like I mentioned in Lake Granbury or do we actually want to address the fundamental flaws of our healthcare system?

I wish we could do something perfect, but certainly with the constraints imposed by the fact that our Democratic friends are not willing to lift a finger to help, and given the fact that we have to do this using the budget process—those are some pretty serious constraints. We basically have to do this with one arm tied behind our back, but we are going to do the best we can because we owe it to the people we represent. I encourage our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to try to take a fresh look at this and figure out how we can be part of the solution, not just to compound the problem.

There is one thing I haven't mentioned that I am particularly excited about in the Better Care Act; that is, for States like Texas that did not expand Medicaid to cover able-bodied adults in the 100 to 138 percent of Federal poverty level, in the Better Care Act, we provide them access to private health insurance coverage and access for the first time. About 600,000 Texans—low-income Texans—who, for the first time under the provisions of this bill, will have access to a tax credit, and States, using the Innovation and Stability Fund and something called the section 1332 waivers, will be able to design programs which will make healthcare more affordable in the private insurance market.

One reason people prefer the private insurance market to Medicaid is for the reason I mentioned earlier, that Medicaid reimburses healthcare providers about 50 cents on the dollar compared to private health insurance. This actually will provide them more access to more choices than they have now, certainly. Certainly, for that cohort of people between 100 percent of Federal poverty and 138 percent of Federal poverty in those States that didn't expand.

I am excited about what we are trying to do here and its potential. Again, to stabilize the markets, which are in meltdown mode right now and we all know are unsustainable, our friends across the aisle will say: We will talk to you if you take all the reforms off the table, which translates to me: We will talk to you about bailing out a bunch of insurance companies but doing nothing to solve the basic underlying pathology in the system. So we are going to do that in our bill, the Better Care Act.

Secondly, we want to make sure that we do everything in our power to bring down premiums. I know the Presiding Officer cares passionately about this. This may well be the litmus test for our success. Under the discussion draft we released earlier, the CBO said that in the third year, you could see premiums as much as 30 percent lower, but we would like to see even more choices and premiums lower than that and more affordable.

The third thing our Better Care Act will do is to protect people against pre-existing conditions. Right now, people sometimes refuse to or are afraid to leave their jobs in search of other jobs because, if they have preexisting conditions, then they cannot get coverage with the new insurance companies for a period of time. That is called the pre-existing condition exclusion. We would like to protect people against that eventually so that people do not have to be worried about changing jobs or losing their jobs and losing their coverage.

Fourth, as I have taken a few minutes to talk about here today, we want to put Medicaid—one of the most important safety net programs in the Federal Government—on a sustainable path, one that is fair to the States that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act and to those that did not. I think any fair-minded person who is looking at what we have proposed here would agree with me that it is not perfect but that it, certainly, fits the name that we have ascribed to it. It is a better alternative than people have under the status quo.

I urge all of our colleagues to work with us in good faith to try to improve it.

Here is the best news of all, perhaps, to those who would have other ideas. We do have an opportunity to have an open amendment process, and sometimes that does not happen around here. People say: Here it is. Take it or leave it. You cannot change it. All you can do is vote for it or vote against it.

That is not what we are going to do. We are going to have an open amendment process. As long as Senators have the energy to stay on their feet and offer amendments, they can get votes on those amendments. I cannot think of a better way to reflect the will of the Senate and to come out with the very best product that we can under the circumstances.

We are on a trajectory next week to begin this process and will have, probably, some very late nights and early mornings come Thursday and Friday.

I yield the floor.

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. REED. 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. REED. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment today to talk about the ongoing efforts by the Senate Republicans to take away health insurance from millions of Americans by repealing the Affordable Care Act.

I was here on the floor just a couple of weeks ago reading letters from my constituents about how they have benefited from the ACA and what TrumpCare would mean for them based on what we had seen of their bill so far.

Since then, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle have continued forging ahead in their effort to repeal the ACA, in spite of overwhelming opposition. Indeed, nearly every major healthcare organization representing patients, doctors, nurses, and hospitals, among others, is opposed to this misguided effort, and that is on top of the millions of Americans who know firsthand how devastating TrumpCare would be for them and their families.

Senate Republicans are working on tweaks to convince their colleagues to vote for this disastrous bill. Unfortunately, their so-called "fixes" are not improvements. That is because, in my view, TrumpCare is fatally flawed and cannot be fixed. My constituents know better and have continued to write and call—even stopping me in stores and on the streets—to express their opposition and fear, quite frankly, of all versions of the Senate TrumpCare bill.

For example, my Republican colleagues are looking to add a provision that would bring us back to the days when insurance companies could deny coverage or charge exorbitant amounts for those with preexisting conditions. The Affordable Care Act ended this practice once and for all, we hope, and I can't imagine why my colleagues want to bring back those discriminatory policies. However, the amendments that several Senators have proposed would do just that. They would allow insurance companies to sell plans on the marketplace with no protections for those with preexisting conditions, which would create a death spiral in the marketplace, so that the very people who need health insurance the most would be priced out entirely.

Just last week, I heard from Anne in North Smithfield, RI, about this very issue. Anne said:

I am the parent of a childhood cancer survivor. The last 11 months of my life have been fighting alongside my warrior, my hero, my 9-year-old osteosarcoma survivor, Julia. She loves unicorns, horses, the beach, and going for walks. Due to no fault of her own, she hasn't been able to walk for the past 11 months.

I am writing to ask for your support to ensure that all children fighting cancer have access to affordable, quality healthcare. If enacted into law, the current proposal for the healthcare bill will have devastating impacts on the hundreds of thousands affected by childhood cancer. Without quality health insurance and access to treatment, my child would not have survived.

Anne went on to explain that the Republican efforts to undermine pre-existing conditions protections would be devastating for childhood cancer survivors. Even parents who get their insurance through their employer would be at risk. Anne pointed out that nearly half of families of children with cancer will experience gaps in coverage because one or both parents often need to stop working or reduce their hours to care for the child.

Further, TrumpCare erodes other critical consumer protections by allowing annual and lifetime limits on care.

Anne continues her message:

Additionally, childhood cancer patients must be assured of access to essential health benefits without the threat of lifetime or annual caps that would effectively price patients out of lifesaving treatments. Two-thirds of childhood cancer survivors will develop serious health conditions from the toxicity of treatment. My child's future is already uncertain enough. We should not have to worry about annual or lifetime caps on coverage.

I agree with Anne. What use is healthcare coverage that expires just when you need it the most? Why would anyone think it makes sense to sell a health insurance policy for thousands of dollars that doesn't actually cover anything—or nothing—when you need it? This is a step in the wrong direction, and I continue to urge my Republican colleagues to reverse course.

I would also like to talk about what this bill would do to those suffering from opioid addiction, a public health crisis that has taken a tremendous toll on our country and particularly on my home State of Rhode Island.

I, along with many of my Democratic colleagues, have been talking about how the Senate TrumpCare bill would pull the rug out from many of those who are suffering from substance use disorders, like opioid addiction, by decimating Medicaid, which is how many people suffering from the opioid crisis access treatment.

News reports suggest that Republicans are considering adding a fund for opioid addiction treatment as another so-called fix to the TrumpCare bill. While we absolutely need more Federal funding to expand access to drug treatment—in fact, I have been urging Republican leaders to do just that for years—what they are proposing cannot make up for the bill's nearly \$800 billion in cuts to Medicaid with a \$45 billion opioid fund. The math simply doesn't work.

Second, short-term drug treatment programs do not provide a full spectrum of healthcare coverage over the long term, like Medicaid or other health insurance coverage. The Medicaid expansion under the ACA has provided the security of reliable healthcare coverage and long-term stability to help people with chronic conditions such as substance use disorders seek treatment and turn their lives around. TrumpCare takes that away.

In addition, people with opioid addiction suffer from other mental health conditions at twice the rate of the general population and higher rates of physical health conditions as well, which would still go unaddressed in this so-called fix. We will be setting people up for failure if we provide immediate drug treatment services but cut access to the other mental and physical healthcare services they need.

An opioid fund alone will not solve this public health crisis and, in fact, would be a drop in the bucket compared to how the rest of this bill would worsen the crisis.

The cuts to Medicaid under the Senate TrumpCare bill are beyond repair.

The Senate TrumpCare bill fundamentally changes the structure of the Medicaid Program, making massive cuts, representing a 35-percent cut over the next two decades. Simply put, this will end the Medicaid Program as we know it, which will hurt not only those suffering from the opioid crisis but also seniors, children, and people with disabilities. We may see Republicans try to spread out this harm over more years to hide the damage, but do not be fooled. Whether they make massive cuts to Medicaid in 2021 or 2022 or even 2026, for that matter, the cuts will be devastating.

In short, no fix can undo the damage this bill will cause. This bill is a massive tax break for the wealthiest Americans at the expense of everyone else. No amendment or tweak to the bill will change that.

