

Oregon. It happened on the other coast in Rhode Island. It has happened around this country.

Lyndon Johnson, when he signed the bill for Medicare, said:

It calls upon us never to be indifferent toward despair. It commands us never to turn away from helplessness. It directs us never to ignore or to spurn those who suffer untended in a land that is bursting with abundance.

Medicare is high-quality coverage for 58 million Americans. It has bargaining power, low administrative costs, and high respect by participants.

What does the Choose Medicare Act do? Well, it covers all that Medicare covers today, and then, because it would be open to people of all ages, it throws in pediatric and reproductive healthcare and builds those networks. It strengthens the exchanges by strengthening the tax credits so that the middle class is not stranded when it comes to the affordability of healthcare. It extends those tax credits from 400 percent of poverty to 600 percent of poverty, reaching further into the middle class to make that transition—to make healthcare affordable on the exchange. It strengthens, certainly, Medicare itself, by putting a cap on the out-of-pocket costs.

For all those who are in traditional Medicare, their Medicare improves as well. It provides the ability to drive down the cost of drugs by giving Medicare the ability to negotiate those prices. That is certainly a very important feature.

Here we have something that is very popular with the public. When the public is asked "Would you like to see the opportunity for every single American to be able to buy into Medicare, have that as an option; it is a voluntary option, but an option," overwhelmingly, they say yes. Democrats say yes. Republicans say yes. Independents say yes. They would like to have that option. The more they learn about how a public option has driven down costs, the more they say that this is needed.

We not only make it possible to buy it on the exchange, we make it possible for self-insured companies to take advantage of Medicare. We make it possible for employers in regular companies, who are buying other healthcare plans for their employees, to consider buying a Medicare plan. So this reach is broad and deep.

That is the type of "we the people" legislation we should be considering on the floor of this Senate—not a healthcare bill designed to destroy healthcare for 22 to 30 million people, as we saw last year courtesy of our majority, not a plan to borrow \$1.5 trillion from our children and to give it away to the very richest Americans, the biggest, boldest bank heist seen in American history—perhaps in world history. That is the type of bank heist you would expect out of corrupt, Third World governments, not here in the United States of America, which tells you just how corrupt our election proc-

ess has become, with Citizens United allowing unlimited billionaire dollars into our campaign system.

We have to fight to take back the vision of our Nation, the "we the people" vision of our Nation. It has been stolen. It has been corrupted, and we have to take it back. When we take it back, we are going to put bills on the floor of this Senate that are about the fundamentals for families, living-wage jobs, public education and public college education, affordable quality classrooms, and the cost of housing, which is completely out of reach, and, certainly, profound substantial improvements to our healthcare system.

Again, I thank CHRIS MURPHY for partnering in this project. I supported BERNIE SANDERS' Medicare for All, and I love that vision. CHRIS MURPHY supported BRIAN SCHATZ's bill to be able to buy into Medicaid. We don't have an identical healthcare profile, but what we sought together is the option of buying into Medicare, which is a complete win for the American people and a complete win for our healthcare system.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 473—EX-PRESSING NO CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY AND CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RESIGNATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

Mr. UDALL (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. CARPER, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. PETERS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. NELSON, Mr. SCHUMER, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Ms. BALDWIN, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CASEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. Kaine, Mr. BROWN, Mr. COONS, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. WARNER, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. REED) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works:

S. RES. 473

Whereas the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this preamble as the "Administrator") is a key position in the Executive Branch;

Whereas the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency (referred to in this preamble as the "Agency") is to protect human health and the environment;

Whereas the Agency is vested by law with the principal responsibility for controlling and abating pollution in the areas of air, water, land, hazardous waste, noise, radiation, and toxic substances;

Whereas Scott Pruitt, as Administrator, has misused taxpayer dollars by spending those taxpayer dollars on excessive personal conveniences and unnecessary office enhancements while dramatically cutting budgets and staff for critically important en-

forcement, research, and implementation activities;

Whereas, under Administrator Pruitt—
(1) the Agency is hemorrhaging staff and experts needed to protect the health, safety, and livelihood of millions of people of the United States, with more than 700 employees of the Agency having left or been forced out of the Agency during his tenure as Administrator;

