

be deceived. Do not be deceived. Americans will pay a very high price. Medicare for All has been estimated at a 10-year pricetag of \$32 trillion. There is only one way to even try to pay for this massive plan and that is to dramatically raise everyone's income taxes to the point where they may need to pay double. That is what is being proposed.

So the result will be less freedom, lower quality of care, and longer lines as people have to wait to get to a doctor, because Washington will be controlling the doctor-patient medical decisions—and, mark my words, Washington will ration care. Rationing means delays and delay means denial of care. Government-run healthcare is notorious for producing long lines, long waiting periods, delay in care—even urgently needed care.

The government-run system has failed where they tried to put it in place in Vermont, in Senator SANDERS' home State. They started it and ended up having to eliminate it. They couldn't afford it. It wasn't working. It was too complicated. That is in one State.

We also have the situation of what is going on both in England and Canada right now in terms of costs and limits of care, the denial of treatment, the delay in treatment.

I think people watching may have seen the stories as a result of what is happening in England, where elderly patients are going blind in Britain right now. Why would they be going blind? Because the government is rationing cataract surgery. People can Google "going blind in Britain." It is the British healthcare system that is causing it because of the rationing of care. So Democrats are promoting this Medicare for All. Basically they are saying that ObamaCare needs to be repealed and replaced because it has failed the American people. The solution they are offering is not one that I think would make things better, but it is one that I think would make things worse.

Republicans, at the same time, are working for meaningful, workable solutions that lower the costs of prescription drugs, solutions that increase healthcare choice and transparency, and solutions that expand all Americans' access to affordable care. We want to make sure patients can get the care they need from the doctor they choose at a lower cost.

So instead of proposing higher taxes, which is what the Democrats are proposing, instead of proposing healthcare rationing, which will come with Medicare for All, Democrats need to begin working with Republicans to improve healthcare for all Americans, and they should start by rejecting BernieCare.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Ohio.

TRIBUTE TO MARK POWDEN

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the career of my long-

time chief of staff, staff director of the Democratic staff on the Senate Banking Committee, former staff director for Republicans on the HELP Committee, and my good friend Mark Powden.

Mark is the model of a public servant and of a Senate staffer. He spent decades serving in these Halls, first for Senator Jeffords, and then, in 2007, he joined my office, becoming my chief of staff less than 2 years later.

I was a brandnew Senator. I still had a lot to learn. There were few better teachers in this institution and this city than Mark Powden. He helped steer our office in its early days, setting up a well-oiled machine. I would like to think, that would serve Ohioans at home and advocate for them in Washington. Under Mark's leadership, we delivered results for the 12 million people in Ohio.

When the country wanted to write off the American auto industry, we said no. We weren't going to abandon this industry and millions of American workers—literally hundreds of thousands in Ohio. Mark was passionate about making sure we got the best deal possible for Ohio workers. It wasn't just auto workers.

Mark took over the job as chief of staff in my office during the depths of the recession around the time President Obama took office, after the economy was tanking with a loss of 800,000 jobs a month at the end of the Bush administration. Ohio had lost 423,000 jobs over a 2-year period—nearly 8 percent of the jobs in the State. Under Mark's leadership, we worked to create the Hardest Hit Fund, which targeted resources to communities in places like Ohio that had been devastated by the financial crisis. Mark and so many others have heard me say that the ZIP Code where my wife Connie and I live in Cleveland, OH—ZIP Code 44105—at that point, in the first half of 2007, there were more foreclosures in that ZIP Code than in any other ZIP Code in the United States of America.

Mark always made sure that investing in Ohio was a priority. We helped secure \$100 million to expand cancer research and treatment at the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and James Cancer Hospital.

Through all of these accomplishments, Mark remained true to his Vermont roots. It is where he grew up. His first major job in Washington was with a Republican in those days, a Senator from Vermont. He tried his hardest always to bring Vermont's bucolic vales to the Nation's Capital, and he maintained the utmost respect for the institution of the Senate.

He had an incredible wealth of knowledge on the history of this place and on legislative procedure and tradition, and he passed it on to other staffers—from my new chief of staff, when Mark moved over to lead the Senate Banking Committee, to the LCs new to the Senate, hoping to learn. We will miss all that about Mark Powden.