Sharon from Wakefield, RI, wrote to me just a couple of days ago and summed this up very well. She said:

I do not support the so-called American Health Care Act because it is not a health care plan, it is a tax cut for the rich. I am 67 years old, and I have a mild version of muscular dystrophy, and I have Medicaid. Since the GOP wants to end Medicaid, I am asking you to vote NO on the bill.

Republicans must abandon this effort and come to the table to work with Democrats on a new path forward. Let's have productive conversations about how we can improve access to care and bring down costs. Let's harness this interest in improving access to drug treatment and work together on those efforts. But, coupled with the TrumpCare bill, those efforts will not mitigate the damage this bill will inflict on my constituents and those across the country.

I hope those on the other side of the aisle who have expressed misgivings will oppose TrumpCare in all of its forms so that we can work together on a bipartisan solution and attempt to do something positive for our constituents.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, there was an interesting press conference earlier today in which I joined with Senator HEITKAMP, Senator CAPITO, and Senator BARRASSO on a common piece of legislation that will help address climate change. That does not happen often, so it was a good sign.

This is not a comprehensive solution. It may not even make much of a meas-

urable difference, but it will make some difference. It will help drive America's technological edge, and it will help, as it gets implemented, reduce our carbon emissions. It was very good to be working with those Senators.

The fundamental problem we face with carbon capture and utilization and the reason so little of it now happens is economics. There is a flaw in the market economics related to carbon capture utilization and sequestration. Here is the flaw: There is no business proposition for stripping out the carbon dioxide, and in a market economy, if no one will pay for something, you don't get very much of it.

LINDSEY GRAHAM and I flew up to Saskatchewan to see Boundary Dam, a carbon capture plant at a coal-powered electric generating facility where they are removing the carbon dioxide by running the exhaust from the plant through, essentially, a cloud of aminos. They are able to sequester closing on 80 percent of the carbon, and they use it to pump out and into nearby oil fields to pressurize the oil to facilitate extraction. Up in Saskatchewan at Boundary Dam, they have proved that the technology works, and where they are, with a little financing help from the Province, the economics work also.

Unfortunately, not every coal-burning plant is on an oil field where the carbon dioxide can be used for extraction. Other than the facility in Saskatchewan, there is not a lot going on, on this continent. The Illinois facility collapsed, the facility in the South just collapsed, and there is one in Texas that is going on. But the bill the four of us got together on—which would be to create a tax credit paid for each ton of carbon that is captured and utilized or sequestered—could really make a difference. Knowing those credits are out there is the kind of reliance industry needs in order to invest in the technologies to make this happen.

Of course, a real market for carbon reduction technologies ultimately requires putting a price on carbon emissions. We can fiddle around with payments for reduced carbon, but ultimately a price on carbon is the sensible economic solution. I think that is pretty much universally agreed by economists. Everyone agrees that carbon dioxide emissions are not a good thing. Everyone also agrees that carbon dioxide emissions are free to emitters now, so we get a lot of them.

A harmful thing that is free to the emitter is called, in economic terms, an externality. It is an externality because the cost of the harm is external to the price of the product. A basic tenet of market economics is that the cost of a harm should be built into the price of the product that causes the harm.

It is basically an economic version of being polite. If you throw your trash over into your neighbor's yard instead of paying for your trash collection, well, your neighbor has to clean up

your mess and you are being really rude—a bad neighbor.

In essence, that is what the fossil fuel industry has been doing with their carbon dioxide emissions for years—not paying to clean them up, dumping them all into our common atmosphere and our common oceans, making their neighbors pay because they don't want to pay for their own waste.

Like that bad neighbor, they have come up with various excuses: Oh, it would be too expensive for us to pay for our trash collection. Or, our trash is actually good for your yard; it kind of composts it a bit. You will love it. It is better for you to clean it up.

Then there is my personal favorite: If you make us take care of our own waste, we will beat you up—politically, at least, which is why the fossil fuel industry spends so much money on politics, just to be able to make that threat credible. And around here, boy, is it credible. It explains virtually fully our failure as an institution to address this patently obvious problem that our own home State universities are telling us is real. From Utah to Rhode Island, the universities we support and root for know and teach climate science.

Anyway, I have a carbon price bill that would cause a technological boom in carbon capture and carbon utilization because, at last, there would be a reason to pay for it, and the free market could get to work. American ingenuity could get to work. With that market signal and with funding from revenues that the fee would generate, we could actually extend the life of existing coal plants being shuttered by competition from natural gas, by stripping their carbon dioxide emissions so that they actually didn't do the damage that they are doing now, they stopped throwing their trash into their neighbors' yard, and they paid for trash collection. The technology needs to be there and the economics need to be there, and then it can be done.

We really ought to pass the carbon fee bill. I would add that the carbon fee bill also creates a lot of revenue. We, I think, have agreed that revenue ought not go to fund the government—not to make Big Government—but there are other things we can do with it that would be very helpful. One would be to make coal country whole for the economic losses coal country has sustained.

Remember Huey Long's old slogan: "Every man a king." We could make every miner a king—with a solid pension, retirement at any time, full health benefits for life for the family, a cash account based on years worked, a voucher for a new vehicle, a college plan for their kids. It all becomes doable if we pass a carbon fee and use the revenues to help coal country. Otherwise, nothing will change.

Coal country will just keep suffering as natural gas keeps driving coal out of the energy market. There is no mechanism now to remedy that inevitability. People will suffer. There is a remedy

right there—a carbon fee—that can help fund and encourage the development of the technologies so that we can strip the carbon dioxide out of the emitting powerplants and so that we can go into these coal countries where pensions and benefits have been stripped by bankruptcy, by the collapse of this industry, and make those folks whole again.

Give them their dignity. Let them retire now. It is not their fault that the coal industry has collapsed. They worked hard. They did dangerous work. They went down in the mines. They worked big equipment. It is a dangerous occupation to be a coal miner, and it is entitled to respect. Retire any time, full health benefits for you and the family, a cash account to help, a new vehicle voucher, a college plan for the kids, to make sure they are well-educated—you could do a lot of those things. You could help those people pass a carbon fee and make every coal miner a king.

In the meantime, I am willing to find funding to flip the social cost of carbon—the way we did in our bill, announced today—and create a positive fee, a tax credit for carbon capture and carbon utilization. I am willing to work with Republican colleagues to find a way to pay our nuclear fleet for the carbon-free nature of its nuclear power.

It is crazy to be closing safely operating nuclear power facilities just because they get zero economic value for the carbon-free nature of their power. The carbon-free nature of their power has value. The carbon-free nature of power has significant value. That is why we are offering in our legislation a tax credit of \$30 to \$50 per avoided ton of carbon dioxide emissions. That implies that an avoided ton of carbon dioxide emissions is worth \$30 to \$50.

If nuclear power avoids that, I am willing to work with my Republican colleagues to figure out a way so that our nuclear fleet can enjoy the actual economic advantage of the carbon-free power they produce.

We close a nuclear plant so we can open a natural gas plant which pollutes more than the nuclear plant because the economics are so fouled up that the nuclear plant gets no value for carbon-free power and the natural gas plant pays no costs for the harm of its carbon emissions. It is economic madness.

We know that carbon-free nature has value. We know that the carbon-free nature of nuclear power has value. We just will not pay for it, and plants close due to that market failure, and jobs are lost, and power is lost, and new investments have to be stood up in polluting plants to make the difference. It is crazy.

In closing, the Heitkamp-Whitehouse-Capito-Barrasso bill, the FUTURE bill, to provide a tax credit for carbon capture utilization and sequestration in powerplants, in factories, and in a variety of applications, is small. It is in some respects a gesture,

but everything begins with small steps and small gestures. I am proud to be a part of it, but I want to remind my colleagues that there are also big win-win ways that we can solve the larger problem. I look forward to working together to accomplish just that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF LIU XIAOBO

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I stand here today on behalf of a hero of freedom and democracy in the People's Republic of China. Liu Xiaobo and his wife Liu Xia are the faces of liberty in China. They have sacrificed comfort and normalcy to chart a path toward political liberalization. For that, they have been detained, imprisoned, and abused.

In 2008, Liu Xiaobo coauthored "Charter 08," a manifesto that shined a light on the Communist Party of China and its totalitarian abuse of power. Though many brave souls signed their names and their fates to that document, Dr. Liu's name was at the very top. For this reason, he received the Nobel Peace Prize. He also received charges of "inciting subversion of state power" and an 11-year prison sentence. It is impossible to neglect the stark irony: a man dedicated to nonviolence, imprisoned for promoting peace.

