

Senate on Tuesday, March 26, 2019, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a hearing entitled “Small business perspectives on a Federal Data Privacy Framework.”

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EAST ASIA, THE PACIFIC, AND INTERNATIONAL CYBERSECURITY POLICY

The Subcommittee on East Asia, The Pacific, and International Cybersecurity Policy of the Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, March 26, 2019, at 9:30 a.m., to hearing entitled, “U.S. policy towards North Korea after the second summit.”

#### GOLD STAR WIVES DAY

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res 68 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 68) designating April 5, 2019, as “Gold Star Wives Day”.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 68) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 13, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### HONORING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF FORT BENNING IN COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Armed Services Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res 72 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 72) honoring the 100th anniversary of Fort Benning in Columbus, Georgia.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 72) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of February 14, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### NATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELORS APPRECIATION DAY

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res 117 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 117) designating March 22, 2019, as “National Rehabilitation Counselors Appreciation Day”.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I know of no further debate on the measure.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There being no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the resolution.

The resolution (S. Res. 117) was agreed to.

Mr. PERDUE. I ask unanimous consent that the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of March 14, 2019, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2019

Mr. PERDUE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, March 27; 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, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 268; finally, that all time during recess, adjournment, morning business, and leader remarks count postclosure on the motion to proceed to H.R. 268.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for as much time as I may consume.

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

#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, I rise to join my colleagues in sharing my concerns and all of our concerns that we have—and really the concerns of a nation—about the announcement last night from a Department of Justice that works for this administration, which announced its plans to literally invalidate the Affordable Care Act and strip healthcare coverage away from millions of Americans, including those with preexisting conditions.

Before this time, it was a bit unclear, despite a court filing in Texas, what the intentions were. Some of our colleagues were saying, “No, we don’t really want to repeal the Affordable Care Act,” but last night we learned the truth, and the truth was very clear. The Justice Department took a hardline approach that they want to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

The President tweeted today that the Republican Party “will soon be known as the party of health care.” In fact, yesterday’s filing—in which the administration changed its previous position and argued in support of affirming the decision of a district court judge in Texas—ensures exactly the opposite; that this administration will break the promise it made to the American people that they can have healthcare insurance; that if they have a preexisting condition, they will not lose their healthcare. That was what the situation was before we had the protections in place in the Affordable Care Act, before you were able to keep your kids on your insurance until they were 26. That was a huge positive development.

Then we also put in place protections that said you couldn’t be kicked off your insurance for preexisting conditions. All over the last year, we had a debate about this in this Nation. I still remember being in a smalltown parade in Northern Minnesota, where a mom was pushing a stroller. She brought me over and pointed to her toddler in that stroller, to her young boy who had Down syndrome. She said: This is what a preexisting condition looks like, and I will do everything to protect my child. Guess what. Last night, the administration announced they wouldn’t protect that child because they will do everything to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

Let’s start with the absurd ruling the administration is basing its actions on. The Texas ruling last December came more than 6 years after the Supreme Court, in an opinion written by Justice Roberts, upheld the law’s constitutionality, which also found that parts of the law can be severed from the rest of the legislation. It also came after

the administration's refusal to defend the law. Instead of going in to put out the fire when the house was burning down, they just stood there. They just stood there and poured lighter fluid on, in terms of tweets and rhetoric.

If this ruling takes effect, the consequences of just this ruling alone from Texas will be devastating. To start, protections for people with preexisting conditions will be gone. About half of all Americans have preexisting conditions. This isn't just rare diseases. It is much more common diseases, like diabetes and asthma. The ability to keep your kid on your insurance plan until they are 26 would be gone. The work we have done to close the Medicare doughnut hole coverage gap would be gone. The provisions that help people buy insurance on the healthcare exchanges would be gone.

In my State, Minnesotans would see a loss of \$364 million in premium tax credits, and roughly 272,000 people would lose their coverage. That is one State alone.

We cannot allow this to happen. The decision from Texas should be overturned, and we need a President who believes the same thing. It is time to stop trying to reset the clock or start from scratch. This is not what the American people want. The vast majority of Americans support those protections in the Affordable Care Act.

We know we can make improvements to the Affordable Care Act. I would like to see pharmaceutical prices go down. I would like to pass my bill to allow Medicare to negotiate cheaper prices for prescription drugs. We could have a vote on that. I would love to see the bill I had with Senator McCain, and now Senator GRASSLEY, come up for a vote that would allow less expensive drugs to be brought in from other countries that are safe, like Canada. I would like to see a vote on the bill that Senator GRASSLEY and I have to stop pay-for-delay, where pharmaceuticals pay off generics to keep their products off the market.

We have already seen what kind of healthcare proposal my Republican colleagues have put forward. We saw it just last year. The legislation we saw last Congress would have hurt people by kicking millions off of Medicaid, by letting insurance companies charge people more when they get sick, and by jacking up healthcare costs.

Every major group you trust, when it comes to your health, was opposed—the largest groups of doctors, nurses, seniors, hospitals, people with cancer, Alzheimer's, heart disease, diabetes. Why were they opposed to repealing the Affordable Care Act? Because there was nothing good that was proposed to replace it.

We cannot spend the next 2 years going backward and fighting old fights, as this administration announced they would do last night. We need to focus on building on the strengths of the Affordable Care Act, those protections, and making it even stronger by allow-

ing seniors to negotiate for less expensive drug prices, for bringing in less expensive drugs from places like Canada, and for stopping pay-for-delay.

We can also reduce premiums by passing the bipartisan bill that Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY have for reinsurance, by passing Senator SHAHEEN's cost-sharing bill, by moving on for a public option which could be supported with Medicaid, the bill that Senator SCHATZ has, or Medicare, which is another bill Senator KAINE has.

I have always said the Affordable Care Act was a beginning and not an end, but guess what. Last night, we found out this administration truly wants to end it.

What are real people saying about this who don't work in this place? What are people who actually have to depend on the protections of the Affordable Care Act saying? I am going to spend the rest of my time this evening telling some of those stories, reading from the letters that I and others have received about people who have been protected by the Affordable Care Act, the very act that this administration announced last night it wanted to repeal—not just partially repeal. They announced they want to repeal all of it.

What would that do to people? Let's hear the stories. Let's read the letters. I am going to read 100 letters tonight, and I am starting, with the first letter, from my home State.

Bruce from Minneapolis has diabetes. He was spending \$1,000 a month for medical coverage before Congress passed the Affordable Care Act in 2010. Today, he pays \$300. He was quoted saying: "As an individual with pre-existing conditions, the ACA has helped save me thousands of dollars and given me a better lifestyle."

Amy of St. Paul said she needs the Medicaid benefits she gained under the ACA. What happened to her? She slipped on an icy driveway, as many people in Northern States, in this past winter, have done. Sadly for her, she had a brain injury when that happened. The ACA Medicaid benefits helped to cover her medical costs.

Delaney was able to access a mammogram screening to see if she carries the same genetic trait that predisposed several of her relatives to breast cancer. I have worked on the EARLY Act—passed this bill as part of the Affordable Care Act—that allowed us to do more to help especially people who have genetically tested to have the same gene, especially, by the way, certain women in African-American populations and certain women who are Jewish. We have found a prevailing gene that means they are more likely to get breast cancer when they are younger, but before we had the Affordable Care Act, none of this would have been covered. None of this would have been paid attention to.

Delaney wrote that because of the bill, she was able to access a mammogram screening to see if she had that

trait. Any threat to the ACA concerns her because the law mandated that healthcare plans cover recommended screenings.

Story No. 4. Katherine of Minneapolis is trying to regain financial independence after diabetes forced her out of her job. For now, she is covered by a low-income government policy that would continue if the ACA stays in place but otherwise it goes away. She worries that any income from a part-time job would disqualify her for coverage and that she would struggle to find private insurance without the ACA's protections for people with preexisting conditions.

