

Pennsylvania, and “9” was representative of the 9 million children across the country who were enrolled in CHIP. When we have all of these debates about what has to get done in the next couple of days and between now and the middle part of January, I hope that 9 million number will be uppermost in people’s minds. Included within that are 180,000 children in Pennsylvania.

This is really not about a number or a program. It is about real people, real people’s lives. Every Member of the Senate has a constituent he could tell a story about or hundreds, if not thousands, of stories. I will just tell one tonight about a mom whom I met not too long ago, just about a week ago, Jennie Sheeks. Jennie is from Upper Makefield, PA. That is Bucks County, Southeastern Pennsylvania, just north of the city of Philadelphia.

Jennie told us about her son Kam-au. Kam-au is 8 years old, and he is enrolled in the Children’s Health Insurance Program. His brother and his sister have special needs and are Medicaid beneficiaries. So, in one family, you have an example of one child, thankfully, benefiting from the CHIP program and then two other members of that same family benefiting either from CHIP or the Medicaid Program. Thank goodness those programs are in place. Without CHIP and Medicaid, Jennie said her children would be uninsured because, even though both Jennie and her husband work full time, covering the whole family on her plan is too expensive.

This is another example of working families who depend upon these programs for their children. They need these programs. These programs aren’t theoretical. They aren’t some far-off Washington debate about timing and leverage and negotiations and back-and-forth. This is about their real lives right now. As I said, the CHIP program should have been reauthorized 100 days ago, and it is inexcusable that it is not being done now.

We all left here right after the tax vote. Everybody went back to his home State and, I am sure, had a great holiday season. Unfortunately, even though there was a little bit of a patch—a tiny, little patch made for this program—a lot of people left here with no worries at all and went back to their States and communities and neighborhoods, where there were a lot of other people worrying about whether they were going to get the kind of coverage for their children they should have a right to expect.

Back to Jennie and her son. What are they going to do without the Children’s Health Insurance Program? I cannot imagine—and few Senators or House Members can imagine—how Jennie and her son will get from here to there without having the Children’s Health Insurance Program. I cannot imagine what it must be like for Jennie to worry about how she will pay for her son’s care if he loses CHIP coverage. No parent should have that kind of stress

in his life when there is an existing program that covers 9 million kids that should be reauthorized.

When he was a public official, my father used to talk about people who had led lives of real struggle. We have all known them in our lives—people who have to work every day just to make ends meet in order to provide for their families and get through another day, another week, another month, another pay period. He used to refer to those Americans as leading “quietly triumphant lives.” My father’s words for those who struggle—“quietly triumphant lives.”

There are a lot of families out there who lead very difficult lives, and they depend sometimes on the Children’s Health Insurance Program or Medicaid or some other program just to get through another week, and I think about Jennie and parents like her who have to overcome so much to help their children—to love them, to care for them, to protect them, and to educate them. Even the most loving, caring, hard-working, and dedicated parent cannot provide the protections and the care health insurance coverage and quality healthcare can provide, the kind of quality healthcare from professionals that comes to that child because he or she has the protection of health insurance. Those parents—no matter how much they work, no matter how good they are to their children—sometimes cannot provide something as basic, obviously, as healthcare and, of course, the insurance coverage that makes it possible.

We have legislation ready today, the KIDS Act, that is bipartisan. It has already moved through the Finance Committee unanimously. I don’t think there was a single vote against it. If there was, it was not that loud a vote. I hope we can make these children a priority in the coming days, finally, at long last.

There were a lot of deals made in the tax bill, a lot of numbers moved around to get the tax bill done. I understand that is part of any legislation, but if a tax bill can get done in the U.S. Senate, we can certainly have a vote to get the Children’s Health Insurance Program reauthorized now that it is 100 days old.

I see the distinguished majority leader is here so I will wrap up tonight with the words of Jennie’s son Kam-au:

I was happy when I got health insurance because I knew I could go to the doctor if I got hurt or sick. When I didn’t have health insurance, I was a little worried . . . I think we should keep CHIP going so we can stay healthy.

No better words were uttered or spoken about the Children’s Health Insurance Program than Kam-au’s, an 8-year-old, who said CHIP should stay in place so we can stay healthy.

I agree. The American people agree. Let’s get CHIP done.

I yield the floor.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 2:15

p.m. tomorrow, all postcloture time on the Campbell nomination be considered expired and the Senate vote on confirmation of the Campbell nomination with no intervening action or debate; finally, that if confirmed, 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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session for 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.

(At the request of Mr. SCHUMER, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

VOTE EXPLANATION

• Mr. TESTER. Mr. President, I was necessarily absent due to a flight cancellation out of my control when the Senate voted on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 370.

On this vote, had I been present, I would have voted “yea” on the motion to invoke cloture on Executive Calendar No. 370.●

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

MACOMB COUNTY, MICHIGAN, BICENTENNIAL

• Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I am proud to pay special tribute today to the people of Macomb County, MI, who are celebrating their county’s bicentennial this year.

The people of Macomb County symbolize the history, sacrifices, and character of people all across our country who have helped create the American middle class. They represent America’s diverse history of immigrants coming to this country to find the American dream. When it comes to hard work, the people of Macomb County are second to none. The county’s rich history has created a resilient people who put family, faith, and community first in their lives.

Macomb County was founded on January 15, 1818. Located on the shores of Lake St. Clair, the county is named in honor of General Alexander Macomb, a veteran of the War of 1812. The county was the third county founded in Michigan and, today, is Michigan’s third most populous county.

Macomb County is known for its innovation and impressive manufacturing might. It is a backbone of the American automotive industry. Fiat