Motivating Dr. Liu's tremendous courage and self-sacrifice was a determination to remember what the People's Republic of China desperately wants the world to forget: Tiananmen Square. A poet, author, and political scientist, Dr. Liu was, in 1989, a visiting scholar at Columbia University, but when the pro-democracy protests broke out in Beijing in June of that year, he raced back to China to support them. He staged a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square in the midst of the historic student protests and insisted that they would remain nonviolent in the faces of the tanks, which the Chinese military deployed to smash them.

In 1996, the party subjected him to 3 years of "reeducation through labor" for continuing to question China's one-party system.

In 2008, on the eve of the 100-year anniversary of China's first Constitution and the 30-year anniversary of Beijing's Democracy Wall movement, Dr. Liu dedicated his work on "Charter 08" to the martyrs at Tiananmen Square.

Today, 8 years into his unjust imprisonment, Dr. Liu needs our help more than ever. Last month, it was revealed that Dr. Liu has contracted an aggressive, late stage form of liver cancer. Although PRC authorities "released" him "on medical parole," both Liu Xiaobo and Liu Xia linger without freedom. Even worse, Liu Xiaobo is dying.

His condition is critical, and we are running out of time to act on his behalf.

Although Chinese authorities compelled the Lius to sign an affidavit allegedly attesting to their satisfaction with the medical care they have received in China and their wish to remain there, Liu Xia has communicated to their attorney their desire to spend Liu Xiaobo's final days in America. PRC doctors insisted that Dr. Liu was too ill to travel, but medical experts from the United States and Germany—one of them being Dr. Joseph Herman of the MD Anderson Cancer Center of the University of Texas—visited Dr. Liu and attested to the contrary. Issuing a joint statement, they agreed that Dr. Liu "can be safely transported with appropriate medical evacuation care and support." They then issued this stark warning: "However, the medical evacuation would have to take place as quickly as possible."

The urgency of this situation goes beyond Liu Xiaobo. Liu Xia's livelihood is inextricably linked to the ability of the two of them to leave China. Due to his imprisonment, Liu Xiaobo has been unable to receive his \$1.5 million in prize money from the Norwegian Nobel Committee. The holdup of transferring the funds is merely routine: a signed form from Dr. Liu and an open bank account with his name on it. But China has prevented these technical steps from progressing. If Liu Xiaobo dies without receiving this account, Liu Xia will be left destitute with no money. I shudder to think what a life would hold for the wife of China's boldest political prisoner.

Only one man stands between a dying man's wish and his wife's livelihood and freedom: Xi Jinping. Although no one action can undo the turmoil that the Lius have suffered over the past 28 years, it is not too late to do the right thing and to allow this man and his wife to spend their last days together according to their wishes.

It wouldn't be the first time that Xi has made a similar decision. Earlier this year, he agreed, after consultations with the Trump administration, to release an imprisoned Houstonian, Sandy Phan-Gillis, who was incarcerated on false charges. Although nothing could bring back the 2 years of separation from her family, she and her family are now reunited—something I spent considerable time urging and encouraging and was grateful to see come to pass.

Lest Xi forget, even Kim Jong Un, the dictator in North Korea, allowed Otto Warmbier, a young American college student from Ohio—in the prime of his life before torture and abuse left him in a coma—to return home for his final hours. Surely, Xi can show the same degree of humanity shown by Kim Jong Un.

Indeed, toward that end, the bill that I have introduced numerous times to rename the street in front of the Chinese Embassy in honor of Liu Xiaobo is

an instrument of leverage that can help produce his freedom. In 2015, I came to this floor and asked on three separate occasions for unanimous consent to pass my bill to rename the street in front of the Chinese Embassy after Liu Xiaobo. Over and over again, sadly, Democratic Senators stood up and objected, stymieing the effort. Each time I advocated on behalf of Liu Xiaobo and Liu Xia, my colleagues expressed procedural concerns: This is counterproductive. Doing so will only antagonize China.

Well, some of us are less concerned about antagonizing Chinese Communist dictators.

My fellow Senators assured me that they have negotiated the release of many political prisoners behind the scenes. Well, that is wonderful, and I encourage them to do so now in the few days and weeks Liu Xiaobo has ahead.

Even so, despite repeated Democratic objections—repeated Democratic obstructionism—ultimately, the U.S. Senate was able to pass my bill by voice vote in the 114th Congress, and the reason at the time was evident: China's stubbornness—wrongly imprisoning a Nobel Peace laureate—required public action to force the issue. The end goal should be clear. It is not merely to rename a street, but rather to use the action to shine light on the Lius and to pressure the PRC to do the right thing.

No Member can explain the success of this tactic better than my good friend Senator GRASSLEY, the senior Senator from Iowa, who led a very similar effort in 1984 to rename the street in front of the Soviet Embassy after Andrei Sakharov, the famed Soviet dissident. Senator GRASSLEY led that effort under Ronald Reagan, and when the street was renamed, it meant anytime a Soviet had to write to their Embassy, they had to write Sakharov's name. It meant anytime you had to pick up the phone and call the Embassy and say "Where exactly do I find this Embassy?" they had to address and highlight the dissident.

For the PRC, they do not want to highlight Liu Xiaobo because he is a powerful voice for freedom and against tyranny. Just as it worked against the Soviet Union, as Reagan demonstrated, public shaming, shining light, telling the truth can bring down the machinery of oppression. So, too, can public shaming—shining light—secure Dr. Liu's freedom.

As we stand here today, we don't know if Xi is going to allow Dr. Liu to come to freedom, to live out his last days in peace, and to receive the Nobel Peace Prize that he was so justly awarded. If Xi does the right thing, we can all commend the action. But if not, I am announcing my intention to continue to press this bill, to seek its passage again in this Congress, just as the Senate passed it in the prior Congress. I intend to press forward and seek passage of this bill.

If Dr. Liu is not released—if he dies in China, still under their oppression—

I intend to continue to fight until the day when the street is named in front of the Embassy and the Chinese Communists can bow their heads in shame at their injustice. If they don't want to be publicly shamed, there is an easy path: Don't commit shameful acts. Truth has power. Sunshine and light have power.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Republicans and Democrats: If there is an issue that should unite us all, it is that a Nobel Peace laureate speaking out for peace and democracy should not be wrongly imprisoned in Communist China. That should bring us together—and the full force of the United States.

I commend President Trump for leading on this issue, and I am hopeful that China will see its way to doing the right thing.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TILLIS). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

GETTING OUR WORK DONE

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, as we know, yesterday the majority leader announced that he plans to delay the start of the August recess by 2 weeks. He stated that this delay is necessary in order to "complete action on important legislative items and process nominees that have been stalled by a lack of cooperation from our friends on the other side of the aisle." Those are the majority leader's words.

I have no problem with the leader's decision. I will happily stay here an additional 2 weeks. I will stay 3, 4, or even 5 weeks as long as we have a plan to address the serious issues that face this Nation.

My friends, when the Senate completes its work this week, we will have considered a whopping total this entire week of three nominations, one of them being a noncontroversial district judge nominee on which the majority leader was forced to file cloture. That cloture vote was unanimous, 97 to 0. Yet we were still forced to burn postcloture time—30 hours—before being allowed to vote earlier today on his confirmation—a vote that was again unanimous at 100 to 0. What? That is the way we are doing business in the Senate? I will repeat. The vote to stop debate was 97 to 0 after 30 hours. After we burned 30 hours, then we were allowed to vote earlier today—a vote that was again unanimous at 100 to 0. Why?

We have a war on. We have men and women in harm's way. We have nominees stacked up, and so we are spending an entire week with three nominees. So with an incredible act of another chapter in "Profiles in Courage," rather than say, OK, we will stay here

Friday, we will stay here Saturday, we will stay here Sunday, but by God we are going to do the people's business—we are not doing the people's business.

I can't go through all the machinations between the Democratic leader and our majority leader, and I can't go through all the tos and fros and all of that, but I am supposed to go back and speak to a high school civics class and say: I am happy to be here. I have had a very tough week this week in the Senate, my young friends who may want to be engaged in public service someday, and we voted on a district judge 97 to 0. Thirty hours later, we were allowed to vote on his nomination, and the vote was 100 to 0.

That is what the Senate is supposed to do? There was no reason why we needed to take 3 days on this nominee.

I say to my friend the Democratic leader and I say to the Republican leader: This type of obstruction has gone on long enough, and it has to stop.

As I said, I am happy to stay here for the entire August recess to do the work the American people sent us here to do, but we must first have a plan of what we are going to do and how. What are we to say to the American people if we stay here for several weeks, have no legislative plan, and accomplish nothing? We have been in for 6 months now. What have we done? We have done Gorsuch, and we have done Gorsuch, and we have done Gorsuch, and we have repealed some regulations—all of it with my party in control of all three branches of government. I am not proud to go back to Arizona and talk about that record of nonaccomplishment.

