

bipartisan approaches. As the wide bipartisan support for today's amendment shows, we are on a promising track, and we intend to stick with it. Market-based pooling must be a part of any comprehensive health reform solution.

I urge my colleagues to support my amendment.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The question is on the adoption of the concurrent resolution, as amended.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. JOHNSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASEY). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 52, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 114 Leg.]

YEAS—52

Akaka	Feingold	Nelson (FL)
Baucus	Feinstein	Nelson (NE)
Bayh	Harkin	Obama
Biden	Inouye	Pryor
Bingaman	Kennedy	Reed
Boxer	Kerry	Reid
Brown	Klobuchar	Rockefeller
Byrd	Kohl	Salazar
Cantwell	Landrieu	Sanders
Cardin	Lautenberg	Schumer
Carper	Leahy	Snowe
Casey	Levin	Stabenow
Clinton	Lieberman	Tester
Collins	Lincoln	Webb
Conrad	McCaskill	Webb
Dodd	Menendez	Whitehouse
Dorgan	Mikulski	Wyden
Durbin	Murray	

NAYS—47

Alexander	Dole	McCain
Allard	Domenici	McConnell
Bennett	Ensign	Murkowski
Bond	Enzi	Roberts
Brownback	Graham	Sessions
Bunning	Grassley	Shelby
Burr	Gregg	Smith
Chambliss	Hagel	Specter
Coburn	Hatch	Stevens
Cochran	Hutchison	Sununu
Coleman	Inhofe	Thomas
Corker	Isakson	Thune
Cornyn	Kyl	Vitter
Craig	Lott	Voivovich
Crapo	Lugar	Warner
DeMint	Martinez	

NOT VOTING—1

Johnson

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 21), as amended, was agreed to.

(The resolution will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

Mr. CONRAD. I move to reconsider the vote, and I move to lay that motion on the table.

The motion to lay on the table was agreed to.

Mr. CONRAD. Mr. President, we have now taken the next step on the journey to having a budget resolution in place for the Nation. It passed the committee and has now passed the Senate. This is an important turning point for the Congress, certainly for the Senate. Three of the last five years, our country has not had a budget. It is impor-

tant—critically important—for the Congress of the United States to agree on a budget. I would be the first one to say this is an imperfect budget, but it does advance the cause of having the discipline of a budget for our country.

I thank all of our colleagues who have worked to this end, even those who voted against it but who cooperated in the process. I especially thank Senator GREGG again and his outstanding professional staff. I see his staff director, Scott Gudes, who has been a true professional.

I very much appreciate having the chance to work with people of that caliber. And again, to my own staff director, Mary Naylor, who has worked such extraordinary hours, weekend after weekend, night after night until 10, 11, sometimes 2 in the morning, this has truly been an extraordinary effort, and I thank her, and I thank all of my staff. To many of them who are here, I say thank you. You have done this institution proud, and I appreciate it deeply.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to a period of morning business with Senators allowed to speak therein for a period of up to 10 minutes each.

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

SPRINGTIME ARTISTRY

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, once again, we welcome in the Spring.

Blooms the thaw-wind pleasantly,

Drips the soaking rain,

By fits looks down the waking sun:

Young grass springs on the plain;

Young leaves clothe early hedgerow trees;

Seeds, and roots, and stones of fruits,

Swollen with sap put forth their

shoots; Curled-headed ferns sprout in

the lane; Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,

When life's alive in everything . . .

—Christina Rossetti.

March 21 is the vernal equinox, when the day and night are, briefly, in perfect balance. It is the first day of spring. This year, of course, the early switch to daylight savings time has created the illusion of an earlier spring with the artificial and arbitrary establishment of darker mornings and longer evenings. I, for one, am happy to welcome an early spring. It is my favorite season, full of new hope and untarnished promise.

West Virginia has seen some snow this winter. The snow was welcomed by

skiers and farmers, but those of us who neither ski nor plow view snow more as a nuisance—something to be moved out of the way, something that complicates our commutes and closes the schools. Snow makes the world monochromatic, a palette that ranges along a single line from blinding white through the shades of gray to the tired black of grime-crusted snow along the roadways. We are ready for spring, ready for some light and for lots of vibrant color around us.

This year, the March winds again worked their artistry, blowing away the flotsam and jetsam of winter to uncover a clean canvas with just the sweeping curves of earth and the angular armature of tree limbs sketched in charcoal, awaiting the Master's hand to apply delicate springtime washes of color. Over the past weeks, we have seen the Master's skill at work in the first creeping stain of green across the lawns and fields, the soft blush of blossoms in the wild plum trees, the deepening blue of the sky. Each day, the colors have grown darker, richer, and more vibrant, as if the warm breezes carried them to us from some distant sunny clime. Bright details have begun to take shape in the scattered spangles of violet and yellow crocus and the bright accents of hardy daffodils amid their grass green leaves. Oh, daffodils—the poets write of you! The Boston poet Amy Lowell (1874–1925) wrote of you:

Thou yellow trumpeter of laggard Spring!  
Thou herald of rich Summer's myriad flow-  
ers!

The climbing sun with new recovered powers  
Does warm thee into being, through the ring  
Of rich, brown earth he woos thee, makes  
thee fling

Thy green shoots up, inheriting the dowers  
Of bending sky and sudden, sweeping show-  
ers,

Till ripe and blossoming thou art a thing

To make all nature glad, thou art so gay;

To fill the lonely with a joy untold;

Nodding at every gust of wind to-day,

To-morrow jeweled with raindrops.

Always bold

To stand erect, full in the dazzling play

Of April's sun, for thou has caught his gold.

Mr. President, spring would not be spring without the daffodils. Their delicate beauty and seemingly fragile petals belie their toughness. Year after year, the daffodils spread, competing with the grass and the tree roots to expand their beds. They manage to deter the onslaught of determined squirrels and other wild creatures who unearth and consume dainty and expensive spring bulbs like so many canapés at a reception. They push their way up into the sun through frozen ground and choking mats of fallen leaves. They defy howling winds and frigid nighttime temperatures. They survive people and houses to bloom on around the decaying foundations of long ago farmsteads. And they do it all with effortless beauty, inspiring us and filling us with joy. The first daffodil, like the first robin, is akin to the dove that brought the olive branch back to Noah—a reassurance to worried man