I will miss Mark's counsel. I will miss his hard work. I will miss his sense of humor. I will miss his modesty. I will particularly miss his farmer jokes that he tells so well after growing up in rural Vermont. It is not surprising that Mark would not want to be here today as I honor him because he just doesn't want to show up to be honored. But after decades in public service, he has earned a long retirement with his wife Wendy; his two sons, Joseph and Russell; and his entire family.

Mark, thank you for what you did for me, thank you for what you did for our State, and thank you for what you do for our country.

I would add to this that one of the people Mark helped to teach is with me on the floor today. She is about to join a Presidential campaign. Her name is Hannah Fine. I want to recognize her service. This is the first time, I believe, she has been on the Senate floor for a moment like this. So, Hannah, thank you.

NOMINATION OF STEPHEN MOORE

Mr. President, this weekend, the President's pick for the Federal Reserve, Stephen Moore, said that we should focus a little less on all of his offensive and outlandish articles, the comments he made about women in print and on the air, the comments he made about places like Cincinnati and Cleveland, the attacks he has made on middle America, on working families. He said: Forget about all that. Let's talk about my economic record.

Well, Mr. Moore should be careful what he wishes for. His economic record is dangerous. It is out of touch. It is a big part of the reason we have suffered so many of the economic problems we have had in the last decade. Even conservative economists have criticized him.

He has claimed over and over again that the country is experiencing deflation. In other words, he thinks prices are falling. I don't know where he gets these ideas. I don't have any constituents who complain to me about prices falling—about deflation—but Mr. Moore seems to see things that aren't really there.

Tell someone who is paying college tuition, whether it is at Sinclair Community College or whether it is at Ohio State or Kent State University, that the prices are going down. Tell it to someone with diabetes trying to afford insulin. Tell somebody in Columbus, OH, who is trying to pay the rent that prices are falling. It is absurd. He makes economic statements like that with so little basis in fact.

He has been a conspiracy theorist. He thinks government statistics on the economy can't be trusted. Maybe that is where he got the idea that the cost of living is going down. He wants to return to the gold standard. He said on CNBC this morning that instead of talking about equal pay for women, the problem actually has been the steady decline in male earnings. I don't disagree the problem has been stagnant

wages for men, but I also can't believe he would say the problem is not women's wages when we know that—I have spent a lot of time on this floor talking about the dignity of work. I understand that so many Americans have seen corporate profits go up; we have seen executive compensation explode upward; we have seen workers working harder and being more productive; and we have seen wages remain flat. The issue is that wages are flat, in large part, because this body and this President have followed the advice of Stephen Moore and continued to cut taxes on rich people, underinvest in infrastructure, underinvest in working families, underinvest in public health, and underinvest in public education. So to put it on women and say that the problem has actually been the steady decline in male earnings—we shouldn't even be talking about women's wages—just makes no sense.

He doesn't seem to understand that, fundamentally, as challenged as so many working families are with stagnant wages and with lack of opportunity, if you are a woman in this country, if you are someone of color, the challenges are even greater. He should know that. Every economic statistic shows that. Sentient human beings walking down the street and listening should know that. But for some reason, this man who wants to be a Governor on the Federal Reserve thinks otherwise.

He wants the entire country—and this is probably even more serious. He wants the entire country to look like Kansas. He was the mastermind—or one of the masterminds—behind Governor Brownback's move in Kansas to basically eliminate tax liability for a whole group of mostly prosperous people, to cut taxes overall on the rich, and then go after public education and cut public education. It was so extreme that once it was enacted in a very Republican State by a Republican Governor, it was the Republicans in the legislature who unenacted it. They repealed most of the things he did and overrode this far-right Republican Governor's veto, again, based on what Mr. Moore had suggested. While almost all of the 50 States were gaining jobs, once-prosperous Kansas lost jobs during this time. He wants that disastrous economic model to go nationwide, and we know he is not alone. It is the same philosophy that so many in this town say we should do—tax cuts for the rich and not for working families. It is this view that if you cut taxes on the rich, the money will trickle down and everybody will have a better standard of living. We tried that with President Reagan, and it didn't work. We tried that with President Bush, and it didn't work. If you remember in the 8 years of the Bush economy, a few hundred thousand in a country of 300-plus million, there was no net job growth to speak of in the Bush 8 years. Then the Trump tax bill cut taxes on the rich, and maybe it will trickle down, and we will

have more jobs and more wages and all that. It just never works. It works for the rich. They get huge tax cuts. Bill Clinton, on the other hand—during his 8 years, in which they increased taxes on upper income people, we saw a 20 million net job increase.