Right now, we have no consensus on how to repeal and replace the failed policies of ObamaCare. I can't tell you the number of hours I have heard the same arguments go around and around and around and around. As far as I know, there is no consensus on how to best fund the government, no plan to do a bipartisan budget deal, and no path forward on appropriations bills. This is disgraceful.

What I am asking for is simple. If we are going to stay here to work, then let's get some work done. Why aren't we working now? Why aren't we working tonight? There are nominees in the Department of Defense who are before this body, and we are in a war, and what are we doing? We are doing a vote on a district judge that we took 30 hours—30 hours—to discuss.

If we are going to stay here, let's get the work done. Let's come in early, stay late, negotiate a healthcare bill, and process nominations to make sure the administration is adequately staffed so the executive branch can function. Let's renew FDA user fees to streamline the regulatory process for lifesaving prescription drugs. Let's fund the Veterans Choice Program to ensure our veterans are able to access care in their communities. Let's address the debt limit before we default

on our payments. Let's debate, amend, and pass the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act. Perhaps, most importantly, let's get to work on the budget so we can begin moving individual appropriations bills to fund the government and not have to resort to a continuing resolution or omnibus.

To those who may be watching, the fact is that a continuing resolution and an omnibus means that we have two choices—yes or no. We don't have an amendment. We don't have a way to improve it. We are talking about trillions of dollars, but we are going to wait until we are right at the edge of the cliff, and then my distinguished friends and leaders on both sides will say: You have to vote aye; you have to vote aye because the government is going to be shut down. I am tired of that choice. We know it is coming. We know the cliff is here. So what did we do this week? We spent 30 hours discussing a district judge—30 hours debating a district judge. Is that the right use of American taxpayers' dollars?

Have we no shame?

The Senate Armed Services Committee successfully reported out the fiscal year 2018 National Defense Authorization Act 27 to 0, supporting \$650 billion for the base budget for national defense and an additional \$60 billion for Overseas Contingency Operations. At these levels, the national defense budget would be \$91 billion above the Budget Control Act spending cap. To put it another way, there was unanimous, bipartisan support for an increase in defense spending of the Budget Control Act, capped by more than a quarter of this body—more than a quarter of this body, on both sides of the aisle. In one sense this consensus isn't surprising because after years of budget cuts under the BCA sequestration, our military faces a serious crisis. As we ask them to do more and more in an increasingly dangerous world, Congress has failed to provide our men and women in uniform with the training, resources, and capabilities they need.

I will repeat that. Congress has failed to provide our men and women in uniform with the training, resources, and capabilities they need.

However, simply passing an authorization bill at higher defense spending levels will not solve the funding problems for our military. We know we must pass a bipartisan budget deal to undo the Budget Control Act caps and set an agreed upon budget top line to allow the appropriations bills to move forward. Absent a bipartisan budget deal, we will be stuck with another continuing resolution, which, I might add, will be below the BCA budget caps for defense, or, worse, we will be facing—guess what—a shutdown of the government.

Has it been that long since we had the last shut down?

I have come to this floor several times already this year demanding that we start negotiating a budget

deal. We are 2 months away from the start of the fiscal year. We know that a budget deal must be done. The failure to begin negotiations means we are knowingly driving toward an outcome that will fund our military at levels below the Budget Control Act caps.

I don't understand why we haven't started. It is not because we think the BCA levels are acceptable. It is not because we believe there is a way to responsibly fund the government without adjusting the BCA caps. Even our leader, Senator MCCONNELL, has publicly stated that we will need to adjust the caps. This leads me to believe that there is only one reason why we are stalling negotiations on a budget deal and forcing the government and our military to start the year on a "continuing resolution" and that is one word, and that word is "politics."

The same tactic that the Democratic leader is employing on nomination stalling is being applied to a budget deal. I find that to be shameful.

There is plenty of blame to go around. The White House has also been surprisingly absent. Their own budget submission asked for defense spending above the budget control caps and repeal of the defense sequester, but none of that—none of that—is possible without negotiating a bipartisan budget deal. Yet we have heard nothing from the White House—nothing. Any budget deal that would pass both the House and Senate and be signed by the President will be extremely difficult to negotiate. That is why we should have started long ago, and we must start now.

I have been ready and willing all year to begin working. My door and, I know, the majority of my colleagues' doors are open to any Senator, Republican or Democrat, but what we really need is for a select group of key Members to come together with leadership's blessings to begin negotiating.

Unless and until this body gets to work on a bipartisan budget deal, we will continue down the path we have been on for years, lurching from crisis to crisis, with no strategy for how to meet our budget responsibilities or fund our national security needs.

My friends, colleagues, and fellow Americans, we must summon the political courage to do the hard work the American people expect of us to do a budget the way we are supposed to—a budget that is sufficient to meet the complex threats of today's world. Our brave servicemembers who are facing those threats every single day deserve no less.

Finally, every year for many years now, I have taken my time on the Fourth of July to have the honor of spending that national holiday in Afghanistan with the men and women who are serving in the military with courage, sacrifice, and skill. As part of our activities there, we have a town-hall meeting with several hundred of the men and women in uniform who are serving. My friend LINDSEY GRAHAM,

who occasionally has a good idea—once every decade—asked the group: How many of you are here not for the first time? Almost everybody in that room raised their hand.

He said: How many of you have been more than twice? Two-thirds of the men in that room raised their hand.

He said: How many of you have been here multiple times? A good number of them raised their hand.

The point is that they are out there serving time after time after time, away from their homes, away from their families, working more than maybe 2 weeks in August. And what are we doing? What are we doing for them?

There are a lot of things they need, and there are a lot of things we need to give them. Yet, somehow, we can't see our way clear—Republicans and Democrats—to sit down and do the right thing for these men and women—to do the right thing so they can win.

We now have a new President, a new National Security Advisor, and a new Secretary of Defense. I don't agree with this President very often, but I do know that this President is committed to rebuilding the military and a winning strategy. The strategy for the last 8 years has been "don't lose." I know that General Mattis and General McMaster are people who want to win, and they have a strategy to win, and we have to be of assistance to them to provide the men and women with what they need to win.

So I ask my colleagues, with passion, that we sit down and figure out the budget deal, move forward with it, and not spend a week like we just spent this week with 30 hours in order to confirm one district judge.

I yield the floor.

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

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PERDUE. 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.

BUDGET SCOREKEEPING REPORT

Mr. ENZI. Mr. President, I wish to submit to the Senate the budget scorekeeping report for July 2017. The report compares current-law levels of spending and revenues with the amounts the Senate approved in the

budget resolution for fiscal year 2017, S. Con. Res. 3. This information is necessary for the Senate Budget Committee to determine whether budget points of order lie against pending legislation. The Republican staff of the Senate Budget Committee and the Congressional Budget Office, CBO, prepared this report pursuant to section 308(b) of the Congressional Budget Act (CBA).

My last filing can be found in the RECORD on June 7, 2017. The information contained in this report captures legislative activity from that filing through July 10, 2017.

Republican Budget Committee staff prepared tables 1 through 3 of this report. They remain unchanged since my last filing.

In addition to the tables provided by Budget Committee Republican staff, I am submitting CBO tables, which I will use to enforce budget totals approved by the Congress.

CBO provided a spending and revenue report for fiscal year 2017, which helps enforce aggregate spending levels in budget resolutions under CBA section 311. CBO's estimates show that current-law levels of spending fiscal year 2017 are below the amounts assumed in the budget resolution by \$303 million in budget authority and \$6.4 billion in outlays. CBO also estimates that revenues are \$1 million above assumed levels for fiscal year 2017, but \$21 million below assumed levels over the fiscal year 2017–2026 period. Social Security levels are consistent with the budget resolution's fiscal year 2017 figures.

CBO's report also provides information needed to enforce the Senate pay-as-you-go, PAYGO, rule. The Senate's PAYGO scorecard currently shows increased deficits of \$226 million over the fiscal year 2016–2021 and \$227 million over fiscal year 2016–2026 periods. For both of these periods, outlays have increased by \$201 million, while revenues decreased by \$25 million over the 6-year period and \$26 million over the 11-year period. The Senate's PAYGO rule is enforced by section 201 of S. Con. Res. 21, the fiscal year 2008 budget resolution.

Finally, included in this submission is a table tracking the Senate's budget enforcement activity on the floor. No budget points of order have been raised since my last filing.

All years in the accompanying tables are fiscal years.