I think this is really important for people to know because even if you are not using those exchanges because maybe you have employer insurance, which over half the people in this country have, the ACA helps you. Do you know why? It has those prohibitions that say your insurance can't kick you off just because you have a preexisting condition, just because you are born with diabetes, just because later in life you have breast cancer, or, as was the case before we passed the ACA in a number of States, if you were a victim of domestic violence, that was considered a preexisting condition because it could happen to you again.

So as I read these letters and tell these stories, people need to understand that the people who have been protected are not just the people who are getting their insurance on the exchanges. There are a whole lot of people who are on private insurance but were protected because the Affordable Care Act made clear that they can't be kicked off their insurance.

Story No. 5, letter No. 5. Amy qualifies for Medicaid only because the ACA raised the income limits to be eligible for the State program for those with disabilities. She had 73 doctor visits after she had this head injury, and she doubts she would have received that much care without good insurance.

That is the same story we had here in the letter; it is the same person who slipped and had a brain injury. This is another piece of why this is so important, because she got a disability when she slipped, and that means she is concerned that because of the income limits, that could change.

Story No. 6. Kate wrote to me and shared the following story:

I call my son the baby that almost didn't happen. A bright, loving and entirely all-boy 4-year-old, Daniel was a gift to us after I battled cancer from 27 to 34 years old. Unable to find care for my cancer after it reoccurred, my only insurance option even denied my pap smears and lifesaving tests. Cancer dotted my cervix in an attempt to overtake me; I refused to allow it to win.

Because of the ACA, I faced a future of hope—not only for myself, but for cancer sisters who were unable to receive other treatment and died. My best friend's cancer scans weren't covered by her insurance until 2015 and after battling for 3 years, she passed last year. Special provisions are now in place in the bill for women's health. Healthcare is going to be more affordable for people like

me and my children for years to come. Being a woman should NOT be a pre-existing condition.

Story No. 7. Abbey of Minneapolis was diagnosed with a parasitic infection at the age of 10 months old. Because of the ACA, she was still on her insurance throughout college when she had to have two brain surgeries and multiple eye surgeries. It also helps her pay for the only medicine that treats her disease.

Story No 8. Mary Jo from Minnesota is struggling with the costs of sending three kids to college. She was able to provide health insurance for her middle daughter only because the ACA allowed her to be covered by her father's insurance. Mary Jo writes that a reversal of this legislation would "be the last straw for us. Please don't take it away from us—we're hanging on by a fingernail."

I think that is a good one to send to the White House: This would "be the last straw for us." This is someone who is struggling to keep their kids in college and who needs the ACA to keep the kids on their healthcare.

Tara is another one from outside of my State. Tara's young son would not be alive if it weren't for Medi-Cal. Tara was laid off from her job just prior to his birth, and there was an issue with transitioning to COBRA. Her husband is self-employed without insurance, so when her son Benjamin came, he was uninsured. Tara said:

We were hard-working Americans, but that didn't matter when it came to insurance. Benjamin was uninsurable because of his heart.

When Benjamin was 2 weeks old, he was taken to the emergency room, where they learned he had a congenital heart defect that was causing him to go into heart failure. As doctors rushed to save his life, Tara and her husband panicked, not knowing how they would afford any care. Tara's mom and sisters offered to sell their houses, and their extended family looked to liquidate whatever assets they had. At that point, someone at the hospital gave Tara the paperwork for California Children's Services. That is where they live. They found they were eligible, and Benjamin's coverage began shortly thereafter.

For years, Tara and her family watched their income levels closely, keeping their income low, fearing that Medi-Cal would be terminated. She didn't return to work for years. She emphasizes that they never collected any other kind of assistance, but she was left with no choice, knowing that they would never be able to find other coverage for Benjamin.

Her mom, who is retired, takes care of Benjamin and helps her. Tara eventually went back to work, but when she went back to work, her husband was diagnosed with hepatitis. He now joins the millions of Americans who have preexisting conditions. She wrote:

If the ACA is repealed and I lose my job, and insurance, my husband and son will lose

access to health insurance we can afford. No healthcare saving will cover the cost of their care, not on a teacher's salary. Benjamin will soon be an adult and unable to be covered on my health insurance. I pray he will be able to afford health insurance.

She says this is what she wants lawmakers to know—that means us, right here, who work here:

We never collected any other type of assistance, but we had no choice to accept the [healthcare] coverage. Please consider the effects of repealing this act on children like my son and our family. We are real people. We're not special. We're normal Americans. We work hard, with some extraordinary circumstances. We don't want a free ride; we just want help and for lawmakers to know we're not disposable.

Letter No. 10. Kathy from Nevada says:

Before the Affordable Care Act, there were times in my life when I had health insurance and other times when I did not. Some employers would offer me a plan, and then if I switched jobs, I'd lose it.

By the way, I can't tell you how many times I heard this in my home State.

She goes on:

I tried to apply for coverage on the individual market—

This is before the Affordable Care Act—

but insurers would deny me when I admitted [and told the truth] that I had occasional migraines and sinus issues.

In late 2013, I started to notice pain in my abdomen nearly every time I ate anything. . . . I drove myself to the nearest urgent care facility. Many tests and procedures followed, and by March I was diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma, a rare form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma that's extremely aggressive. . . . The diagnosis came at the worst time imaginable. My mom died unexpectedly in January and a tree fell on my house in February. I found myself running away to escape because I was completely overwhelmed and terrified of chemotherapy. But after about a week, the cancer had weakened me to the point where I could barely walk from my car. . . . I went home to begin cancer treatment.

Because Burkitt's lymphoma is so aggressive, I needed . . . infusions of chemotherapy for 5½ days during each round, for a total of six rounds. These infusions could only be administered in the hospital.

When I finally finished treatment, I had amassed an astronomical amount of medical bills. . . . If I had not had medical insurance, I honestly don't know if I would have been able to continue.

The gratitude I felt (and continue to feel) for the ACA and the fact that I have medical insurance, is off the charts! The thought of going back to the days of not having medical insurance is so frightening to me. It almost feels barbaric, for lack of a better term, for anyone to be denied the opportunity to take care of his or her health without the looming possibility of bankruptcy.

She continues:

It is truly inhumane. I recently moved to Nevada and enrolled in their exchange. I will require monitoring for the rest of my life. Now that the ACA is up in the air, I feel like I am fighting for my life again! Congress is trying to take away the one thing that continues to guarantee access to screenings and treatment. Because of my age and my cancer history, any plan that doesn't have those protections guarantees that I will be charged

more and that I am at risk for being discriminated against.

Thank you for listening to my story.

Story No 11. Mendy in Virginia says:

My family's whole world was turned upside down in September 2015 when my husband, Ed, survived a massive stroke.

The stroke left Ed severely disabled. He lost the ability to verbally express himself, needed a wheelchair, and required help with all basic functions, including bathing and toileting.

When the stroke hit, Ed was working for an insurance company and I was a stay-at-home mom. His employer was kind enough to keep us on their health insurance for as long as they could. But within a couple of months, it became apparent that the damage was too severe, and Ed's recovery would take too long. His employer had no choice but to let Ed go, and with that, we lost our health insurance.

It was frightening—I knew that Ed needed help and that COBRA was too expensive at \$600 a month. A friend recommended that we make an appointment with a navigator at the local health center. I had no idea help like that even existed, but we walked out of an appointment with a silver plan for \$15 a month. . . . Our son was able to receive coverage through CHIP.

The insurance is what we can ask for [and it is good]. It covers Ed's physical therapy . . . our family doctor, his cardiologist, neurologist, and all of the medications he needs to make sure he doesn't have another stroke.

