

One Governor recently was quoted as saying he:

Personally was very concerned about the cost issue, particularly the \$1 trillion figure being batted around.

Here is another one commenting on proposals to shift Medicaid costs on to already cash-strapped States. She said:

As a governor, my concern is that if we try to cost-shift to the States, we are not going to be in a position to pick up the tab.

Another Governor had the same concerns about Medicaid. Here is what he was quoted as saying in the New York Times last week:

Medicaid is a poor vehicle for expanding coverage . . . It's a 45-year-old system originally designed for poor women and their children. It is not health care reform to dump more money into Medicaid.

All these people have something in common: They all want reform. They have concerns about the proposals we have seen so far, and they have something else in common too. Every one of the lawmakers I have quoted is a Democrat—every one of them.

Some are trying to portray this debate as a debate between Republicans and Democrats. This is a distortion of the facts and is a disservice to the millions of Americans who want us to get this reform right. As I and others have said, the only thing that is bipartisan about the reforms we have seen so far is the opposition. The reason is clear: It costs too much; they don't address the long-term challenges in our health care system; they don't reduce long-term costs; they would add hundreds of billions to the national debt; and there is no way the American people will embrace them because all of them fall well outside the boundaries of the middle path Americans are asking us to take.

This is why so many within the President's own party are now standing and telling the administration to slow down and to reassess. This is why even traditionally Democratic groups, such as the AFL-CIO, are having second thoughts. Just last week, the AFL-CIO criticized a plan to tax so-called gold-plated insurance plans because of the impact it could have on workers. Why? Because they know that when politicians talk about raising tax on business, it is average Americans who end up shouldering most of the burden.

Americans don't want to lose the quality of care our current system provides, and they certainly don't want to pay trillions of dollars for a government takeover of health care that could lead to the same denial, delays, and rationing of treatment we have seen in other countries. They have heard the same stories we have—of someone with cancer being denied a drug because it costs too much or the woman who came here from Canada to deliver her babies because there wasn't any room in the neonatal intensive care units back home or they visited places such as the M.D. Anderson Center in Houston, TX, as I have, and saw how dozens of patients from other countries go there for treatments.

We don't know the exact circumstances that brought these people here, but we do know this: that they decided to come to the United States, in some cases traveling thousands of miles to do so, to get the kind of care that only America could provide.

Some people, for some reason, seem afraid to admit it, but the fact is, American health care is the envy—the envy—of many people around the world, and Americans don't want to lose it. That is why Americans are telling us we can reform health care without bankrupting the country or destroying what is so unique and special about our current system. That is why a growing number of politicians in Washington are hearing the people's concerns and speaking out. That is why many of them are now urging the administration to take a different path.

TRIBUTE TO METEOROLOGIST TOM WILLS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I rise on behalf of the people of Louisville, my hometown, and across Kentucky who were saddened by the news that after 40 years on the air, WAVE-3 chief meteorologist Tom Wills is retiring. Tom first joined the station and began to be welcomed into people's homes over the airwaves back in 1969.

Many Louisvillians cannot imagine turning on the TV and not being able to find a forecast from Tom Wills. It is a rare and remarkable achievement to reach 40 years in broadcasting and even more so at the same station, serving the same community.

Tom earned the level of respect he has in Louisville by being one of the best meteorologists in the Nation. He is the only broadcast meteorologist in Louisville to hold the Certified Broadcast Meteorologist Seal from the American Meteorological Society, and he is among the earliest holders of the AMS Seal of Approval in the Nation to still be on the air.

We Louisvillians have appreciated waking up every morning the last 40 years knowing Tom is there to tell us whether we need our coat or our umbrella. Tom has also been a calming presence on the television screen at the time of severe weather, helping to save lives by providing crucial information.

Tom was on the air on April 3, 1974, the day when the most severe tornadoes in living memory cut a path of destruction through the city of Louisville. When it was over, lives had been lost, hundreds were injured, and over 900 homes were destroyed.

