

DACA

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I come to the floor today as a voice for 800,000 young men and women who are counting on all of us to pass the Dream Act. We can't wait because they can't wait. Every day that passes is another day they are forced to keep their lives on hold. Right now, hundreds of thousands of young people in this country are deferring their dreams of finishing a college degree, of becoming a doctor, buying a home, raising a family, starting a small business, or serving in our military—all because President Trump pulled the plug on the DACA Program 3 months ago.

Imagine that feeling of waking up day after day without any certainty about what comes next. Imagine that the country you love—the country where you grew up, where you are part of the community, where you pay your taxes, where you spend your time, your energy, and your money—will not commit to uphold this promise to you. That is just wrong.

Dreamers were brought to this country as children—some of them so young, they don't even remember it—and holding up their futures or sending them to a country they have never known makes no sense for them or for our country. It doesn't do anything to solve our broken immigration system, and it certainly doesn't reflect a country of opportunity or promise—something the United States has always aspired to.

My colleagues have been sharing stories from their States. Here are a few from my home State of Washington—just a few. I have heard so many in recent months.

Not long ago, I was in Tacoma, and I visited a community organization that has actually helped hundreds of men and women get enrolled in the DACA Program, including a woman named Adriana. She has always been a strong student. As early as middle school, she was representing her school district in statewide math and science competitions. Now, after becoming a certified nursing assistant, she is a program manager supervising others. Letting the DACA Program collapse would be a huge setback for Adriana and would end her authorization and her ability to work as a nursing assistant.

I heard from a sophomore at my alma mater, Washington State University, who was brought here to this country at the age of 9. Thanks to the DACA Program, she was able to get a job helping adults with disabilities, which has allowed her to pay for college tuition and support herself. She is a full-time student with a part-time job and still finds time to volunteer in her community. She is on track to graduate in 2019. She dreams of owning her own company someday.

I heard from another DACA recipient who owns a business in Washington State. He said that his college degree from the University of Washington—which he completed without any Fed-

eral funding, by the way, no help at all—symbolized one of his great life challenges. And, as he noted, he is now using his education, his skills, his earnings, and his taxes to contribute to the U.S. economy. He wrote: “This country is my home.”

The thought that this country would slam the door shut on him or any other Dreamer after all they have put in their communities and our country is so backward. That is why we Senators who are elected to work for the people and address the big issues facing the country need to act.

I urge my Republican colleagues to consider the stories you heard from your own States. Think about the communities you represent and the young men and women who are studying and working and starting businesses in the communities you travel to and live in. Show them that President Trump's reckless, divisive agenda does not represent you, your party, or your own State. Work with Democrats to stand for the Dreamers in your district, who are unsure if they can keep their job at a hospital or as a firefighter or serve in our military to fight for our freedoms, who are unsure if they can stay in the only country they have known as home and remain with loved ones.

We need the help of every Member to push back against the policies and the rhetoric that hurt our friends and our neighbors, our coworkers, our students, and our loved ones, because, to paraphrase Dr. King, we know that only our light can drive out the dark forces of bigotry and division in this country.

I thank the countless DACA recipients who have bravely shared their stories in letters, in person, and at rallies across our country. I know it cannot be easy to speak up in these uncertain times, but I want Dreamers to know that there are a lot of us here in Congress and across the country who are inspired by your courage and resilience. We stand with you, and we will not stop until we get this across the finish line.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

TRIBUTE TO MAX MENDEZ

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, it is my honor to announce our latest Granite Stater of the Month, an inspiring, resilient, and generous young man from Merrimack, NH.

Max Mendez, an 8-year-old boy—also known as Mighty Max and Professor Max—has battled leukemia for over a year, and he has proven to be a shining example of the values that make the

Granite State and all of our communities strong.

As Max began treatment last year—procedures, blood draws, and tests—at Boston Children's Hospital, he was often recognized for his courage and grit. The hospital had a supply of toys, and after these procedures, he would often be rewarded with one of them.

Max received so many toys that he started to donate some of them to other kids and realized that giving toys felt even better than receiving them.

In the face of his own severe health challenges, Max started Mighty Max's Mega Toy Drive to help supply Jimmy Fund Clinic, the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, and Boston Children's Hospital's hematology and oncology unit with presents for brave young patients like himself.

In true Granite State fashion, Max and his family received invaluable support from their community, including friends, local businesses, schools, sports teams, and the local police department.

Max's community donated toys, offered spaces, collection sites, and delivered donations to Max and the Mendez family. With extra help from his sister, Mckayla, and the Lyna family, who helped advertise the toy drive and store donations, Mighty Max's Mega Toy Drive received roughly 3,000 toys ahead of the holiday season this year.

Mighty Max, the Mendez family, and all of the Granite Staters who supported the toy drive demonstrate the spirit that makes New Hampshire such a strong, resilient State.

While battling leukemia and enduring painful treatments, Max found it in himself to bring joy to others who face similar challenges. His entire community, including people Max will never meet, is stronger because of his generous spirit and hard work.

Max is an inspiration for all of us during this holiday season and beyond, and I am proud to call him our Granite Stater of the Month.

Thank you.

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

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

DACA

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, this fall, I met with Dreamers in my home State of Oregon. At meetings in Eugene and in Portland, these young people gave powerful accounts of how the Trump administration has needlessly and cruelly injected fear into their lives and the lives of their families.

Right now, these Dreamers—these young people who have done nothing wrong, who have terrific grades, wonderful conduct, who are helping their

families—are faced with the very real threat that they may be ripped away from the only lives and the only country they have ever known. These young people might be little more than numbers on a page to those who spend their days waging political fights in the Nation's Capital, but this is not just some academic topic for the thousands of young people across the land who would be affected by these vicious policies. This is a real-life issue with real-life consequences and real-life dangers for many of our friends and neighbors.