Now, you can imagine if they didn't have this coverage, and if he had another stroke when he is not that old, it would be even more expensive. Those are my words that I am adding.

She says:

Almost two years after the stroke, Ed can move around with the help of a cane, but he still needs assistance standing.

What are we going to do if we lose access to insurance?

She continues:

I'm am not being dramatic when I say this is life or death. My husband will die if we lose access to affordable coverage.

I wish lawmakers—

And I would add in this case, as we know from what was announced last night, this administration—could understand that they are cutting our family's lifeline.

Letter No. 12. Celeste and Larry from Michigan say:

My husband and I worked our entire lives. Larry worked as a stone mason, while I pursued a degree . . . in social work. . . . We . . . saved for retirement. We built up a great safety net, but it all got yanked away. We're now 63 and 61, and I don't know what we are going to do if the Senate takes away—

If this administration takes away, I would add—

our access to Medicaid.

In 2006, Larry was laid off from his job and he struggled to find another job in light of the Great Recession. It became really important for me to keep my job so that we could maintain insurance for both of us.

Within a couple of years, Larry began to experience problems with his memory, and doctors diagnosed him with early onset Alzheimer's disease.

As we know, by the way, many millions of Americans are affected by Alzheimer's—some of them way too early and some of them not expecting it.

This can happen to any family—what happened to Celeste and Larry. That is why taking their word last night and looking at what they have said they wanted to do, which is to repeal the Affordable Care Act, would mean that not only do those who buy insurance on the exchange lose out, but every American loses out who could have a preexisting condition or who does have a preexisting condition.

So she says this:

He was diagnosed with early onset Alzheimer's. Unfortunately, because he had been out of work for so long, he wasn't eligible for disability benefits. I had to leave my job because I became disabled. We were without any insurance until the Affordable Care Act marketplaces opened. In order to get by, we sold our houses, spend down our retirement, and took drastic measures to pay our medical bills and day-to-day living expenses. That first year, we bought a plan that cost us only \$27 a month. The next year, we qualified for expanded Medicaid.

We paid into the system our entire lives. I don't think it is right that lawmakers are now threatening to take everything away from us.

She says this:

My parents immigrated to this country. English wasn't their first language. Four out of five of us kids went to college. All of the grandchildren went to college. Everyone is doing well because we worked.

My family has collectively paid into the system more than enough to cover us, but now they are talking about ripping away benefits. Where is the justice in that?

She adds this—this woman whose husband has Alzheimer's, who was protected by the Affordable Care Act. Do you know what she says in this letter?

We are not losers. We are not freeloaders. We should not have to be embarrassed or shamed for needing help. There should be dignity in getting old, and we should be enjoying our golden years, but that has been taken away from us. Don't make it worse.

Story No. 13, Mary and Erich:

Let me tell you about my son Erich. He is friendly and compassionate. When he grows up, he wants to be in a band and to be a Power Ranger. He loves to dance to videos we find together on YouTube. His greatest joy comes from being around his friends at Miracle League Baseball, [and that is a baseball league for kids with] special needs, where he plays third base.

Mary writes:

Erich was born with Down syndrome and a severe intellectual disability. At 20 years old, he functions at roughly the level of a second grader. While many young adults with Down's have been able to integrate into society and take on employment, Erich's disability is so profound that he requires full-time care, and he will never be able to live independently.

My husband, Mary writes, died suddenly in 2009. So today, it is just Erich and me. After my husband's death, I was forced to close down the business we owned, and we lost access to traditional insurance. Erich and I were able to get coverage through Medicaid. It has been a critical lifeline over these last 9 years, and I don't know what would happen to either one of us if it were to go away.

Through the services provided by Medicaid and other supportive programs in our community, I am able to keep Erich at home where he belongs. He needs Medicare for speech therapy as he has an enlarged tongue,

small mouth, and weak facial muscles. He has difficulty communicating and saying words like "water" [and] "phone". . . . His sentences are two and three words. Erich is prone to sinus and allergy infections due to a smaller cartilage in his nose typical of Down syndrome. He suffers from skin rashes due to the infections that he gets. He does require many prescriptions and doctor's visits and occasionally a visit to the emergency room.

As a boomer generation widow, I need to make sure that I am healthy enough to show up for him. He has NO ONE else. I depend on these services, too.

When I hear about potential cuts [to Medicaid, when I hear about repealing the Affordable Care Act], I think not just about Erich, but about all his "special needs" friends he has made over the years at the school, at the tutoring center, and on the baseball field. Cutting or capping programs like Medicaid will devastate us all. Many of his friends require more services, are wheelchair bound, have speech, hearing, heart, and constant ear problems.

As a society, and the greatest country in the world, we have to continue to support—

In her words—

our "special people" and families like ours. These "special people" enrich our lives and show us what is important . . . caring for each other, compassion, and friendship.

Story No. 14, Sara in Maryland. She says:

I am a physician, and the ACA allows me to document [healthcare issues] better and more fully. I no longer need to worry that if a person is designated as, for example, having acne and they have a serious condition later, they will be denied insurance for a pre-existing condition.

I thought this story in the letter was interesting because it shows what the doctors were going through as they were trying to figure out how they report things so this person isn't denied insurance later because they have a preexisting condition. Now they don't have to worry about that anymore, but if the administration wins—if they win in their action to repeal the Affordable Care Act, like they announced last night they wanted to do—we would go back to that situation.

Story No. 15, Tracey in Maryland. She says this:

In 2011, I began dialysis due to end-stage kidney disease. Before dialysis and well into it, I worked as a preschool teacher, a notoriously low-paying profession. In 2007, when I changed jobs, I lost my employer-based health insurance. After 1 year of COBRA, a local insurance person and a good friend of ours told me about the Maryland State Health Insurance Plan. Through that plan, I was able to qualify. When the ACA began, the MSHIP [State] plan ended. In a meeting with a member of Howard County's Health Department to figure out how to replace my insurance under the ACA, he told me that because of my end-stage kidney disease, I probably would qualify for Medicare. He was right. I also have a supplemental plan (Care First) and a drug plan [through] AARP, and my parents help pay the premiums for those. In 2015, I had to stop working because of exhaustion caused by dialysis. I then qualified for disability. In 2016, I had a kidney transplant. Medicare will continue to insure me. . . . Our hope is that by then I will be back to work, but my biggest concern is that without the ACA, my preexisting condition will prevent me from finding health insurance.

At the end of her letter, she asks a simple question: "What will I do then?" That is a question that millions and millions of Americans want to ask the President today. They woke up to read the newspaper or turn on TV and found out that this administration had announced that they want to repeal the Affordable Care Act—not part of it, no, no, the whole thing. So when they do this, this means these protections aren't in place. So there is a whole ton of people that joined Tracey in asking: "What will I do then?"

Story No. 16, Debbie in New Jersey:

I am a 48-year-old woman with chronic health issues that require me to visit doctors every few weeks and take prescription medications. I suffer from migraines. . . . I also have herniated discs in my back. . . . I am self-employed and run two businesses.

Guess what. That means she is contributing in a big way to our economy.

I purchase my coverage on the federal ACA exchange. Before the ACA—

Or as we know it, the Affordable Care Act—

I had nowhere to buy affordable insurance coverage that would actually cover my health issues. Repealing the ACA will have a devastating impact on small businesses and the self-employed, especially those of us with health problems. I am terrified that I won't be able to afford coverage as I inch closer to the 50-64 age bracket. And if the ACA is repealed and if there is no marketplace for me to purchase insurance, I will be forced to close my businesses.