Throughout the night and into the early morning hours of the next day, Tom Wills was on the air telling people the information they needed to know. As tragic as those events were, we know things could have been worse if not for the lives saved and the tragedy averted thanks to Tom's work.

Tom Wills grew up in West Reading, PA, and knew by age 7 he wanted to do the weather when he grew up. While

earning meteorology degrees at Penn State and Colorado State, he specialized in the science of tornado formation.

In addition to his WAVE-3 duties, he has passed along his knowledge and experience by teaching meteorology at the University of Louisville.

Now that he will no longer have to wake up at 2:30 a.m. every day, I hope Tom will have time to pursue his other interests, including gardening and following our Louisville Cardinals sports teams. Of course, his wife Pam, his kids, and his grandkids will be happy to see more of him. Tom is known throughout the community not just as a fine meteorologist but also a gentleman and friend to the many people he has met in his 40 years on the air. He is going to be greatly missed, and I wish to take this moment to thank him on behalf of Kentuckians everywhere for his service.

We are honored that for four decades he chose to share his talents with the people of Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

REMEMBERING DAVID FULLER

Mr. McCONNELL. Finally, I am saddened by the recent loss of my good friend David Fuller. This was a man who certainly had an impact both on his community and on the Nation as a whole. It is no exaggeration at all to say that thanks to David, thousands of workers at nuclear plants in this country have safer jobs and healthier lives.

That includes David's coworkers at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Paducah, KY, where for 10 years David served as president of the Nuclear Workers Union. You see, the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant has produced enriched uranium since 1952 and is currently the only operating uranium enrichment facility in the United States.

For much of the Cold War, the Paducah plant produced fissionable material for our country's nuclear arsenal. It also enriched uranium for commercial nuclear reactors, helping to provide the benefits of cleanly generated electric power to millions of people.

Those Kentuckians who worked in the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant played a vital role in America's victory in the Cold War. Unfortunately, their own government did not look out for them as it should have.

About 10 years ago, we learned there were risks associated with working at the Paducah plant, particularly during the early years of its operation. Some workers were exposed to cancer-causing chemicals and radiological hazards. Some would later sicken and even die.

David was tireless in advocating for the workers at Paducah. He was one of them. He put in 33 years as a cascade operator and electrician. His testimony before Congress was key to advancing the effort to care for those who had been harmed by the government's careless treatment. Thanks, in part, to

David, we created the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program to ensure that our Nation's nuclear workers finally now get the attention they deserve from their government. Medical screening is available to all Paducah workers so they may be tested and treated for any illness they contract as a result of working at the plant. We are working to clean up some of the legacy waste materials left at the Paducah plant.

I also might say my wife Elaine Chao, who served as Secretary of Labor during the Bush years, was deeply involved in setting up this compensation program there at Paducah and she too became a friend of David Fuller's.

David testified before Congress on behalf of his fellow workers, including before a committee I chaired. He served as his union's president for 5 years, longer than anyone before, and never lost an election.

David and I worked side by side for a long time on this issue. He visited my office frequently here in Washington, and on several occasions I was his guest at the Paducah Nuclear Workers Union Hall to meet with and speak to the local membership. In that time, I saw how determined David was to help develop a program that would ensure all current and former plant employees were tested for exposure and that would provide sick employees with the treatment they need and deserve.

Of course, nothing can take the place of a life or good health, but David wanted to see every effort made to provide compensation for the workers and their families. Thanks to his extraordinary work, he lived to see that happen.

I know his tireless service will not be forgotten by his friends and coworkers. Even the Paducah workers who did not get to know David personally know they certainly have him to thank for the justice that was provided to the workers who took on this vital duty.

Elaine and I have lost a good friend. We send our prayers to his wife Katherine Cooper Fuller; his daughters, Julie Fuller Leidecker, Laura Ann Nichole "Nikki" Fuller, and Meagen Joan Fuller; his son John David Fuller; his three grandchildren; and many other beloved family members and friends.