I ask unanimous consent that the tables be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (–) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS

	(In millions of dollars)		
	2017	2017–2021	2017–2026
Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Armed Services			
Budget Authority	0	0	0

TABLE 1.—SENATE AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES—ENACTED DIRECT SPENDING ABOVE (+) OR BELOW (–) BUDGET RESOLUTIONS—Continued

	(In millions of dollars)		
	2017	2017–2021	2017–2026
Outlays	0	0	0
Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Commerce, Science, and Transportation			
Budget Authority	1	1	1
Outlays	1	1	1
Energy and Natural Resources			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Environment and Public Works			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Finance			
Budget Authority	–239	468	–204
Outlays	38	763	91
Foreign Relations			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Judiciary			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Rules and Administration			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Intelligence			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Veterans' Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	200	200
Indian Affairs			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Small Business			
Budget Authority	0	0	0
Outlays	0	0	0
Total			
Budget Authority	–238	469	–203
Outlays	39	964	292

TABLE 2.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED REGULAR DISCRETIONARY APPROPRIATIONS¹

	2017	
	Security ²	Nonsecurity ²
Statutory Discretionary Limits	551,068	518,531
Amount Provided by Senate Appropriations Subcommittee		
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	0	20,877
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	5,200	51,355
Defense	515,977	138
Energy and Water Development	19,956	17,815
Financial Services and General Government	33	21,482
Homeland Security	1,876	40,532
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	0	32,280
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	0	161,025
Legislative Branch	0	4,440
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	7,726	74,650
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0	36,586
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	300	57,351
Current Level Total	551,068	518,531
Total Enacted Above (+) or Below (–) Statutory Limits	0	0

¹ This table excludes spending pursuant to adjustments to the discretionary spending limits. These adjustments are allowed for certain purposes in section 251(b)(2) of BBEDCA.

² Security spending is defined as spending in the National Defense budget function (050) and nonsecurity spending is defined as all other spending.

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)

(Budget authority, millions of dollars)	
2017	
CHIMPS Limit for Fiscal Year	19,100
Senate Appropriations Subcommittees	
Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies	741

TABLE 3.—SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE—ENACTED CHANGES IN MANDATORY SPENDING PROGRAMS (CHIMPS)—Continued

(Budget authority, millions of dollars)

	2017
Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies	8,452
Defense	0
Energy and Water Development	0
Financial Services and General Government	826
Homeland Security	187
Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies	28
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies	8,009
Legislative Branch	0
Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies	0
State Foreign Operations, and Related Programs	0
Transportation and Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies	857
Current Level Total	19,100
Total CHIMPS Above (+) or Below (-) Budget Resolution	0

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 12, 2017.

Hon. MIKE ENZI,
Chairman, Committee on the Budget,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The enclosed report shows the effects of Congressional action on the fiscal year 2017 budget and is current through July 10, 2017. This report is submitted under section 308(b) and in aid of section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act, as amended.

The estimates of budget authority, outlays, and revenues are consistent with the technical and economic assumptions of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.

Since our last letter dated June 7, 2017, the Congress has not cleared any legislation for the President's signature that has significant effects on budget authority, outlays, or revenues.

Sincerely,

KEITH HALL.

Enclosure.

TABLE 1.—SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF JULY 10, 2017

(In billions of dollars)

	Budget Resolution	Current Level	Current Level Over/Under (-) Resolution
On-Budget			
Budget Authority	3,329.3	3,329.0	-0.3
Outlays	3,268.2	3,261.8	-6.4
Revenues	2,682.1	2,682.1	0.0
Off-Budget			
Social Security Outlays ^a ..	805.4	805.4	0.0
Social Security Revenues	826.0	826.0	0.0

Source: Congressional Budget Office.
^aExcludes administrative expenses paid from the Federal Old-Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund and the Federal Disability Insurance Trust Fund of the Social Security Administration, which are off-budget, but are appropriated annually.

TABLE 2.—SUPPORTING DETAIL FOR THE SENATE CURRENT LEVEL REPORT FOR ON-BUDGET SPENDING AND REVENUES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2017, AS OF JULY 10, 2017
(In millions of dollars)

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Previously Enacted ^{a,b}			
Revenues	n.a.	n.a.	2,682,088
Permanents and other spending legislation	2,054,297	1,960,884	n.a.
Appropriation legislation	132,558	614,655	n.a.
Offsetting receipts	-834,250	-834,301	n.a.
Total, Previously Enacted	1,352,605	1,741,238	2,682,088
Enacted Legislation:			
National Aeronautics and Space Administration Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-10)	1	1	0
A joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes (P.L. 115-30)	2	2	0
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31)	1,967,450	1,518,744	1
Total, Enacted Legislation	1,967,453	1,518,747	1
Entitlements and Mandatories:			
Budget resolution estimates of appropriated entitlements and other mandatory programs	8,928	1,795	0
Total Current Level ^c	3,328,986	3,261,780	2,682,089
Total Senate Resolution ^d	3,329,289	3,268,171	2,682,088
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	1
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	303	6,391	n.a.
Memorandum:			
Revenues, 2017-2026:			
Senate Current Level	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,639
Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	32,351,660
Current Level Over Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
Current Level Under Senate Resolution	n.a.	n.a.	21

Source: Congressional Budget Office.
Notes: n.a. = not applicable; P.L. = Public Law.
^aIncludes the budgetary effects of enacted legislation cleared by the Congress during the 114th session, prior to the adoption of S. Con. Res. 3, the Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for Fiscal Year 2017.
^bSections 193-195 of Division A of P.L. 114-254 provided funding, available until expended, for innovation projects and state responses to opioid abuse. CBO estimates that, for fiscal year 2017: The \$20 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 193 would result in an additional \$5 million in outlays for FDA innovation projects; The \$352 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 194 would result in an additional \$91 million in outlays for NIH innovation projects; The \$500 million in discretionary budget authority provided by section 195 would result in an additional \$160 million in outlays for state response to opioid abuse.
Consistent with sections 1001-1004 of P.L. 114-255, for the purposes of estimating the discretionary budget authority and outlays for these provisions under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Act of 1974 and the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985, those amounts are estimated to provide no budget authority or outlays.
^cFor purposes of enforcing section 311 of the Congressional Budget Act in the Senate, the resolution, as approved by the Senate, does not include budget authority, outlays, or revenues for off-budget amounts. As a result, current level does not include these items.
^dPeriodically, the Senate Committee on the Budget revises the budgetary levels in S. Con. Res. 3, pursuant to various provisions of the resolution. The total for the Initial Senate Resolution shown below excludes \$81.872 million in budget authority and \$40,032 million in outlays assumed in S. Con. Res. 3 for non regular discretionary spending, including spending that qualifies for adjustments to discretionary spending limits pursuant to section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985. The total for the Revised Senate Resolution shown below includes amounts for non regular discretionary spending:

	Budget Authority	Outlays	Revenues
Initial Senate Resolution	3,226,128	3,224,630	2,682,088
Revisions:			
Pursuant to sections 311 and 314(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974	103,161	43,541	0
Revised Senate Resolution	3,329,289	3,268,171	2,682,088

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF JULY 10, 2017

(In millions of dollars)

	2016-2021	2016-2026
Beginning Balance ^a	0	0
Enacted Legislation: ^{b,c,d}		
Tested Ability to Leverage Exceptional National Talent Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-1)	*	*
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of the Interior known as the Stream Protection Rule (P.L. 115-5)	*	*
National Aeronautics and Space Administration Transition Authorization Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-10)	1	1

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF JULY 10, 2017—Continued

(In millions of dollars)

	2016-2021	2016-2026
Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to teacher preparation issues (P.L. 115-14)	*	*
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to "Clarification of Employer's Continuing Obligation to Make and Maintain an Accurate Record of Each Recordable Injury and Illness" (P.L. 115-21)	1	1

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF JULY 10, 2017—Continued

(In millions of dollars)

	2016-2021	2016-2026
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by qualified State political subdivisions for non-governmental employees (P.L. 115-24)	*	*
An act to amend the Veterans Access, Choice, and Accountability Act of 2014 to modify the termination date for the Veterans Choice Program, and for other purposes (P.L. 115-26)	200	200

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF JULY 10, 2017—Continued

	[In millions of dollars]	
	2016-2021	2016-2026
Making further continuing appropriations for fiscal year 2017, and for other purposes (P.L. 115-30) ^c	*	*
Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017 (P.L. 115-31) ^d	24	25
U.S. Wants to Compete for a World Expo Act (P.L. 115-32)	*	*
Modernizing Government Travel Act (P.L. 115-34)	*	*
Disapproving the rule submitted by the Department of Labor relating to savings arrangements established by States for non-governmental employees (P.L. 115-35)	*	*
Public Safety Officers' Benefits Improvement Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-36)	*	*

TABLE 3.—SUMMARY OF THE SENATE PAY-AS-YOU-GO SCORECARD FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS, AS OF JULY 10, 2017—Continued

	[In millions of dollars]	
	2016-2021	2016-2026
Follow the Rules Act (P.L. 115-40)	*	*
Department of Veterans Affairs Accountability and Whistleblower Protection Act of 2017 (P.L. 115-41)	*	*
A bill to amend section 1214 of title 5, United States Code, to provide for stays during a period that the Merit Systems Protection Board lacks a quorum (P.L. 115-42)	*	*
Current Balance	226	227
Memorandum:		
Changes to Revenues	-25	-26
Changes to Outlays	201	201

Notes: P.L. = Public Law; * = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.
^aPursuant to the statement printed in the Congressional Record on January 17, 2017, the Senate Pay-As-You-Go Scorecard was reset to zero.
^bThe amounts shown represent the estimated effect of the public laws on the deficit.
^cExcludes off-budget amounts.
^dExcludes amounts designated as emergency requirements.
^eThe budgetary effects of this Act are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO scorecard pursuant to section 202(c) of P.L. 115-30.
^fDivision M of P.L. 115-31 contains the Health Benefits for Miners Act of 2017 and the Puerto Rico Section 1108(g) Amendment of 2017. Division N contains the HIRE Vets Act. Pursuant to section 301(b) of Division M, the budgetary effects of Division M and succeeding divisions are excluded from the Senate's PAYGO scorecard.