Story No. 17, Stephanie in Massachusetts:

I was born with hip dysplasia. I had surgery to correct it at 9 months old. At best, the issue was corrected to 85 percent of what a normal hip will do. In college . . . I had hip pain. I underwent four separate surgeries to fix cartilage. That meant four sets of pre-op AND post-op MRIs or other scans and four sets of post-op hospital stays.

In just 27 years, my family and I racked up hundreds of thousands of dollars in medical bills. In recent years, insurance covered . . . [me].

I'm honestly not sure what repeal of the ACA means for me, but I guarantee it'll make life harder as it will for a lot of people. I was lucky to have insurance.

Please vote no on any bill that repeals the ACA. Save my care.

As for this story, even though she didn't know quite how it would affect her, I can tell you that with hip dysplasia, something I have, she has a preexisting condition, and that would mean that she couldn't qualify for insurance, especially when it came to further hip surgeries.

No. 18, Tegan in Ohio:

It would put me at risk of losing coverage [if you repeal] because of a genetic pre-existing condition. Congenital dilated cardiomyopathy killed my grandfather, nearly killed my aunt, killed my sister, and nearly killed my brother. When my brother, a 12 year old at the time, needed a heart transplant, doctors told our parents that the insurance could simply decide to not cover the procedure. They had buried a toddler just 4 years earlier, and they were faced with the possibility of losing another child.

Tegan writes:

We need to ensure that all Americans have access to care. You can't predict when you

will get sick or injured, and you can't predict when a dangerous genetic mutation may emerge in your family. How we treat our fellow Americans is a measure of who we are as a people.

That is a good one to send to the White House tonight.

No. 19, Shirley in Massachusetts. She writes:

My second daughter was born with liver disease, which was diagnosed 9 weeks after her birth and required surgeries and medications. Pediatricians, cancer specialists, heart doctors, and family physicians all agree that . . . [healthcare suggested changes that would repeal the Affordable Care Act] will make things worse, not better.

No. 20, Sheila in Illinois:

The ACA allowed us to start a new business, in spite of the fact that my husband was diagnosed in 1992 with hepatitis C after receiving a tainted blood transfusion in the '70s. We became, in her words, job creators because we were finally able to get coverage for him outside of employer provided coverage.

She says:

I have been self-employed for 28 years but have gotten a job because at age 61, the fear of losing affordable healthcare at my age could ruin our finances.

No. 21, Carter, 22 months. This is written by his family.

Meet Carter. He loves cars, swimming, and building blocks. He requires therapy (speech, occupational, and physical), orthotics . . . glasses, and nebulizer machine. He sees an infectious disease, pulmonologist, and neurologist. His disease is progressive . . . [he needs healthcare].

Story No. 22, Myka, age 7:

Myka is 7 years old. She loves the Girl Scouts, ice skating, and playing with her friends. Myka was born with a congenital heart defect. What does access to affordable quality healthcare mean? It means Myka is still alive.

No. 23, Leonore in New York. She writes:

I have Parkinson's, and I have had it for 18 years and have Medicare disability since 2008. I am 62, and the ACA allows me to have a preexisting condition and . . . [still get help].

She talks about her son, who is 24 years old and disabled and says:

We'd both be in terrible trouble if we lost our coverage.

No. 24, Joanna:

My name is Joanna. I am here to share the story of my daughter Jasmine. . . . I will start at the beginning of her life, 3 years ago, when she was . . . inside my belly.

I was four months pregnant . . . when I received the most devastating and heart wrenching news. . . . I was told that my precious little . . . [baby had a heart problem]. I was told she had one of the most complex and deadly conditions around.

I was told she would have half a heart with many of her organs flipped.

But she was given options.

I prayed for a decision. I was quickly reminded of the recent Obamacare legislation that would give Jasmine a chance at life. One that is hopeful and compassionate, that protects innocent children like Jasmine from being denied medical care due to preexisting heart conditions, one that refuses to put a dollar sign on her life by imposing lifetime caps, and one that would ensure essential healthcare benefits to keep her alive.

She was born, and she had the surgery. She says:

Thank goodness for Essential Health Benefits that allowed me to receive proper maternity care when Jasmine was in the womb . . . and emergency services.

I am sharing my story today as a plea to not steal these lifetime protections away from Jasmine. . . . Please do not tell my child and children like her that they are too expensive, not worthy of life any longer. Please know, this is a life and death fight for me and my daughter, and I will do everything in my power to protect her and to stand up for whatever is needed to keep her alive.

No. 25, Kendall in Oklahoma.

The moment I finally realized what it meant to be poor and sick in America, I was sitting by myself in the cancer center an hour from my home. I had arrived early for my infusion that day, checked in and gotten that day's hospital bracelet. Before I could be hooked up to an I.V., I was pulled into a side room and told my insurance had denied my claim.

That is the story, and that is what is going to happen over and over again if we go back to those old days before we had the Affordable Care Act.

No. 26, Jennifer.

My husband Chris is one of many ACA success stories in red state Oklahoma. In January 2006, at age 29 at the time, Chris began working for a nonprofit that offered healthcare benefits after a certain period of employment. A few months later, we went to the ER thinking he had appendicitis. Doctors quickly took him to surgery thinking the same. After several hours, the surgeon (accompanied by a chaplain) said he removed a large tumor from Chris' colon. He was on the brink of death with a rare aggressive form of colon cancer. Removing the tumor increased his chances for survival but the cancer was far too advanced for traditional chemotherapy. The only course of action at that point was to see an oncologist every month for CEA labs and a colonoscopy every 6 months until the oncologist determined he was out of danger for recurrence. We crossed our fingers and hoped for the best.

Between 2006 and 2009, Chris tried to get health insurance but [was] rejected due to cancer diagnosis being a preexisting condition. Once the ACA became law, because of its protections for people with preexisting conditions, my husband was able to purchase a [healthcare] policy through the federal exchange and continue seeing an oncologist for needed care.

Miraculously, Chris has not had a recurrence—so far. Without ACA protections for preexisting conditions, my husband will be forced [and] (priced) out of the market. Given the high probability for recurrence and increased costs impeding an early diagnosis of recurrence, survival is less likely for my husband. I cannot bear the thought of losing my love, my best friend . . . my hero.

Story No. 27 is from Texas. His name is Mike. All he says is this:

My wife and I are uninsurable without the ACA. I take life-saving medications.

Think of how many people just write those simple words.

No. 28, Amanda in Texas.

My son, Cooper, is 3 years old. We found out he has cystic fibrosis when I was 14 weeks pregnant. Though he has been very healthy for a child with CF, literally a simple cold could change that. He will always have CF, and both preexisting conditions and lifetime maximums keep us up at night. Just

being insured won't mean anything if there is a lifetime maximum. By the time he reaches grade school, he will likely have exceeded the typical "million dollar maximum" we dread so much. Please keep our boy healthy.

She pleads not to repeal the Affordable Care Act.

No. 29, Adele in Massachusetts.

I was diagnosed with epilepsy at 18 years old. Beforehand, I was dealing with chronic depression which required high doses of antidepressants. . . . My mother is a single parent and I am currently 22, so we try our best to be able to afford our medications. . . . If the ACA [is repealed] it is possible that we will no longer be able to afford our medicines and that I could fall into a deep depression. . . . If the ACA repeal is passed I will no longer be proud to be an American.

No. 30, Helen in North Carolina.

Insuring me through COBRA when my husband retired would have cost us a full third of our small, fixed income. The ACA provided [us] not only assured access to health insurance for me, but insurance with a premium and an out-of-pocket maximum that fits [with] our budget.

So many of these stories involve people trying to fit their budget with healthcare.

She writes:

That insurance allows me to continue my treatments for my illnesses. Without my medications, I will be in extreme pain, will have more joints eroding to the point of being nonfunctional, and will be landing in a hospital multiple times a year. . . . Without the tax subsidy I get through the ACA, my insurance premiums plus the max for my current plan would cost 80% of our income.