(2) the Agency is seeking to shrink staff of the Agency by 3,200 employees (or roughly 20 percent of the workforce of the Agency of about 15,000), which would make it difficult to implement the mission of the Agency; and

(3) top officials of the Agency have been granted permission to also work for private companies while employed by the Agency, creating major conflicts of interest with their positions at the Agency;

Whereas, by delaying the effective date of regulations, easing enforcement of existing regulations, and delaying implementation of new regulations, Administrator Pruitt is helping polluters at the expense of the health, safety, and livelihood of millions of people of the United States;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has failed to exercise the enforcement authorities of the Agency, which are necessary to the fulfillment of the mission of the Agency, and has hampered career officials and experts from efficiently doing their jobs without political interference by issuing a memorandum that required regional offices of the Agency to first seek permission from Agency headquarters before—

(1) investigating potential pollution violations;

(2) requesting information from potential violators; or

(3) requiring additional monitoring from companies suspected of violations;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has continually overridden the recommendations of the scientists of the Agency in order to provide relief to industry, leaving in place the use of harmful chemicals, pesticides, and policies that are directly impacting the health and well-being of millions of people of the United States;

Whereas the Agency is expected to maintain and uphold unbiased scientific credibility, but Administrator Pruitt—

(1) has undertaken actions directly counter to the science-based mission of the Agency by working to undermine and censor science, scientists, and researchers;

(2) has skewed the membership of all advisory committees of the Agency by removing and barring highly qualified, independent scientists from those advisory committees if the scientist has received grants from the Agency, while allowing individuals who receive funding from industry to serve on those advisory committees; and

(3) is attempting to paralyze the ability of the Agency to set health-based pollution standards by restricting the use of scientific research by the Agency unless that research complies with criteria that are intentionally nearly impossible to meet;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt—

(1) has shielded his actions from the people of the United States, including by refusing to make his schedule public or provide justifications for his policy and rulemaking decisions, in a way not done by any previous Administrator; and

(2) has claimed unprecedented exemptions on the few requests under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the "Freedom of Information Act"), from outside groups that the Agency has responded to, masking all but the most basic information about meetings, travel, and spending of Administrator Pruitt from the public;

Whereas Administrator Pruitt has lost the faith of the public through his continued undermining of basic ethics, particularly the ethics of impartiality (such as by renting a below-market priced room in a condominium owned by an energy lobbyist with clients who had interests that are regulated by the Agency), and is tarnishing the reputation of serving in public office at the Agency; and

Whereas, for the reasons described in this preamble, Scott Pruitt, as Administrator, has failed to faithfully discharge the functions of that office: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) Scott Pruitt should resign immediately from his post as Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency; and

(2) the President should appoint to the office of Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency an individual who will be committed to the fulfillment of the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency and who is able to fully and faithfully discharge the public duties entrusted to the office of the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.

SENATE RESOLUTION 474—RELATIVE TO THE DEATH OF THE HONORABLE JOHN MELCHER, SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF MONTANA

Mr. TESTER (for himself, Mr. DAINES, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. ALEXANDER, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. BENNET, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. BURR, Ms. CANTWELL, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. CASSIDY, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. COONS, Mr. CORKER, Mr. CORNYN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. DONNELLY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. ENZI, Mrs. ERNST, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. FISCHER, Mr. FLAKE, Mr. GARDNER, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. GRASSLEY, Ms. HARRIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. HATCH, Mr. HEINRICH, Ms. HEITKAMP, Mr. HELLER, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. HOEVEN, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ISAKSON, Mr. JOHNSON, Mr. JONES, Mr. KAINE, Mr. KENNEDY, Mr. KING, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. LEE, Mr. MANCHIN, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mrs. MCCASKILL, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MORAN, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mr. MURPHY, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. NELSON, Mr. PAUL, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. REED, Mr. RISCH, Mr. ROBERTS, Mr. ROUNDS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. SASSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. SCOTT, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. SHELBY, Ms. SMITH, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. TOOMEY, Mr. UDALL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WARNER, Ms. WARREN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WYDEN, and Mr. YOUNG) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 474

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher was first elected to Congress in 1969 and served in the House of Representatives for more than 7 years until 1977 and in the Senate for 12 years until 1989;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served in the United States Army during