ENFORCEMENT REPORT OF LEGISLATION POST-S. CON. RES. 3, FY 2017 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET RESOLUTION

Vote	Date	Measure	Violation	Motion to Waive	Result
—	—	—	—	—	—

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO SUZY DEYOUNG

● Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. President, today I wish to recognize Suzy DeYoung from Cincinnati, recipient of the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Public Service. The Jefferson Awards Foundation was founded in 1972 by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Senator Robert Taft, Jr., and Sam Beard to power others to have maximum impact on the things they care about most.

Suzy cares about helping her community and has a passion for good food. She was born to be a chef. Her father, Pierre Adrian, was head chef at the five-star Maisonette restaurant in Cincinnati and her grandparents were chefs in New York. She and her sister co-ran La Petite Pierre restaurant until Suzy split off to focus on La Soupe.

Now, Suzy is more than a chef. She is a business owner, transportation manager, teacher, and fundraiser.

In response to growing childhood poverty rates and the fact that one-third of all food produced worldwide is either lost or wasted each year, Suzy DeYoung started La Soupe to close the gap between food waste and hunger. La Soupe rescues otherwise wasted produce to create delicious and highly nutritious meals for customers, non-profits, and food-insecure families.

In 2016 alone, La Soupe rescued 125,000 pounds of food from going to the landfill and donated over 95,000 servings to people living in food insecurity.

La Soupe partners with Kroger, Jungle Jims, Crosset Company, Sugar Creek, and various local organic farms who provide ingredients allowing La Soupe's team of volunteer chefs to share their culinary magic turning rescued produce into soup or sometimes stew or gumbo or a casserole to feed to people who are hungry.

Suzy also spends time helping parents learn how to feed their kids and teaches weekly cooking classes at area

schools, sending kids home with ingredients and recipes to cook for their families. In addition, she operates a retail "Soupe Shack," where sales of the meals made from rich ingredients fuel donations to Cincinnati's food-deprived individuals.

An energetic social entrepreneur, Suzy has inspired chefs to create and give. She has inspired parents to provide healthier options to their families, and she has also inspired kids to pursue culinary careers.

I would like to congratulate Suzy DeYoung and thank her and all of the volunteers at LaSoupe for their dedication to closing the hunger gap for so many in greater Cincinnati.●

MESSAGE FROM THE HOUSE

At 12:02 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 597. An act to take lands in Sonoma County, California, into trust as part of the reservation of the Lytton Rancheria of California, and for other purposes.

H.R. 702. An act to amend the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 to strengthen Federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and expand accountability within the Federal Government, and for other purposes.

H.R. 954. An act to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1306. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain Federal land in the State of Oregon, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1397. An act to authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1404. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain land inholdings owned by the United States to the Tucson Unified School District and to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona.

H.R. 1541. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain property related to the Fort Scott National

Historic Site in Fort Scott, Kansas, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1913. An act to establish the Clear Creek National Recreation Area in San Benito and Fresno Counties, California, to designate the Joaquin Rocks Wilderness in such counties, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1988. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1730 18th Street in Bakersfield, California, as the "Merle Haggard Post Office Building".

H.R. 2156. An act to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 703(c) of the Public Interest Declassification Act of 2000 (50 U.S.C. 3161 note), the Minority Leader appoints Mr. John F. Tierney of Massachusetts to the Public Interest Declassification Board.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 597. An act to take lands in Sonoma County, California, into trust as part of the reservation of the Lytton Rancheria of California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

H.R. 702. An act to amend the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 to strengthen Federal antidiscrimination laws enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and expand accountability within the Federal Government, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 1397. An act to authorize, direct, facilitate, and expedite the transfer of administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal land, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1404. An act to provide for the conveyance of certain land inholdings owned by the United States to the Tucson Unified School District and to the Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1913. An act to establish the Clear Creek National Recreation Area in San Benito and Fresno Counties, California, to designate the Joaquin Rocks Wilderness in such

counties, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

H.R. 1988. An act to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1730 18th Street in Bakersfield, California, as the “Merle Haggard Post Office Building”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

H.R. 2156. An act to provide for the establishment of a national memorial and national monument to commemorate those killed by the collapse of the Saint Francis Dam on March 12, 1928, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

MEASURES PLACED ON THE CALENDAR

The following bills were read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and placed on the calendar:

H.R. 954. An act to remove the use restrictions on certain land transferred to Rockingham County, Virginia, and for other purposes.

H.R. 1541. An act to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to acquire certain property related to the Fort Scott National Historic Site in Fort Scott, Kansas, and for other purposes.

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-2097. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Regulatory Affairs, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Allocation of Assets in Single-Employer Plans; Benefits Payable in Terminated Single-Employer Plans; Interest Assumptions for Valuing and Paying Benefits” (29 CFR Part 4022 and 29 CFR Part 4044) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2098. A communication from the Secretary of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Assistance to States for the Education of Children with Disabilities and the Preschool Grants for Children with Disabilities Program; Early Intervention Program for Infants and Toddlers with Disabilities” (RIN1820-AB74) received in the Office of the President of the Senate; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2099. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy in the position of General Counsel, Department of Education received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2100. A communication from the White House Liaison, Department of Education, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy in the position of Assistant Secretary, Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs, Department of Education received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

EC-2101. A communication from the General Counsel, Office of Special Counsel, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to the vacancy in the position of Special Counsel, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2017; to

the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2102. A communication from the Associate General Counsel for General Law, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Administrator, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Homeland Security, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 28, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2103. A communication from the Executive Secretary, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a vacancy for the position of Director, Office of Personnel Management, received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2104. A communication from the Acting Director, Employee Services, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Prevailing Rate Systems; Redefinition of Certain Nonappropriated Fund Federal Wage System Wage Areas” (RIN3206-AN48) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 27, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2105. A communication from the Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Semi-annual Report of the Inspector General and the Management Response for the period from October 1, 2016 through March 31, 2017; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2106. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-91, “Primary Date Alteration Amendment Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2107. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-92, “Medical Marijuana Cultivation Center Relocation Temporary Amendment Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2108. A communication from the Chairman of the Council of the District of Columbia, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report on D.C. Act 22-90, “St. Mary’s Way Designation Act of 2017”; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-2109. A communication from the Senior Counsel for Regulatory and Legislative Affairs, Patent and Trademark Office, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Revival of Abandoned Applications, Reinstatement of Abandoned Applications and Cancelled or Expired Registrations, and Petitions to the Director” (RIN0651-AC41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 28, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2110. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, an annual report to Congress concerning intercepted wire, oral, or electronic communications; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2111. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting proposed legislation entitled “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2112. A communication from the Director, Administrative Office of the United

States Courts, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the report entitled “2016 Report of Statistics Required by the Bankruptcy Abuse Prevention and Consumer Protection Act of 2005”; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2113. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel, Office of Justice Programs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act Formula Grant Program” (RIN1121-AA83) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 16, 2017; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

EC-2114. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel, Office of Hearings and Appeals, Small Business Administration, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Rules of Procedure Governing Cases Before the Office of Hearings and Appeals” (RIN3245-AG82) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 28, 2017; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

EC-2115. A communication from the Acting Chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board’s 2016 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2116. A communication from the Acting Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs, Office of International Affairs and Seafood Inspection, Department of Commerce, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Taking and Importing Marine Mammals; Taking Marine Mammals Incidental to Waterfront Construction” (RIN0648-BG32) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2117. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9571) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2118. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Airplanes” (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0573) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2119. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Rolls-Royce plc Turbofan Engines” (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9553) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2120. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Airworthiness Directives; Lycoming Engines Reciprocating Engines” (RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9512) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2121. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Pratt and Whitney Division Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9405)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2122. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Pratt and Whitney Division Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2013-0740)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2123. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Safety Management System for Domestic, Flag and Supplemental Operations Certificate Holders; Technical Amendment" ((RIN2120-AJ86) (Docket No. FAA-2009-0671)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 20, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2124. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment and Removal of VOR Federal Airways; Eastern United States" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0107)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2125. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9432)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2126. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9115)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2127. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; The Boeing Company Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0531)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2128. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0016)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2129. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal

Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; General Electric Company Turbofan Engines" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9490)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2130. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Pilatus Aircraft Ltd. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0194)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2131. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Bombardier, Inc. Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9387)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2132. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; BAE Systems (Operations) Limited" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2016-4220)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2133. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Airworthiness Directives; Empresa Brasileira de Aeronautica S.A. (Embraer) Airplanes" ((RIN2120-AA64) (Docket No. FAA-2015-3143)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2134. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace; Aspen, CO; and Pueblo, CO" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0054)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2135. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class E Airspace; Moses Lake, WA; Olympia, WA" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0217)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2136. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of VOR Federal Airways; Eastern United States" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2016-9178)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2137. A communication from the Management and Program Analyst, Federal Aviation Administration, Department of

Transportation, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Amendment of Class D and Class E Airspace for the following Idaho towns; Lewiston, ID; Pocatello, ID; and Twin Falls, ID" ((RIN2120-AA66) (Docket No. FAA-2017-0216)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 29, 2017; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

EC-2138. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition, Technology and Logistics), transmitting, pursuant to law, Selected Acquisition Reports (SARs) for the Chemical Demilitarization-Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternatives (Chem Demil-ACWA) and Ballistic Missile Defense System (BMDS) programs; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2139. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense (Legislative Affairs), transmitting legislative proposals relative to the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2140. A communication from the Senior Official performing the duties of the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), Department of Defense, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "2017 Report to Congress on Sustainable Ranges"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-2141. A communication from the Executive Director, Comptroller of the Currency, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Office of the Comptroller's 2016 Annual Report on Preservation and Promotion of Minority-Owned National Banks and Federal Savings Institutions; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2142. A communication from the Chairman, Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Council's 2016 Annual Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2143. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2144. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2145. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to the Congress on the Profitability of Credit Card Operations of Depository Institutions"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2146. A communication from the Assistant to the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Availability of Funds and Collection of Checks" (RIN7100-AD68) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2017; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2147. A communication from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Federal Reserve System, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Board's semiannual Monetary Policy Report to Congress; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-2148. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the

report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Walk-In Cooler and Freezer Refrigeration Systems" (RIN1904-AD59) (Docket No. EERE-2015-BT-STD-0016) received in the Office of the President of Senate on July 10, 2017; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-2149. A communication from the Secretary of Health and Human Services, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Annual Report to Congress on the Medicare and Medicaid Integrity Programs Report for Fiscal Year 2015"; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2150. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Update of Pre-Approved Plan Revenue Procedure" (Rev. Proc. 2017-41) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2151. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cumulative List of Changes in Plan Qualification Requirements for Pre-Approved Defined Contribution Plans for 2017" (Notice 2017-37) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2152. A communication from the Chief of the Publications and Regulations Branch, Internal Revenue Service, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Guidelines for the Streamlined Process of applying for Recognition of Section 501(c)(3) Status" ((RIN1545-BM06) (TD 9819)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 10, 2017; to the Committee on Finance.

EC-2153. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2017-0723); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2154. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2017-0722); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2155. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2017-0721); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2156. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2017-0720); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2157. A communication from the Acting Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to law, an addendum to a certification, of the proposed sale or export of defense articles and/or defense services to a Middle East country (OSS-2017-0719); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2158. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the

certification of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services for the operational support, maintenance, and overhaul of F110-GE-100/100B/129/129B/129C/129D/129E/132/132A aircraft engines used in F-15 and F-16 aircraft to the Republic of Turkey in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 16-091); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2159. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) and 36(d) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of defense articles, including technical data, and defense services to support the manufacture and maintenance of South Korea's T-50 aircraft program for ultimate end-use by the Kingdom of Thailand, Royal Air Force in the amount of \$50,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-002); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2160. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of 5.56mm carbines with extra magazines and parts to Malaysia in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 17-027); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2161. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of M16A4 rifles, spare parts, accessories, and training to the United Arab Emirates in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 16-123); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EC-2162. A communication from the Bureau of Legislative Affairs, Department of State, transmitting, pursuant to section 36(c) of the Arms Export Control Act, the certification of a proposed license for the export of M4A1 carbines with flash and sound suppressors, associated components and equipment to the Republic of Tunisia in the amount of \$1,000,000 or more (Transmittal No. DDTC 16-129); to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

EXECUTIVE REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following executive reports of nominations were submitted:

By Mr. BARRASSO for the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

*Susan Parker Bodine, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

*Annie Caputo, of Virginia, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2021.

*David Wright, of South Carolina, to be a Member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for the term of five years expiring June 30, 2020.

By Mr. CORKER for the Committee on Foreign Relations.

*Mark Andrew Green, of Wisconsin, to be Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, for the Committee on Foreign Relations I report favorably the following nomination lists which were printed in the RECORDS on the dates indicated, and ask unanimous consent to save the expense of reprinting on the Executive Calendar that these nominations lie at the Secretary's desk for the information of Senators.

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

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Nicholas Raymond Abbate and ending with Elizabeth Marie Wysocki, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 6, 2017.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Gabriela R. Arias Villela and ending with Haenim Yoo, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 6, 2017.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Andrew Anderson-Sprecher and ending with Evan Nicholas Mangino, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 6, 2017.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Rameeth Hundle and ending with Loren Stender, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 6, 2017.

*Foreign Service nominations beginning with Andrew K. Abordonado and ending with Peter B. Winter, which nominations were received by the Senate and appeared in the Congressional Record on June 29, 2017.

*Nomination was reported with recommendation that it be confirmed subject to the nominee's commitment to respond to requests to appear and testify before any duly constituted committee of the Senate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. YOUNG (for himself and Mr. MANCHIN):

S. 1531. A bill to require reporting by the Secretary of Education on the implementation of recent Government Accountability Office recommendations; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. THUNE (for himself, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1532. A bill to disqualify from operating a commercial motor vehicle for life an individual who uses a commercial motor vehicle in committing a felony involving human trafficking; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. COTTON, Mr. UDALL, Mr. HENRICH, and Mr. BROWN):

S. 1533. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to cover physician services delivered by podiatric physicians to ensure access by Medicaid beneficiaries to appropriate quality foot and ankle care, to amend title XVIII of such Act to modify the requirements for diabetic shoes to be included under Medicare, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL):

S. 1534. A bill to direct the Federal Communications Commission to amend its rules so as to prohibit the application to amateur stations of certain private land use restrictions, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Ms. HEITKAMP (for herself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. KAINE, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. TESTER, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. CASEY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BROWN, Mr.

WARNER, Mr. DONNELLY, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. PETERS, Mr. COONS, Mr. BENNET, and Mr. KING):

S. 1535. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to improve, expand, and extend the credit for carbon dioxide sequestration; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. THUNE, and Mr. NELSON):

S. 1536. A bill to designate a human trafficking prevention coordinator and to expand the scope of activities authorized under the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's outreach and education program to include human trafficking prevention activities, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. NELSON, Mr. UDALL, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. PORTMAN):

S. 1537. A bill to amend the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act to reauthorize the Act; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

By Mr. PETERS (for himself and Mr. RISCH):

S. 1538. A bill to amend the Small Business Act to establish awareness of, and technical assistance for, the creation of employee stock ownership plans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. HIRONO, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN):

S. 1539. A bill to protect victims of stalking from gun violence; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BROWN, and Mr. PETERS):

S. 1540. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow a credit against tax for investments in qualified production facilities; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. CASSIDY:

S. 1541. A bill to modify the definition of an antique firearm; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. HATCH:

S. 1542. A bill for the relief of James Doyle, doing business as Rocky Mountain Ventures and Environmental Land Technologies, Ltd; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. BLUMENTHAL:

S. 1543. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to improve protections for a member of the Armed Forces who is a survivor of a sexual assault during military service regarding the separation, or the characterization of any separation, of the member from the Armed Forces, to make additional changes to the authorities and procedures of boards for the correction of military records and discharge review boards, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Armed Services.

By Ms. KLOBUCHAR (for herself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REED, Ms. WARREN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. HARRIS, and Mr. MERKLEY):

S. 1544. A bill to prevent Federal funds from being used to establish a cybersecurity unit in cooperation with the Russian Federation; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. CARPER, Mr. COONS, Mr. NELSON, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KING, Mr. PETERS, Mr. TESTER, and Ms. STABENOW):

S. 1545. A bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to provide the same level

of Federal matching assistance for every State that chooses to expand Medicaid coverage to newly eligible individuals, regardless of when such expansion takes place; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mr. WARNER (for himself, Mr. MANCHIN, Ms. HEITKAMP, and Mr. KING):

S. 1546. A bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to provide greater flexibility in offering health insurance coverage across State lines; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. REED, Mr. FRANKEN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARPER, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HASSAN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. UDALL, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, and Ms. CANTWELL):

S. 1547. A bill to nullify the effect of the recent Executive order that establishes an "election integrity" commission, which will be used and is designed to support policies that will suppress the vote in minority and poor communities across the United States; to the Committee on Rules and Administration.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 170

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 170, a bill to provide for nonpreemption of measures by State and local governments to divest from entities that engage in commerce-related or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activities targeting Israel, and for other purposes.