No. 31, Jennifer in Arizona.

I am an attorney and have been employed full-time since graduating law school in 2006. I take care of myself, make healthy choices, and work hard. I have encountered multiple medical challenges in the last 15 years. I was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in my first semester of law school and had surgery to remove my thyroid over Christmas break that year. The surgery damaged my [parathyroid] glands which produce a hormone that helps the body process calcium. I have to take replacement thyroid hormone, activated Vitamin D, and calcium supplements to stay healthy. Over the last 15 years my prescription costs have gone up from \$30 a month to about \$110 a month.

In 2012, I had an unexplained placental abruption with my first pregnancy and delivered my son 9 weeks early. He spent 5 weeks in [intensive care] learning to eat and breathe.

Last year, my son tripped over his Pull-up and broke his femur. He was placed in a full-body cast for almost 8 weeks.

We [have good jobs] with good employer health coverage.

But here is the problem. Because of her problems with her thyroid, she would have a preexisting condition. They would not get health insurance.

We are working on continuing to be contributing members of society, investing our savings . . . [and making sure we participate] in the economy in every way.

No. 32, Debra in Illinois.

Our older daughter is severely disabled.

By the way, anyone who dealt with the past attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act knows that the disability

community was mobilized as never before. Because they, of anyone, the families of people with kids with disabilities, understand more than anyone how important this preexisting protection is.

Yet, last night, without regard to them, without regard to anyone in America with a preexisting condition, the administration just announced they are going all out to repeal these protections in the Affordable Care Act.

That is what happened.

Debra from Illinois.

Our older daughter is severely disabled. Essentially a preexisting condition since birth. In 2014 I underwent treatment for Stage 3 . . . breast cancer. I was horrified. Then I pulled myself together. If I can survive cancer, I can survive [this].

But without healthcare, we can't survive.

No. 33, Felicia in Texas.

I have struggled with chronic pain for over 20 years. For years I've gone to specialist after specialist, and pain clinic after pain clinic. No one could tell me why regular approaches to joint and tendon pain never worked for me.

Just last year I was finally diagnosed with . . . a genetic . . . connective tissue disorder.

She goes through and describes what this means to her: There is no cure for my chronic condition, only pain management.

Because these conditions are rare, [these physicians don't know] how to help me.

She says she depends on healthcare specialists. She says she needs the affordable healthcare act because of the preexisting condition protection. I believe her.

No. 34, Janet in Illinois.

I have a son who survived cancer and a daughter with Crohn's disease. My daughter's husband has Cystic Fibrosis.

Repeal of the ACA would change everything.

Let them stay healthy.

No. 35, Elizabeth in Illinois.

I am lucky (for now), in that I have coverage through my employer. That said, even I could be impacted if lifetime and annual benefits caps are put back in place. I have two family members undergoing cancer treatment right now, what happens to them? What if one of my children is diagnosed with a . . . disease like my best friend's 5-year-old daughter was?

No. 36, Patricia in Illinois.

I have a preexisting condition as I have Multiple Sclerosis. My treatment includes MRI's yearly and medications that cost nearly 60,000 dollars yearly. I am now in Medicare and Medicaid and would be left with no options as I am on disability and could afford no insurance.

No. 37, Noel in Maryland.

I will soon be 26 and off my parents' health insurance, and it is thanks to Obamacare that I have been able to stay on that insurance while I have been struggling with a chronic disease. . . . I have made great strides in recovering my health . . . should not be punished for having a preexisting condition.

No. 38, Megan in Texas.

My dearest friend recently donated her kidney to a two year old child who was on di-

alysis, and saved his life. At the time of her donation, Obama was President and pre-existing conditions seemed protected, and she didn't question such a transformative medical procedure. Pre-existing Condition coverage must remain in order to protect living organ donors and encourage people to save lives by donating. Who would donate an organ if they knew insurers could charge them or not accept them? We must protect this important provision!

No. 39, Jeffery in Illinois.

I have MS. . . . Every 48 hours I inject myself with prescription medication to prevent the disease from advancing.

If the ACA was repealed, I would not have protection, and MS would, of course, be considered a preexisting condition.

The ACA has allowed me to remain a productive wage earner supporting myself and my family.

How many times do you hear this?

Please consider the personal and societal costs of repealing the ACA.

No. 40, Lauren in California.

When I was a freshman in college, I donated blood to the Red Cross. A couple of weeks later, a letter from the Red Cross informed me that I had Hepatitis C—I was 18, living away from home (clear across the country) for the first time, and I had no idea what to do or how I might have contracted the virus. After a year it was determined the diagnosis was a false-positive . . . but every blood test since has indicated liver enzyme levels outside of normal, which means Hepatitis C will be a pre-existing condition that follows me around for the rest of my life. I just earned my PhD and I'm still looking for my first postdoctoral job, which means I'll need health care coverage until I am insured by an employer. . . . I'm screwed [if I don't have the ACA]. I've worked hard to make good choices for my health, but now an administrative mistake that I have no control over—

That was the information she received when she gave blood—

has the potential to wreck my chances for affordable health insurance [if the ACA protections aren't in place].

No. 41, Koula in Texas.

I have high blood pressure & pre-diabetic. I am retired and currently I'm covered under my employers plan as a retiree (I pay premiums at twice what an active employee pays) until the age of 65 then I switch to Medicare and my employer insurance will become secondary. If you cut the requirements that corporations offer to their employees and retirees I will be greatly affected as I'm living on a fixed income. My condition is heredity and no amount of exercise or dieting will ever bring down my blood pressure enough for it to be normal. . . .

No. 42, Joy in Texas writes:

I would be dead and/or bankrupt without ACA coverage. Within 6 weeks of moving to Austin from New York City in 2012, I was diagnosed with stomach cancer; I had had breast cancer . . . I came with insurance associated with my business, a plan unavailable in Texas. When that expired, I was kind of stunned to discover I was uninsurable. . . . For the next 6 months, I was in the state pool and basically self-insured until the ACA became effective. . . . Although not perfect, it provided the coverage I needed at a price point I could afford.

No. 43, Liz writes:

I wish the ACA had been around 10 years ago. Back then I was almost 30 years into a happy and successful teaching career. . . .

But then along came that little glitch in the economy, and schools were tightening belts. I found myself unemployed, uninsured, and living with a pre-existing condition requiring very expensive, but life extending medications. Worse, I was living in a country where health care is tied to one's job status.

Jobs were scarce, and age was not on my side in a tight job market. So I worked in daycare centers, and did babysitting. My Cobra ran out. Private insurance was totally out of reach.

Ultimately I had just one option left: I was just old enough to retire early as a teacher and to qualify for retired teacher benefits with TRS. It was a last resort. . . . By law, I would no longer be eligible to teach. . . . Without the ACA, I had to choose between my job and my life.

No. 44, Jerry writes:

Fifteen years ago I was self-employed and working furiously to get a new company off the ground. Things were going fine until I ran up against a brick wall—health insurance. My wife and I had been happily paying for health coverage through my previous employer via COBRA, but then we approached the time limit allowed under that coverage. It was impossible for us to buy a policy on the individual market for two reasons: my wife had not only been recently treated for cervical cancer, but she was also pregnant with our first child.

He says:

Protect our care. Entrepreneurial and creative Americans deserve the freedom to chase our dreams without having to risk financial ruin by being denied access to comprehensive . . . healthcare. Isn't that risk-taking spirit . . . what . . . [people say] . . . is needed to build our economy ever higher?

No. 45, Lisa writes:

No healthcare coverage for my chronic illness will result in my death [because of the ACA.]

