

Houston, TX, is far more dramatic because of climate disruption and carbon pollution. It is simply a fact that the devastation we just witnessed in Florida is far worse than the disruption and the devastation that would have occurred otherwise. That is why we all need to keep working to tackle this challenge. The United States should be in the lead in taking on the seminal challenge of humankind in our generation.

Thank you, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. 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.

HEALTHCARE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise in strong opposition to the Republican healthcare bill known as Graham-Cassidy. You would expect that Republicans' fourth attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act would be better than the previous three. In fact, the opposite is true. This bill is the worst of the four bills.

This is especially personal for me because the bill hurts California more than any other State. Before I get to this attack on my home State, I would like to list just a few of the many ways this bill harms millions of Americans and puts countless lives at risk.

This bill boots at least 32 million Americans off healthcare. There is no sugarcoating it; Graham-Cassidy cuts health insurance subsidies and slashes Medicaid funding. That will mean fewer people with healthcare, plain and simple.

The bill ends guaranteed protections for those with preexisting conditions. Anyone who says otherwise is not telling the truth. This bill says that States can allow insurance companies to charge those with preexisting conditions whatever they want. That means an end to guaranteed coverage because people with health conditions would be charged so much they wouldn't be able to afford coverage. Arguments to the contrary are just wrong.

This bill not only eliminates the Medicaid expansion, it ends Medicaid as we have known it since 1965. The Medicaid expansion in the Affordable Care Act has meant 15 million more vulnerable Americans have gained insurance. With those funds gone, they lose coverage. By radically changing traditional Medicaid, States would have to either cover hundreds of billions in additional costs or kick people off Medicaid. Again, fewer people with coverage, more lives at risk—these are facts, and they are indisputable.

This bill is also devastating for women's health. It ends the guarantee that

maternity care, contraception, and other critical services women need will be covered and bars women on Medicaid from accessing Planned Parenthood, which is the primary healthcare provider for millions of American women. We hear so much from the other side about the importance of being able to choose your doctor. This bill says that, if you have chosen a doctor at Planned Parenthood, too bad. It doesn't matter how much you like that doctor; you need to find someone else.

The bill also takes us back to the days of junk plans, when you could faithfully pay your premium and then discover you weren't covered when you got sick. The Affordable Care Act required all insurance companies to cover essential health benefits like cancer treatment, maternity care, prescriptions, and mental health. Graham-Cassidy says States can waive that protection.

Those items I described affect all Americans, but as I said, this bill is also a direct attack on California and other Democratic States. When the Supreme Court ruled that the Affordable Care Act couldn't require States to expand Medicaid to cover more families, some Republican States used that as a way to attack President Obama's legacy. Never mind that they were risking their own constituents' lives, it was a political win for them.

Now, Graham-Cassidy proposes taking Federal funds away from those States that did expand Medicaid and give it to those that refused. In California alone, 4 million have health insurance today because my State decided to accept the Federal Government's 90 percent contribution for a small 10 percent buy-in. Graham-Cassidy would end that, pulling the rug out from under those Californians. To say this is unconscionable is an understatement.

What is worse, the bill's authors openly admit this is their strategy—to redirect money from States like California and New York to Republican States. Senator CASSIDY said he is just trying to create "parity," but the reason there isn't parity is because Republican Governors and legislatures chose to put politics over people's health. States can choose at any time to opt-in and receive the 90 percent match for Medicaid expansion. Candidly, it is a revolting way to get a bill passed.

The one part of this bill that is the same as past versions is the dire cuts to Medicaid. This needs to be repeated: The only thing congressional Republicans have agreed on throughout this entire process is that children, pregnant women, people with disabilities, and seniors in nursing homes get too much healthcare.

For any of my colleagues who don't realize the full extent of what Medicaid does for this country, allow me to explain. Gutting Medicaid would devastate care for children, particularly those with disabilities and complex healthcare needs. If anything in Wash-

ington were untouchable, I would think it would be providing healthcare to sick children, but apparently not.

Each Republican healthcare bill in the House and Senate goes far beyond just repealing the Affordable Care Act. It essentially ends Medicaid as we have known it since 1965, the year President Lyndon Johnson created the program. Today, Medicaid covers 36 million children, including 5 million in California. That is nearly half of all children in this country. The program has always been a partnership between the States and the Federal Government. The Federal Government has paid a fixed share of all healthcare costs for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Republicans want to end that partnership. Their plan would place strict limits on Federal payments, with States responsible for all costs above that limit. We don't have a full CBO score of this bill, so we don't have the exact numbers, but outside estimates of the total cuts in this bill show States losing over \$4 trillion over the next two decades. Let me repeat that figure: over \$4 trillion of cuts to Medicaid and health insurance subsidies within a generation.

California alone would be required to pay \$139 billion more between 2020 and 2027, and over the next 20 years, it would cost my State \$800 billion. These cuts would be backbreaking and force many States to make extremely hard choices. If California couldn't come up with tens of billions of dollars more each year, millions of residents could lose their Medicaid coverage. California's Medicaid director said, "Nothing is safe—no population, no services."

In July, I visited UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital in San Francisco. I met with three mothers—Kristin, Sally, and Nina. Their children—Maggie, Megan, and Drew—have struggled with extraordinary healthcare needs including cerebral palsy, a congenital heart defect, and VATER syndrome, which is a set of complex birth defects. If it weren't for the first-class care they received at Benioff, they wouldn't have survived.

These mothers are heroes. They have dedicated their lives to their children, doing all they can to ensure they lead full, happy lives in the face of such significant adversity. When I asked them how they and their children cope, Nina told me that you simply do your best to live the life you have.

All three of these families are middle class. They are covered by employer-sponsored private insurance, but Medicaid fills the significant gaps in coverage. It covers in-home nurses to provide around-the-clock care, as well as first-rate medical equipment—services that private insurance doesn't cover. Without in-home care, their children would have been placed in institutions to ensure access to critical around-the-clock care.

If the Senate passes a bill that guts Medicaid, mothers like these may not be able to keep their children at home.