It is real for those like Cynthia Aguilar, whom I met this fall at the University of Oregon in Eugene. She spoke eloquently about how her mother sacrificed so much for her, living paycheck to paycheck so Cynthia could have an education and a better life.

It is real for those like Eastern Oregon University student Daysi Bedolla, who spoke just as movingly when we met in Portland, as well as in La Grande at a townhall I held in her community. Not only does Daysi talk about the huge contributions that Dreamers are making in their hometowns and college campuses, she demonstrates her contributions each day at Eastern Oregon University as the school's student body president.

Cynthia, Daysi, and so many others are what I call the real dream team, and I am proud to be their teammate in this fundamental fight for fairness. It is not a small fight. In Oregon alone, there are an estimated 11,000 Dreamers—enough to fill almost every seat in the Memorial Coliseum—and every one of those young people has parents and brothers and sisters and friends in their communities. They have well-laid plans to work hard in school, make something of their lives, and start families of their own in the United States. The strength of their stories fuels our fight, and that is why I join colleagues today in insisting that the Dream Act come to the floor of this Senate. This has been a long battle.

I am proud to have been with the Dreamers every step of the way from the Dream Act legislation to President Obama's actions on DACA. I am also pleased to have worked with my colleagues to introduce legislation like the Protect Dreamer Confidentiality Act. This bill would ensure that the information Dreamers provided to the government isn't somehow used against them for immigration enforcement.

Congress has to come together and work in a bipartisan way on a fair path forward for Dreamers. This effort from the White House to punish innocent young people and split families goes against the values we cherish as Americans and further divides our country. These children have known nothing but the United States as their home. They have done nothing wrong and everything right. They deserve an opportunity to stay here. Our government made a promise to Dreamers when we encouraged them to share their stories

publicly, submit to background checks, and pay taxes. It would be wrong to go back on that promise now.

I am pleased to be on this floor to say that we are just going to battle every step along the way until there is justice done for the Dreamers.

REPUBLICAN TAX BILL

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I thank Senator MORAN, who graciously gave me some time, and I want to briefly talk about one other subject.

I am the ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, and I am pleased to serve with my colleague from Louisiana who also serves on the committee and will be a conferee on the tax bill.

I would like to bring up a matter the President introduced yesterday. The President has long said that there was going to be a "fantastic tax bill"—his words, not mine—and obviously the American people don't see it that way. Overwhelmingly, we see in surveys—I saw it in townhall meetings over the weekend, in a community Hillary Clinton won, in a community where Donald Trump was extremely popular—that this tax bill was incredibly unpopular.

The President admitted yesterday that there was a "tiny little sliver" of Americans who, as he said, "just through circumstances maybe don't get the full benefit of the tax bill." I am not sure what tax plan he is talking about, but it sure can't be the one that hikes taxes on middle-class folks that Republicans are working out in the conference room now.

So I want to get to the numbers, just briefly, from the independent, non-partisan referees at the Joint Committee on Taxation. These are the folks we pay. The numbers they have given us really aren't in line with what the President is talking about when he says only a "tiny little sliver" of Americans are going to be hurt and come out behind.

Thirteen million low- and middle-income Americans are facing an immediate tax hike of \$100 or more because of this bill. Apparently, in the President's view, 13 million Americans is a "tiny little sliver."

That is just the immediate impact. The bill gets worse and worse for middle-class folks with each passing year, and 2027 is when the numbers put your jaw on the floor. Under this plan that the President says is so "fantastic," 150 million middle-class taxpayers either get a couple of crumbs or they get hit with an outright tax hike. I am going to say that once more. One hundred and fifty million Americans will get nothing but crumbs or an outright tax hike. That is what the President calls a "tiny little sliver"? It is pretty close to 90 percent of the middle class.

That is just the raw math of who is facing a tax hike. As I have said, this bill drives a dagger into the heart of the Affordable Care Act. Thirteen million Americans are going to lose their

healthcare, and tens of millions more will get hit with a hidden tax hike in the form of higher insurance premiums. Then, of course, we all understand that the coverage requirement in the Affordable Care Act that Senate Republicans seek to remove is what makes it possible for us to get loophole-free, airtight protection for those who faced discrimination when they had a preexisting condition.

This is pretty troubling stuff, and it sure doesn't strike me that when this administration says that only a "tiny little sliver" of people are going to get hurt—the reality shows something very different.

The fact is, after all the giveaways to the multinational corporations and the well-connected and high-fliers, this bill is going to cost more than \$1 trillion. It is a real head-scratcher, how you can spend so much money, help so few people, and convince yourself that what you are doing is so terrific.

Peddling the idea that there is just a "tiny little sliver" of people out there who don't benefit from this tax plan, in my view, is preposterous, and the tens of millions of Americans this bill is going to hurt deserve far better.

Mr. President, 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. MORAN. 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. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for up to 15 minutes.

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

VETERANS COMMUNITY CARE AND ACCESS ACT

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am glad to see the Presiding Officer in the Chair because I came to talk about a topic that he and I share a great concern and compassion about—the veterans of our States and our Nation.

I first want to thank Senator JOHN MCCAIN, of Arizona. Many of my colleagues have spent a much longer time in the Senate than I have, and they have had the opportunity to work side by side with Senator MCCAIN more often than I have, but I am honored today to join him in legislation that we introduced earlier this week. It is S. 2184, the Veterans Community Care and Access Act of 2017.

I am honored to have the opportunity to work side by side with Senator MCCAIN and other colleagues as we try to determine how best we can care for those who served our Nation. I wish to use this opportunity to pay tribute to the Senator from Arizona for his service to our Nation and what I know of his experience in Vietnam and his service to the Nation but what I also know