No. 46, Hannah writes:

My spouse is a research scientist. Some years ago, while working at the University of Texas, he received a highly prestigious national research fellowship. The fellowship made him ineligible for employee health insurance. . . . Due to a preexisting condition he contracted as a teenager, however, he was denied affordable insurance. . . . We oppose the repeal of the ACA because the denial of healthcare to individuals based on their employment status, their economic status, or their health conditions is deeply unethical and ultimately deadly.

No. 47, Jaime writes:

I am a 62-year old and am currently in the hospital awaiting open heart surgery. I am only able to have this surgery due to being in ObamaCare.

No. 48, Devora in Maryland writes:

My daughter Esther was diagnosed with Leukemia when she was 12. She would not be able to get health insurance under the proposed bill. She has been through enough.

That is what a lot of people in America would say right now to the Trump administration. They have been through enough because of their health problems and because they have worked hard, and they deserve to be carried. They have been through enough because they have had that healthcare threatened over and over. They voted in 2018 because they wanted to have their healthcare protected.

Yet now, last night, the administration—not listening to that—announced

they would repeal the entire Affordable Care Act.

No. 49, Darla in Michigan writes:

I'm on disability from chronic pain because of a doctor's mistake with back surgery. I am going to have my fifth back surgery. I live alone and am on disability. I already pay huge premiums.

She says: If you repeal the Affordable Care Act, "I will be homeless."

No. 50, Nathan in Michigan writes:

I am a builder who builds and maintains homes for many of the wealthiest people in our State. I have worked hard and climbed my way to the top over the last 20 years. None of the employers in my area offered insurance, and only until the ACA was I able to afford the healthcare I need. I have severe asthma and have arthritis in my right hip. Even with the ACA, we still struggle to pay my medical bills, but we manage.

He says:

Now, we are worried that . . . [if we lose the ACA] I could be priced right out by being put in a high-risk pool because I have pre-existing conditions. I am making top dollar working for the people who are going to reap the profits. . . .

He finishes by saying: This is taking away my ability to do the work on their houses.

No. 51, Ellen in New York writes:

My husband has been disabled from a stroke for almost 20 years and unable to work. I am a licensed clinical social worker within busy Private Practice doing counseling with individuals, couples, and families. If Mental Health Services are dropped . . . I will not be able to support my family.

My husband and I are both seniors and anticipate insurance premium rates going up . . . [if we don't have the Affordable Care Act]. . . . we both have preexisting conditions.

Erika in Washington writes:

I have triplet sons, each of which have all had a form of healthcare issues that would be deemed under this plan to now be pre-existing conditions.

I can't fathom the thought that another woman or a mom would not be alive or her children would not receive the same care we have. I will stand against anyone who threatens my children's future access to health. I don't know a single mother who won't be right there alongside me.

Well, I think they are going to have to go to the White House now because we just heard last night that they want to repeal the entire Affordable Care Act.

No. 53, Marcy writes:

I'm in fairly good physical health, but mental health has been a lifelong struggle for me. I take medication and have turned to therapists . . . several times over the years. I do my best to stay mentally healthy. But there have been many times when I needed help. . . . I believe everyone should have access to mental healthcare. It's not something you should choose as part of your health care plan or not.

We ALL need full, comprehensive, excellent healthcare coverage. Essential coverage for mental health, maternity care, well care check-ups, medication, etc. is important for EVERYONE.

No. 54, Samantha in Massachusetts writes:

My husband has a genetic kidney disorder . . . and at the age of 47, needed a kidney transplant. He is now, thanks to the mir-

acles of modern medicine and the incredible generosity of his donor, back at work, paying taxes, and living a good life. The transplant took place one week before the last election, and the last thing we did before the surgery was vote early—in large part to try to stave off the repeal of the ACA. My husband's prospects are very good. . . . The financial implications to both my family and the kidney donors are impossible to predict or calculate, but the cost of losing ObamaCare would be steep, terrifying, and entirely un-American.

No. 55, Amal in Tennessee writes:

I feel ridiculously lucky that the ACA existed when I had my baby, and here's why: My husband and I were both freelancers when I got pregnant and were on ObamaCare in New York. When I was 5 months pregnant, we moved to Nashville for his job, which didn't provide insurance. Because of the ACA, we were able to buy coverage, even though somehow pregnancy is considered a preexisting condition. It could once again become the basis for an insurance company to reject you or to increase your premiums if the ACA is repealed.

Denying a pregnant woman insurance coverage can have far-reaching effects. She might stay in an unhealthy job to maintain coverage, or stay in an unhealthy or abusive marriage to maintain her husband's coverage. A family might forego a good opportunity to move for a better life for their child. . . .

No. 56, Matthew in Washington writes:

I was diagnosed with a chronic medical condition when I was 9. Growing up, I was fortunate to have a mother who was able to fight for me, from keeping me enrolled in a public school to getting me access to experimental drugs at any of trials. . . . But I also saw her in tears over medical bills when my father was laid off after 9/11 and we had to go on COBRA, and how draining negotiations with insurance companies were.

I am now successful, independent, and working in international relations in Washington, D.C., which I love. If the ACA is repealed, I will live in constant fear of being laid off or fired and losing my insurance, or worry that I will have a flare-up that would devastate me financially.

No. 57, Page writes:

I was fired in 2015 when I was 5 weeks pregnant. Thank goodness we had the Affordable Care Act because I could not be discriminated against under any preexisting condition limitations. I knew my maternity care would be covered. I logged onto the exchange, compared plans, [and] signed up . . . I'm just so grateful that happened for me.

No. 58, Kelsey writes:

My brother has Type 1 diabetes and prior to the ACA, he was covered on my parents' insurance, but I don't know what's going to happen to him [when we don't have the ACA, if they took it away.]

No. 59, Macon writes:

I'm a member of a union that takes care of me, but a lot of people are not that fortunate and I'm scared for them. I have family members with preexisting conditions, and by every accounting, this bill, if it passes, is going to take coverage away from people who are vulnerable. . . .

No. 60, Samantha writes:

I'm fighting the repeal of the ACA because my father has a preexisting condition and he's hoping to retire in the next few years. I don't believe plans should be changed because of a bill that would remove protections for people with preexisting conditions. . . .

No. 61, Golchin from Nevada writes:

It will be really hard for us to get insurance since I will be [considered having a pre-existing condition]. . . . We would love to start our family. . . . Having kids is all we talk about, so please don't take that away from many of us.

No. 62, Cathy writes:

ObamaCare saved my life. I had health insurance. I needed brain surgery. My health insurance company kept delaying approvals. . . . Because they refused to pay for a CT scan that was needed to confirm a diagnosis, I had to pay for one out of pocket. . . . But, because of the public pressure, when ObamaCare was being drafted, my surgery was eventually approved by the insurance company in 2009.

I am deeply concerned that legislation repealing ObamaCare could leave in place devastating and historic cuts to my hospital. Please do not gut protections for those of us with preexisting conditions. . . . Do not eliminate services for special needs kids.

No. 63, Jennifer in Nevada writes:

If the ACA is repealed, my healthcare might go away and I could never afford continuing care with my . . . [heart condition] . . . and my husband's arthritic condition. When my battery runs out in four years, if I don't have health insurance, I'll probably die or have to go bankrupt. . . . My brother also has heart trouble. . . . And for what? So that the wealthy can have more . . . ? Our government is supposed to work for our best interests. . . .

No. 64, Adrian writes:

In 1986 to 1987, I was diagnosed with [genetic] breast cancer and was told I had a 25 percent chance of living 5 years. I quit my job to have medical treatment, and, after COBRA coverage ran out, was put in a high-risk pool [Illinois]. My insurance payments were high . . . I had to go back to work to pay for . . . [them]. If that's what happened 30 years ago . . . [what would happen now if I had a preexisting condition and couldn't get insurance coverage]?