Not everyone, after he or she is gone, will be able to show as easily as David that theirs was a life spent helping others. David gave so many the simple gift of time: more time spent with their family, friends, and loved ones.

Sadly, David's family has run out of time with David himself, as he passed away on July 19 at the age of only 62. But I hope they can take some solace in the tremendous work he did on behalf of others. Kentucky has lost a great man. He will not be forgotten.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, there will be a period for the transaction of morning business for 1 hour, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half and the Republicans controlling the second half.

The Senator from Washington is recognized.

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, a few moments ago, the Republican leader, on the floor, talked about a concern about "rushing" to a health care reform debate and bill. I want to assure everyone that no one is rushing to anything. Everyone is working hard to come up with a good, strong health care reform bill that addresses an urgent need in this country.

In fact, last week, President Obama spoke to the Nation about the urgent need to reform the health care system. He spoke about premiums that have doubled over the last decade. He talked about the out-of-pocket costs that have been shooting up by over a third. He talked about deductibles that all of us have seen skyrocket. He talked about the families and the small business owners who have to work harder and harder to stay afloat. President Obama spoke about the work that has been done to put a health care reform plan together.

I sit on the health care committee in the Senate. We spent months having hearings and working through some of the tough, difficult challenges. We spent weeks and hours working through a debate on a health care reform package. We looked at hundreds of amendments, many of them Republican, a lot of them accepted into our health care bill before it passed out. We are working very hard now with the Finance Committee for them to work through the challenging issues and come up with a solution, as the House is as well.

We are working hard to come to a solution with the health care reform plan that protects patient choice, that reins in those costs I talked about, and provides coverage for millions of Americans who don't have any today.

The President of the United States spoke frankly about some of our Republican colleagues who are speaking out for the status quo. President Obama spoke plainly to Americans about the devastating costs of inaction—the devastating costs of inaction if we do nothing, and what will happen

if we maintain the status quo. I am telling you what would happen if we do nothing: Premiums are going to continue to rise, benefits will continue to erode, out-of-pocket costs are going to continue to skyrocket, and more and more employers will do what I have seen too many in my State have to do: drop coverage for their workers. We talk about 47 million Americans today who don't have coverage at all. That will seem like the good old days if we do nothing.

Despite what some of our colleagues wish us to believe, Americans do want health care reform. They need health care reform desperately, and they are not going to accept another year of talking and bickering and stalling.

Last month, I sent a letter to families across my State of Washington asking for their help as we work very hard to reform the health care system. I told them I wanted to pass a plan that protects existing coverage when it is good, improves it when it is not, reins in costs today, and lowers them long term, and guarantees care for the millions of people who don't have health care today.

I asked my constituents to share with me their stories and ideas about how to make this vision a reality. I told them that I know health care is a very personal issue, but I also told them their personal stories have the power to change minds and transform debate. The response I got was overwhelming. I came to the floor last week several times and shared some of the over 5,000 stories that have now poured into my office from my State. I underscored the need to fix this broken health care system and do it this year.

I come to the floor to share a few more stories, and I want to talk about a specific aspect of health care reform I have been working very hard on, and that is, as we reform this health care system, we have a skilled health care workforce that is ready to step up and provide the care we need.

Judy Allen, from Moses Lake, WA, sent me a story about her son. She said he had been diagnosed with cystic fibrosis at the age of 5 and was given a 50-50 chance of making it to his ninth birthday. Judy said she and her husband had good health insurance, but they had to travel over 3 hours to get to a clinic with the resources her son needed. They could not move close to this facility, because moving would force them to switch health care insurance providers, and they knew if that happened, they would get rejected because of their son's preexisting condition. Sadly, Judy's son died 3 years ago, but the reforms we are working on will help mothers such as Judy across the country.

We want to stop insurance companies from spending our premium dollars on figuring out ways to exclude people from coverage. We are going to ensure that nobody will be denied health care coverage even if they have a preexisting condition.