World War II and was part of the D-Day invasion of Normandy in June 1944;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher received the Purple Heart, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Bronze Star for his service;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher graduated from veterinary school at Iowa State University in 1950, after which he moved with his family to Forsyth, Montana and established his own veterinary clinic;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served on the Forsyth city council starting in 1953 and served as mayor from 1955 to 1961 prior to serving as a State representative and State senator in Montana;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher understood the value of public land and paved the way for future pieces of legislation to preserve the breathtaking landscapes of Montana;

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher passionately stood up for family farmers and ranchers in Montana and ensured his colleagues understood the importance of the agricultural sector; and

Whereas the Honorable John Melcher served with great humility, determination, integrity, and love of his family, the State of Montana, and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That—

(1) the Senate—

(A) has heard with profound sorrow and deep regret the announcement of the death of the Honorable John Melcher, Senator from the State of Montana; and

(B) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate communicate this resolution to the House of Representatives and transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to the family of the Honorable John Melcher; and

(2) when the Senate adjourns on the date of adoption of this resolution, it stands adjourned as a further mark of respect to the memory of the deceased Senator.

SENATE RESOLUTION 475—COMMEMORATING THE 60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE NORTH AMERICAN AEROSPACE DEFENSE COMMAND

Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. BENNET) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 475

Whereas 2018 marks the 60th anniversary of the creation of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, commonly referred to as "NORAD";

Whereas the United States and Canada, bound together by history, values, economy, environment, and resolve to improve the lives people of both countries, have long enjoyed a close relationship that has allowed for continuous collaboration, building a prosperous future for the people of both countries;

Whereas the United States and Canada have stood shoulder to shoulder in defense of peace and security for more than 100 years, as partners and allies in World War I, World War II, the Korean War, throughout the Cold War, in Afghanistan, and as part of the global coalition against Daesh, working together to advance shared values of both countries;

Whereas, as indispensable allies in the defense of North America, on May 12, 1958, the United States and Canada signed an official agreement creating the binational North American Aerospace Defense Command and formally acknowledged the mutual commit-

ment of both countries to defend their citizens from air domain attacks;

Whereas this cooperation is an important element of United States and Canadian contributions to the collective defense provided by the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command enjoys a unique status as the only fully integrated binational military command;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command is headquartered at Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado Springs, Colorado, with—

(1) 3 subordinate region headquarters located at—

(A) Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, for the Alaskan NORAD Region;

(B) Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida, for the Continental NORAD Region; and

(C) Canadian Forces Base Winnipeg, Manitoba, for the Canadian NORAD Region; and

(2) 3 subordinate sector command centers at—

(A) Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, for the Western Air Defense Sector;

(B) Rome, New York, for the Eastern Air Defense Sector; and

(C) Canadian Forces Base North Bay, Ontario, for the Canadian Air Defense Sector;

Whereas the missions of the North American Aerospace Defense Command are to provide aerospace warning, aerospace control, and maritime warning to defend North America;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command and the current operations center of United States Northern Command are connected to a worldwide system of sensors that provides the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command with a common operating picture of aerospace and maritime threats;

Whereas the Cheyenne Mountain Air Force Station, Colorado, hosts the Alternate Command Center for both the North American Aerospace Defense Command and United States Northern Command;

Whereas the Commander of the North American Aerospace Defense Command provides integrated tactical warning and attack assessments to the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command detects, intercepts, and, if necessary, engages air domain threats to North America using—

(1) a network of space-based and ground-based sensors;

(2) airborne radars, fighters, and helicopters; and

(3) ground-based air defense systems;

Whereas the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of Canada on the North American Aerospace Defense Command, done at Ottawa April 28, 2006 (TIAS 06-512), added a maritime warning mission to the slate of responsibilities of the North American Aerospace Defense Command, which entails a shared awareness and understanding of the ongoing activities conducted in United States and Canadian maritime approaches, maritime areas, and inland waterways;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command provides continuous surveillance and defense of North American airspace from further airborne aggression or attack, as occurred on September 11, 2001, through the ongoing Operation Noble Eagle mission;

Whereas the North American Aerospace Defense Command will continue to evolve to address the ever-changing nature of the threats to North America and adapt to future shared security interests;