

sure my colleagues and I are united in the effort to see that good things happen as a result of the passage of the Choice Act in 2014.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

The Senator from Wisconsin.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, it is no secret we are living in dangerous times and that we face a variety of threats. We face the threat of ISIL, a barbaric and despicable terrorist organization. We face threats to the security of our personal information both online and in our daily life. We still face threats from Al Qaeda and rogue nations such as North Korea. With all of these ongoing threats to our Nation and its citizens, shouldn't our colleagues on the other side of the aisle want to work together in a bipartisan manner in order to fund the government agency responsible for protecting us from those threats?

Evidently they do not. Instead, they are playing a partisan game while threatening to shut down the Department of Homeland Security. They are playing politics with our homeland security. The vote the Senate just took relates to a bill that put partisan politics ahead of our national security while also needlessly creating another manufactured budget crisis, and that is why I voted no.

I understand our Republican colleagues have concerns about the President's Executive actions on immigration, and I believe there is a time and place for this body to debate those issues, as we have in the past and we must in the future. But to jeopardize our Nation's security by playing politics with this vital funding measure is extremely disappointing.

I would actually like to remind our colleagues that the President's actions on immigration reform devote even more resources to securing our Southwest border and to deporting felons, not families, and identifying threats to our national security.

The President's Executive action on immigration also provides certain undocumented immigrants temporary relief, after background checks and other security measures are passed, bringing families out of the shadows so they can work and pay taxes like everyone else.

I remain committed to finishing the job on bipartisan and comprehensive immigration reform here in Congress, but until we can achieve that goal, I support the President keeping his promise to take action and do what he legally can to fix our broken system.

Consistent with the actions by previous Presidents of both parties, President Obama is right to follow in the footsteps of every President since Eisenhower to address as much of this problem as he can through Executive action. The status quo is simply unacceptable.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office—also known as the nonpartisan scorekeeper—recently found that including a reversal of these Executive orders in the homeland security funding bill would actually increase our deficit.

Instead of attaching these transparent attacks on the President, the Congress should pass a clean, straightforward, bipartisan bill. And there is such a bill. That bill was previously negotiated and it was just introduced by the vice chairwoman of the Committee on Appropriations, BARBARA MIKULSKI, and the ranking member of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security, Senator SHAHEEN.

As a new member of the Subcommittee on Homeland Security of the Committee on Appropriations, I am a strong supporter of the Mikulski-Shaheen bill because it would fund programs that are critical to our Nation and to my home State of Wisconsin. Their straightforward funding bill funds essential Departments such as the Coast Guard, which keeps the Great Lakes safe and open for business; and it funds FEMA grants, which have helped communities in western Wisconsin, for example, plan and prepare for floods; and it funds fire grants that help rural fire departments with equipment they could never afford through the proceeds of annual pancake breakfasts. These are critical assets that my constituents rely on, and putting them at risk is simply irresponsible.

It is time for our colleagues to drop this dangerous political stunt and to join with Democrats to pass a bipartisan bill that gives the Department of Homeland Security the resources it needs to keep Americans safe.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

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

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. BROWN. Mr. President, today the House of Representatives held yet another vote—I think they are maybe up to 50-some—to repeal the Affordable Care Act, showing once again their objective is to dismantle the health care law. House Republicans voted to repeal the law. They like to say “repeal and replace,” but the “replace” doesn't ever really quite come forward.

Think what that would be like. It would take us back to the day when

children with preexisting conditions such as cancer or asthma could be turned away from health coverage. Let me illustrate.

Several months ago a couple came to my coffee, which I hold every Thursday when the Senate is in session. It is open to anyone from Ohio who wants to stop in. A woman came from Cincinnati. She lives in one of the most conservative parts of the State. We talked for a few minutes about home schooling and her desire to be able to get some support from the Federal Government in a variety of different ways for home schooling.

Then she said: I want to thank you for the Affordable Care Act.

I said: Certainly. I was proud to support it.

She said: You see, my son—and she pointed across the room. He was about 15. He was diagnosed with diabetes when he was 7 or 8 years old.

She hesitated. She said: I counted them, 33 times, we were turned down for health insurance because of his preexisting condition. We signed up last week for the Affordable Care Act.

So if the House's effort to repeal the Affordable Care Act had come to the Senate and become law, someone would have to explain to her why she loses her health care. Again, if this is repealed, insurers could place lifetime or annual caps on health coverage. We know that tens of thousands of people in this country have gotten sick and their insurance has been cancelled because their insurance was so expensive. That is prohibited under the Affordable Care Act. That would be back if we repealed the Affordable Care Act.

Seniors were forced to pay huge out-of-pocket costs when they hit the gap in prescription drug coverage known as the doughnut hole.

A decade ago, when I was a Member of the House of Representatives, I voted against that Medicare plan in part because it had this huge gap in coverage. So if you have an illness or a series of illnesses and buy a lot of prescription drugs, between the second thousandth dollar and the fifth thousandth dollar, there is a gap in coverage. In other words, you continue to pay the premiums for prescription drug coverage but get no assistance from the government. Under the Affordable Care Act, we have closed that gap. We have already cut it better than half, and over the next 3 or 4 years it will be eliminated entirely. We know the Affordable Care Act is working.

In my State, 100,000 young Ohioans, a little older than these pages, between the ages of 18 and 26, are on their parents' health insurance plans right now. They would be dropped from that coverage if the Affordable Care Act were repealed.

Ohio seniors have saved \$65 million in prescription drug costs by the closing of the coverage gap, the so-called doughnut hole. Those savings would end. Those with preexisting conditions would no longer be covered or would be