No. 65, Michelle writes:

I have had three surgeries for the "chronic disease". . . . Prior to ACA, these surgeries would not have been covered. . . .

No. 66, Elizabeth writes:

Please do not allow States the ability to opt out of holding insurances companies accountable to cover essential health benefits like maternity care, mental health treatment, and rehabilitation treatment. As an elementary public art educator, I know firsthand the importance of [the] mental health care [provision]. The school district I serve . . . has suffered the loss of four students who have taken their own lives just this year to battles with mental and emotional issues, the youngest of whom was 12 years old and a former student of mine from the first year I taught. . . . These saddening and possibly preventable deaths have rocked our community. Coverage for mental health and treatment will allow parents the ability to seek help for their children whose precious lives hang in the balance in the politics of healthcare. Affordable care helps destigmatize mental and emotional illnesses, giving these students the confidence and ability to speak up.

People have long stories, and they care about this a lot.

Story No. 67, Karen:

My friend Mary was never able to purchase health insurance until ObamaCare passed. She bought a policy the very first day it was available to her. A few months later, she was

driving, and she was almost killed. She required prolonged care and rehab, which would not have been available to her before she had health insurance. Through good care, hard work, and persistence, she is alive and again a productive member of society. Please do not take healthcare away from people like my friend Mary.

**No. 68, JoSelle in Florida:**

I am self-employed as a freelance editor and writer and have been for most of my post-college life. Unfortunately, I also have preexisting conditions.

Pre-ACA, I was ineligible for insurance despite taking some of the cheapest, most common medications on the marketplace. I was forced into a high-risk pool in the State where I lived at the time, Utah, which placed an enormous financial burden on me. . . . Post 2014, I can afford to pay for my insurance.

Of course, the ACA isn't perfect. I am sympathetic to those who faced premium increases under it or who found their access to healthcare diminished. However, the logical thing to do is to improve it, not demolish it.

That is a pretty good line. Send that one to the Justice Department.

I urge all people reading this to stop and think. Whether you voted for Clinton or Trump, whether you preferred one of their primary challengers to either of them, whether you live in a red, purple, or blue State . . . it does not do to not have the Affordable Care Act.

**No. 69, Kat in Kansas:**

I had advanced stage 3 breast cancer and inflammatory breast cancer. I am now on disability. Contrary to what many have said, I did nothing to bring this on myself. I ate right and exercised. I didn't smoke. My cancer was genetic. So was the heart problem I had. I did not ask for this. Disability is no picnic. I can barely make ends meet. If the ACA is repealed, I will be homeless at the best and, at worst, dead.

**No. 70, Lois in New York:**

Breast cancer runs throughout my family on both my parents' sides. My mother, aunt, and cousins have all had this disease. Some have died from it, including my mom. When I was 23, I had a lump removed. Luckily, it was benign. The anxiety, pain of discovery, and treatment are excruciating enough without having to worry if you can afford care.

**No. 71, Penny in New York:**

My son has a life-threatening preexisting condition for which he received medical treatment and medication through the ACA expansion of Medicaid in the State where he lives. Without this, he will be unable to pay for his medications and doctors' visits and will surely decline. Both my mother and my husband's father were able to be cared for in nursing homes, until their dying days, because of Medicaid. I am desperate to make sure we keep our healthcare.

Thank you for listening.

**No. 72, Jen:**

In 2015, I donated a kidney to a stranger, kicking off a chain of three transplants. I didn't have to worry about how it would affect my health insurance because, thanks to the ACA, I could never be charged more or be denied coverage because I shared my spare kidney. I am 55 years old and self-employed. This repeal will be a direct attack on my financial and health security.

**No. 73, Jolene:**

I know many of my friends rely on Medicaid. Losing it means the loss of their lives. They cannot afford their medications without the ACA.

**No. 74, Deborah:**

My family's story is over, but I want people to know how much the ACA meant to us at a very difficult time. Our niece, a single adult, lost her job and her insurance coverage when she was in the middle of the fight for her life, battling advanced melanoma. Because of the ACA, she was able to sign up for insurance on the marketplace. I will be very honest and say it wasn't easy, and she was forced to change insurance companies because of changes in available plans. However—and this is big—

she writes in capital letters, sort of similar to the President's tweets—

she was able to get coverage despite the fact that she was very ill. Anyone who has watched a loved one suffer from this devastating disease of melanoma knows how terrible it is. Even though she eventually succumbed to the melanoma that had spread throughout her body, she was able to have continued quality medical care and, eventually, hospice care until her death. I beg you to consider how your decisions will impact people. Even the least of those among us—

That was a quote she put—

deserve the dignity of receiving quality medical care.

Think about this. This is a story of someone whom she lost in her family, and she is making a point that, I think, many would make in this Nation. Even when people are going to die, they want to have them die peacefully. They want them to have good healthcare. They don't want to have them taken off of their insurance because of preexisting conditions.

Story No. 75 talks about how a financial burden in the early 2000s forced him into bankruptcy. The reduction of work hours and required continuing medical costs left him unable to afford healthcare.

Now, with the potential loss of affordable healthcare on the horizon, my wife is facing a similar situation with her preexisting condition.

He writes:

Anyone is one step away from a financial disaster due to the onset of a serious medical condition. Believe me, I lived it first hand, and I didn't see it coming. I think most people who get suddenly sick would say the same thing. They have gone through their lives. They are working hard. They didn't see it coming. That is why we need the protections of the Affordable Care Act.

**No. 76, Jackson:**

Most of the people in my family are likely to lose coverage without anything less than the protections established in the ACA. Any one of us without the ACA would be one car accident or illness away from bankruptcy.

That kind of says it all.

**No. 77, Allison in Utah:**

My husband and I are self-employed, so we buy our insurance on the open market. Although we were much healthier than some people when we applied for insurance prior to the ACA, we were both rated out because of preexisting conditions. I was even rejected by one company. This seemed ridiculous since the preexisting conditions that caused the rate increases were injuries from being active and were both completely resolved. This made our insurance astronomically expensive.

When I say we are healthy, we really are healthy. We are lean; we are trim; we are in

our mid forties; but we can run, hike, climb, and do more pushups than most people in their mid-20s. We eat healthy, exercise hard, and never get sick. At the most, we might catch one cold a year between the both of us.

Since the ACA, we have had no problem getting health insurance, and we are not rated out because of preexisting conditions, but the best part is we feel comfortable that we have health insurance. Now it sounds like people are scheming to take away the protection we enjoy under the ACA.

OK. They are not just scheming. They actually announced last night to the entire country that they were going to do this. People woke up. They watched the TV. They looked at their newspapers. The administration said, yes, it is not going to repeal just part of the ACA; it is going to repeal the whole ACA.

It goes on to read:

We are against their attempt to take away the mandate that prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against individuals with preexisting conditions.

**No. 78, Erin in Missouri:**

Ours is a story of a genetic mutation that none of us could fathom would bring incredible health challenges to our family. We are the lucky few that have jobs that provide us with insurance. My grandfather's sister was the first to be diagnosed with breast cancer. My mother's cousin and her sister were next. Then my mom was diagnosed with uterine cancer. Then I came along at 32 with the diagnosis and then my sister. Now, as I type this note, my 78-year-old mother awaits another radiology appointment.

This story is filled with heartbreak and much love. These are the things patients should have to worry about, not whether they can afford their care or be discriminated against because they carry a gene that is beyond their control.

**No. 79, Mary in Massachusetts:**

We have MassHealth and great hospitals. Without both of these, my daughter would have died at birth. Everyone, no matter their income, deserves proper access to healthcare even if you have a preexisting condition or a previous illness. Every time I look at my daughter, it affirms this.