S. 194

At the request of Mr. WHITEHOUSE, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 194, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to establish a public health insurance option, and for other purposes.

S. 198

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 198, a bill to require continued and enhanced annual reporting to Congress in the Annual Report on International Religious Freedom on anti-Semitic incidents in Europe, the safety and security of European Jewish communities, and the efforts of the United States to partner with European governments, the European Union, and civil society groups, to combat anti-Semitism, and for other purposes.

S. 266

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 266, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his heroic achievements and

courageous contributions to peace in the Middle East.

S. 281

At the request of Mr. LEE, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 281, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to eliminate the per-country numerical limitation for employment-based immigrants, to increase the per-country numerical limitation for family-sponsored immigrants, and for other purposes.

S. 301

At the request of Mr. LANKFORD, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 301, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit governmental discrimination against providers of health services that are not involved in abortion.

S. 397

At the request of Mr. ISAKSON, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 397, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to ensure fairness in Medicare hospital payments by establishing a floor for the area wage index applied with respect to certain hospitals.

S. 690

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) were added as cosponsors of S. 690, a bill to extend the eligibility of redesignated areas as HUBZones from 3 years to 7 years.

S. 720

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, a bill to amend the Export Administration Act of 1979 to include in the prohibitions on boycotts against allies of the United States boycotts fostered by international governmental organizations against Israel and to direct the Export-Import Bank of the United States to oppose boycotts against Israel, and for other purposes.

At the request of Mr. PORTMAN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 720, supra.

S. 925

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 925, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the ability of health care professionals to treat veterans through the use of telemedicine, and for other purposes.

S. 945

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Utah (Mr. LEE) and the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) were added as cosponsors of S. 945, a bill to amend the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006 to authorize funds to identify and eliminate excessive occupational licensure.

S. 967

At the request of Ms. STABENOW, the names of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) and the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) were added as cosponsors of S. 967, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to increase access to ambulance services under the Medicare program and to reform payments for such services under such program, and for other purposes.

S. 1050

At the request of Mr. COCHRAN, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1050, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the Chinese-American Veterans of World War II, in recognition of their dedicated service during World War II.

S. 1068

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1068, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax incentives for increased investment in clean energy.

S. 1104

At the request of Mr. MANCHIN, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Mr. SULLIVAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1104, a bill to require the Federal Communications Commission to establish a methodology for the collection by the Commission of information about commercial mobile service and commercial mobile data service, and for other purposes.

S. 1179

At the request of Ms. MURKOWSKI, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. REED) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1179, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to inter in national cemeteries individuals who supported the United States in Laos during the Vietnam War era, and for other purposes.

S. 1182

At the request of Mr. YOUNG, the names of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE) were added as cosponsors of S. 1182, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint commemorative coins in recognition of the 100th anniversary of The American Legion.

S. 1292

At the request of Mr. RUBIO, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1292, a bill to amend the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 to monitor and combat anti-Semitism globally, and for other purposes.

S. 1312

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cospon-

sor of S. 1312, a bill to prioritize the fight against human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1343

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1343, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions.

S. 1354

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from Maine (Mr. KING) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1354, a bill to establish an Individual Market Reinsurance fund to provide funding for State individual market stabilization reinsurance programs.

S. 1361

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1361, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to allow physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and clinical nurse specialists to supervise cardiac, intensive cardiac, and pulmonary rehabilitation programs.

S. 1462

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1462, a bill to amend the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to improve cost sharing subsidies.

S. 1520

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. COCHRAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1520, a bill to expand recreational fishing opportunities through enhanced marine fishery conservation and management, and for other purposes.

S. RES. 201

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. TESTER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 201, a resolution affirming the importance of title IX, applauding the increase in educational opportunities available to women and girls, and recognizing the tremendous amount of work left to be done to further increase those opportunities.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 257. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1519, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 257. Mr. CRAPO (for himself and Mr. RISCH) submitted an amendment

intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 1519, to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the end of subtitle C of title XXVIII, add the following:

SEC. 2826. LAND CONVEYANCE, MOUNTAIN HOME AIR FORCE BASE, IDAHO.

(a) CONVEYANCE AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary of the Air Force may convey, without consideration, to the City of Mountain Home, Idaho (in this section referred to as the "City"), all right, title, and interest of the United States in and to a parcel of real property, including improvements thereon, consisting of approximately 4.25 miles of railroad spur located near Mountain Home Air Force Base, Idaho, as further described in subsection (b), for the purpose of economic development.

(b) MAP AND LEGAL DESCRIPTION.—

(1) FINALIZING LEGAL DESCRIPTIONS.—As soon as practicable after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of the Air Force shall finalize a map and the legal description of the property to be conveyed under subsection (a).

(2) MINOR ERRORS.—The Secretary of the Air Force may correct any minor errors in the map or the legal description.

(3) AVAILABILITY.—The map and legal description shall be on file and available for public inspection.

(c) PAYMENT OF COSTS OF CONVEYANCE.—

(1) PAYMENT REQUIRED.—The Secretary may require the City to cover all costs (except costs for environmental remediation of the property) to be incurred by the Secretary, or to reimburse the Secretary for costs incurred by the Secretary, to carry out the conveyance under this section, including survey costs, costs for environmental documentation, and any other administrative costs related to the conveyance. If amounts are collected from the City in advance of the Secretary incurring the actual costs, and the amount collected exceeds the costs actually incurred by the Secretary to carry out the conveyance, the Secretary shall refund the excess amount to the City.

(2) TREATMENT OF AMOUNTS RECEIVED.—Amounts received under paragraph (1) as reimbursement for costs incurred by the Secretary to carry out the conveyance under subsection (a) shall be credited to the fund or account that was used to cover the costs incurred by the Secretary in carrying out the conveyance, or to an appropriate fund or account currently available to the Secretary for the purposes for which the costs were paid. Amounts so credited shall be merged with amounts in such fund or account and shall be available for the same purposes, and subject to the same conditions and limitations, as amounts in such fund or account.

(d) USE RESERVATION.—The Secretary may reserve a right to temporarily use, for urgent reasons of national defense and at no cost to the United States, all or a portion of the railroad spur conveyed under subsection (a).

(e) ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS.—The Secretary may require such additional terms and conditions in connection with the conveyance under subsection (a) as the Secretary considers appropriate to protect the interests of the United States.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I have 11 requests for committees to meet during today's session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

The Committee on Armed Services is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in open session to consider the nominations.

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold a Hearing on "Force Multipliers: How Transportation and Supply Chain Stakeholders are Combatting Human Trafficking."

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 9:45 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate office building.

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate office building, to conduct a hearing entitled "The Use of TIFIA and Innovative Financing in Improving Infrastructure to Enhance Safety, Mobility, and Economic Opportunity."

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 10 a.m., to hold a business meeting.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the ses-

sion of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, at 10:05 a.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Consideration of the Taylor Force Act."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on July 12, 2017, at 9:30 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nominations."

COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Indian Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, in room SD-628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a legislative hearing.

COMMITTEE ON AGING

The Special Committee on Aging is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017, to conduct a hearing entitled "Nourishing our Golden Years: How Proper and Adequate Nutrition Promote Healthy Aging and Positive Outcomes."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC, INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY

The Committee on Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asia, the Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, July 12, 2017 at 2:15 p.m., to hold a Human Rights, and the Rule of Law."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER SECURITY AND IMMIGRATION

The Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Border Security and Immigration, is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on July 12, 2017, at 2:30 p.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled "Examining the Problem of Visa Overstays: A Need for Better Tracking and Accountability."

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that my intern, Thomas Adamson, be granted privileges of the floor for the remainder of the day.

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

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that two fellows from my office, Micaela Klein and Sunmin Kim, be granted floor privileges for the remainder of the calendar year.

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

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Andrew Rollo, a detailee on the Senate Committee on Finance, be granted floor privileges for the duration of the Congress.

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

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY, JULY 13, 2017

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12:30 p.m., Thursday, July 13; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Hagerty nomination, with all postcloture time expiring at 1:45 p.m.

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

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 12:30 P.M. TOMORROW

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:57 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, July 13, 2017, at 12:30 p.m.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate July 12, 2017:

THE JUDICIARY

DAVID C. NYE, OF IDAHO, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE DISTRICT OF IDAHO.