For some reason, Stephen Moore and his corporate crowd don't understand what happens when you cut taxes for the rich. You don't grow the economy by giving more money to the super-wealthy, who will invest it in Swiss bank accounts. You focus on the middle class, and you give the tax breaks to the middle class like our earned-income tax credit bill. If you focus tax breaks on the middle class, you will grow the economy because you are putting money in the pocket of somebody making \$20- or \$30- or \$50- or \$100,000 a year. They are going to spend it. They are not going to put it in a Swiss bank account. When you give tax cuts to some of the people in the Trump Cabinet, they are going to put more in Swiss bank accounts. They are not going to spend it. They are not going to invest it. They are not going to make any difference in our economy.

So I ask my colleagues to vote no on Stephen Moore not only because there is so much about him and what he has done and what he has written, but mostly for what he would advocate as a member of the Federal Reserve.

If you love your country, you will fight for the people who make it work, and you respect and honor work. There is nothing about Mr. Moore's record that would suggest he would do that. We need someone on the Federal Reserve who actually understands that.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Iowa.

NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I would like to first give approximately a 1-minute speech and then speak for a longer time on another subject.

I am happy to recognize small businesses in Iowa, and, of course, we should recognize them all across our country. We do that by celebrating National Small Business Week.

In my State of Iowa, 99 percent of all businesses are small businesses. Also, almost half of Iowa's employees are employed by small businesses.

Government regulations have a disproportionate impact on small businesses, often costing them 20 percent more than the average of all businesses. So we need to remember that small businesses are the main source of America's innovations and economic strength. We should all be proud of and support these men and women who

work hard to keep our communities vibrant.

This week is devoted to honoring small business.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, a few weeks ago, our tax filing season came to an end. This filing season was a very important milestone as it was the first tax filing season under the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act signed by the President before Christmas 2017.

Congressional Democrats sought to turn the filing season into an indictment of the tax reform through a campaign of misinformation and a campaign of half-truths. They were obsessed with finding anything—just anything—they could hang their hat on to declare that the tax filing system was a failure.

I will give you a case in point—maybe, several cases.

They attempted to use early and incomplete tax reform data to mislead taxpayers into believing that since the average tax refunds went down, taxpayers' taxes actually went up. Of course, such a claim is just simple hogwash. The size of the tax refund tells you absolutely nothing about a taxpayer's overall tax liability. The tax refund, as most people ought to know, tells you how much a taxpayer overpaid the Federal Government throughout the year.

None other than the Washington Post Fact Checker called out Democrat tax refund falsehoods as, in their words, "nonsensical and misleading." The Democrat talking points earned the Democrats a whopping four Pinocchios from that Fact Checker. Yet the Democrats wouldn't let facts or reason get in their way, because if it did, it wouldn't be a political win for them. The Democrats continued to mislead and scare the public for several more weeks. And why not? The truth might hurt.

Then, more complete tax refund data came in showing that the average tax refunds were actually in line with the previous years. Much to the Democrats' chagrin, their favorite talking point was, once and for all, exposed for the nonsense that it is.

The fact is that this filing season was a resounding success for the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, signed before Christmas 2017. The filing season happened to run remarkably smoothly. This became even clearer the further into the filing season we went and a more complete picture emerged. On four points, all the IRS computer systems functioned as planned, refunds were processed in a timely manner, the total number of refunds sent to taxpayers are up—and the average refund amount differed by only \$55 compared to the previous tax year—and, lastly and most importantly, millions of middle-income taxpayers saw less of their hard-earned money go to Washington. And, of course, that was the purpose of the tax bill in the first place.

Now, unfortunately, the Democrats remain yet today as determined as ever