**No. 80, Brent:**

When I graduated high school, my dad informed me that he had paid enough for my health insurance, and now that I was an adult, he wasn't going to pay for it anymore. That's it. That was the entire conversation. I had no idea how to get health insurance for myself, much less how to pay for it, so I just went without for 7 years. Within that time, I had health problems.

My sister lives in France.

He talks about her getting protections.

Instead of being punished, we should be able to have healthcare. This is no way to run a democracy. This is no way to be a decent human.

**No. 81, Tina in Texas:**

I have stage 4 colon cancer, and I am currently on private insurance. I will be forced on to Medicare in another year as I am currently on disability. My life span is at risk if the provision to cover preexisting conditions is abandoned. I have literally risked my life in order to participate in a phase 1 drug trial to help advance our knowledge of treating cancer. How good is that knowledge if we will not be covered?

**No. 82, Julia:**

I am a 29-year-old adult who was diagnosed with a syndrome at age 9, and all through



most of my life, I have had no real help besides my mom, but she is a single mom. There is not just me but my brothers and sisters as well as there is only so much one person can do.

She writes:

Help me.

No. 83, Nicole in Kansas:

I am writing on behalf of my 15-month-old daughter, Mira. I experienced a normal pregnancy, a normal birth, and a normal maternity leave, but around the 4-month mark, we learned that Mira had a neurological disability that may very well render her unable to walk or talk. I could not return to work for a year while I was acting as her mom.

The ACA is the only thing that kept our family afloat in the most difficult year of our lives. If the ACA is repealed, Mira, who has absolutely no control over the state of her health—

a 15-month-old kid—

she will suffer needlessly. Please help us.

No. 84, Jane:

I am a psychologist with a Ph.D., employed for the past 30 years in community mental health centers. I have a serious preexisting condition that made me completely uninsurable before the ACA. Access to healthcare matters.

No. 85:

Because the ACA mandates access to free mammograms, I got one this year that resulted in a breast cancer diagnosis. Because the ACA mandates coverage for genetic testing, I was able to have that done and found out I have a gene that means I am at risk for cancer. My risk of ovarian cancer was 60 percent. My risk of breast cancer recurrence was 70 percent. I get to ensure that won't happen to me. Yes, early menopause and a mastectomy suck, but they are a whole lot better than radiation, chemo, and possibly death.

No. 86, Ashley:

In 2012, at the age of 29, I had my first job and was diagnosed with a heart disease. This is a pregnancy-induced form of heart failure that occurs in women with no prior history of heart disease. My recovery has been a long and brutal one of heart disease. I was on a life vest—a portable defibrillator—for the first month, and I should have been on it longer. I will always have a preexisting condition. The ACA makes me safe.

No. 87, Lea:

I am a wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, and great aunt. In my family, my husband and I owned a small business and couldn't change health insurance because of a preexisting condition in one of my children. As a sister, I watched my older sister fight cancer while still working 12-hour shifts as an RN. As a great aunt, I have watched my niece handle two sons with medical conditions. These people deserve the health insurance that does not have any lifetime maximums, and they should be able to pay reasonable premiums.

No. 88, Hillary from New York City and Kansas.

Although I live in New York now, Kansas City is home. I was raised in KC, attended Shawnee Mission Schools and KU. My friends, family, and a piece of my heart remain there. I was born with spina bifida, so I have always had a preexisting medical condition. I need affordable healthcare.

No. 89.

Eleven years ago, I had just turned 23.

She talks about her pregnancy, how she needed the protection, and how the

Affordable Care Act—now that she has a preexisting condition and has a photography business and her husband's work insurance doesn't cover her, ACA has saved her and allowed her to work, and she has a beautiful baby.

No. 90, Laura.

My son Danny was born at 30 weeks gestation via emergency C-section. He was diagnosed with spastic cerebral palsy at the age of 1. Without the protections of the ACA, we would not have him. Now we don't have to worry about lifetime limits, preexisting conditions, and the security of knowing we could keep him on our insurance until he is 26.

No. 91, Kerry.

My initial surgery, a bulging disk, happened when I was 17 and a senior in high school. When I was 18, the disk herniated. I had back surgery at 19, and then I felt like a new person. No more crawling to the bathroom every morning, no more chronic pain. In June 2003, I was days away from being kicked off my parents' insurance when I re-injured my back.

Then she talks about how, later, the ACA helped her.

Now I am going to finish up with letters from my own State.

No. 92, Kayla from Belgrade. Kayla lost her child to cancer and wrote to me that if protections for preexisting conditions are taken away, more families will suffer similar heartbreak.

No. 93, Katie. Katie told me that without protections for individuals with preexisting conditions, she would not have been able to have gotten her diagnosis and beat cancer.

No. 94, Tony. Tony is afraid that without the protections provided by the Affordable Care Act, he will be unable to afford healthcare or be denied coverage because of his preexisting condition.

No. 95, Alison. A nurse named Alison from Minnesota is concerned that changes to the health law could make the homeless populations she works with even more vulnerable.

No. 96, Julie. Julie is concerned for her young son, Hudson, who has asthma and a rare food allergy. Without protections for individuals with preexisting conditions, Julie believes Hudson will be forced into a plan that will dramatically reduce his access to healthcare or, worse, prevent him from getting health insurance to begin with.

No. 97, Sarah. Sarah was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer when she was 34 and has undergone countless rounds of chemo. She fears what the "scarlet letter" of having a preexisting condition will mean for her access to care and wonders how she will be able to receive the most cutting-edge treatments.

No. 98, Kate. I remember Kate. Kate did a video, and she became famous. She wrote to me about her son, Cooper, who has severe, nonverbal autism. Because of Medicaid, Cooper has access to the care he needs, and Kate can keep her job. Why were they famous? Cooper was featured on Jimmy Fallon and the "Today" show for being the cutest toddler to say "mama." He started a con-

test, and his mom Kate decided to enter herself and her son saying "mama." Cooper can't speak, but he uses a speech device to help him communicate. She sent in her video, that was the one they picked, and Cooper became a star.

Kate is afraid that changes to Medicaid could force her to quit her job in order to take care of Cooper. How could she explain that to her sons?

This is another story of someone who has a family member—in this case, her beloved son—with a disability that would then be considered a preexisting condition. Maybe there would be a way to cover him, of course, under disability insurance, but then you start messing with whether his mom can work. We would be right back where we were before these protections took place.

Story No. 99, Penny of St. Paul. Penny works with disabled veterans, but she has a chronic condition of her own—rheumatoid arthritis. Thankfully, her current insurance allows her to get the care she needs. But without the ACA, Penny is concerned that she and many others with treatable conditions will be unable to afford their medications.

Last, Ariane. Ariane had triplets at just 28 weeks, and her pregnancy included three hospital stays and bedrest. Without the ban on lifetime caps, Ariane said she would have lost everything.

Those are just 100 stories. Think of the millions more, the millions of people who would like to tell the President and the Justice Department and this administration what it would mean if what they said they wanted to do last night actually happened. These are just 100 people from across the country.

I hope my colleagues are listening to this because just last night, this administration announced that they were going to go all-out, that they were going to do everything to repeal the Affordable Care Act. These 100 people are not going to let this happen. You have heard the stories of those moms who will do anything for their kids with disabilities. You heard the story of the woman who, while her family member was lost to melanoma, that coverage for a girl who would have had a preexisting condition allowed her to have a peaceful life in her last weeks of life.

These are the stories this administration needs to hear to understand that this isn't just some political battle to see how this sits with your base, to be against ObamaCare; these are real Americans with real healthcare needs. We will fight this on their behalf to the end.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 9:30 A.M.  
TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 9:30 a.m. tomorrow.