

Americans do not want a single-payer system. The leadership of both parties, House and Senate, understands this fact. The American public does not want a wholesale government takeover of one-sixth of our economy. We do not want waiting lists such as in Canada. We do not want rationing such as in the United Kingdom.

Realizing where public opinion is on this pivotal issue, the advocates of these congressional Democratic plans have gone to great lengths to assure people they do not want a single-payer option either. These reassurances have come from as high as the White House itself. Just last week in North Carolina, President Obama said:

Nobody is talking about some government takeover of health care. . . . These folks need to stop scaring everybody.

I wish that were true. But with due respect to our Chief Executive, there is a reason people are frightened. They are paying attention, and they see that sponsors of this legislation are, in fact, advocating a government takeover.

I found it interesting that just 1 day after the President's remarks, I turned on the news to see one of the most senior Democratic chairmen in the House of Representatives seem to contradict the President. Here is the exact quote from this leading Member of the House on the consequences of a public option. He said:

I think if we get a good public option, it could lead to a single payer and that is the best way to reach single payer.

I wonder what the Federal Trade Commission would say about that type of advertisement. To me, it says: Let's lure people into going along with a public plan when we know it will eventually lead to a single payer down the road. I don't want to take that risk.

Another leading House advocate of the public option had this to say about a path to a single-payer system:

This is a fight about strategy about getting there—

Meaning the single-payer option—and I believe we will.

I think most folks would call this a classic legislative bait and switch.

I recently ran across a blog from Dr. Michael Swickard of New Mexico, cautioning about this very tactic. Here is what Dr. Swickard said:

Given the track record of our government in bait and switch, all of the promises of national health care are just that—promises to be broken. Maybe there will be a few years before the full impact of the bait and switch is felt by citizens. But given the past actions of our government when implementing programs, our future is clear.

I hope we can avoid that future for our country, but the writer's point is this: It may take a while, but the pattern is there. The future he fears includes a single-payer takeover that very few Americans would vote for today.

I say to my colleagues, there is much to be said about the ill effects of the health care proposals being put forward by the House and Senate committees.

But among the most troublesome aspects of this so-called reform is the enactment of a public plan which will inevitably lead to a single-payer system Americans don't want and don't need.

Don't take my word for it on the cost, on the loss of choice, and on the effect on small business job creators. Just read the words of the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. On the issue of massive, unsustainable cost shifting to State governments, don't take my word for it. Listen to the experienced Democratic Governors pleading with us not to go down this road. And when it comes to whether the goal of this whole exercise is to move us to a European single-payer plan, it is no longer necessary to heed the warnings of the political conservatives. When you listen closely, the leading advocates of the House and Senate legislation, in their unguarded moments, are willing to admit that a single-payer government takeover is their ultimate dream. I hope we do not go down that road.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Connecticut.

Mr. DODD. I yield to my colleague from Vermont.

AMENDMENTS NOS. 2276 AND 2271 TO AMENDMENT NO. 1908

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I seek unanimous consent to set aside the pending amendment so that I may call up my amendments Nos. 2276 and 2271.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. SANDERS] proposes amendments numbered 2276 and 2271, en bloc, to amendment No. 1908.

The amendments are as follows:

AMENDMENT NO. 2276

(Purpose: To modify the amount made available for the Farm Service Agency)

On page 24, line 12, strike "\$1,253,777,000" and insert "\$1,603,777,000".

AMENDMENT NO. 2271

(Purpose: To provide funds for the school community garden pilot program, with an offset)

On page 52, lines 22 and (23), strike "\$16,799,584,000, to remain available through September 30, 2011," and insert "\$16,802,084,000, to remain available through September 30, 2011, of which \$2,500,000 shall be used to carry out the school community garden pilot program established under section 18(g)(3) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769(g)(3)) and shall be derived by transfer of the amount made available under the heading 'ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE' of title I for the National Animal Identification program".

Mr. INOUE. Madam President, the Senate is considering the fiscal year 2010 appropriations bill for the Department of Agriculture, rural development, the Food and Drug Administration, and related agencies. I thank our two managers, Senators KOHL and BROWNBAC, for their hard work on this measure.

The bill was reported by the Appropriations Committee more than 3 weeks ago on a bipartisan basis with all members voting in support of the measure.

As my colleagues are aware, as the new chairman of the Appropriations Committee this year one of my goals was to increase transparency and accountability in the appropriations process. In many respects I have followed the lead of former Chairman Senator BYRD in this regard. To this end, the Agriculture bill and report have been available on the Internet and in printed form for several weeks. All Members have had ample time to review the material in this bill.

As the Senate considers this measure it will find a bill that will meet our Nation's critical requirements to support agriculture and related programs which are vital to our economy and, frankly, our Nation's livelihood.

Our Nation has been blessed with a wealth of natural resources which allows us to be the world's leader in agriculture. This bill offered by Senators KOHL and BROWNBAC will help to ensure that we maintain that position.

There is a total funding of \$123.9 billion included in this bill, of which \$23.05 billion is for discretionary programs, the same as the 302(b) allocation. While this represents an 11-percent increase in funding when compared with fiscal year 2009, not including supplemental spending, my colleagues should recognize that for too long funding for our Agriculture and Rural Development Subcommittee has been severely constrained.

Even with this level of funding, the subcommittee has had to find savings in farm programs to live within this allocation.

I very much thank our two managers for their work in preparing this bill. The Committee on Appropriations has offered its unanimous support. I believe the full Senate should do the same.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that there now be a period for the transaction of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Mr. DODD. Madam President, I thank my colleagues this evening. I am going to momentarily turn to my colleagues from Iowa, Ohio, Vermont, and Rhode Island—all of whom participated with us nearly 3 weeks ago in the markup of our bill, the Affordable Health Choices Act, which took up an inordinate amount of time, longer than I think any markup certainly in the history of our committee, maybe the longest in the history of this body. We actually spent about 56 hours, 23 sessions, and 13 days on this bill. We considered just shy of 300 amendments, of