

by putting American taxpayers on the hook. Either way, Ex-Im is not necessary.

At the same time, I understand that many Senators on both sides take a different view. A significant percentage of my conference and many Democrats support the Ex-Im's reauthorization. They are entitled to that view. I don't see a reason why they shouldn't be allowed a debate and then a vote to sort all of this out. I have said repeatedly and I have said publicly for months that the Ex-Im supporters from both parties should be allowed a vote. I also said publicly that the highway bill would be an obvious place to have that vote.

When there is overwhelming bipartisan support for an idea, even if I am opposed to it, it doesn't require some special deal to see a vote occur on that measure. This is the U.S. Senate, after all, where we debate and vote on all kinds of different issues. The supporters of Ex-Im can still lose a vote, of course. They are not the only ones with passion on their side. Those on my side of the issue are passionate, too, and this debate might just present the perfect opportunity to make the case against Ex-Im and carry the day in an open and democratic vote, but whatever the outcome, the slots for these amendments will be open once the Senate disposes of them and that will open the possibility of considering other important amendments.

Let me repeat that. The slots for these amendments will open once the Senate disposes of them.

We know there are many other ideas from both sides of the aisle about how to improve the highway bill further before its completion, but we also know time is running short to complete our work on the underlying highway bill. Jobs are on the line. Infrastructure projects important to the people we represent are on the line. We have to get this done. With cooperation, we can ensure that more ideas from both sides of the aisle are still heard and voted upon.

This is a new Senate. Amendment votes are hardly a rarity here anymore. We will have more opportunities soon to address other issues in the weeks and months ahead. I will work with colleagues to help ensure that votes on other priorities occur.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—AMENDMENT NO. 2266, AS MODIFIED

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the clerk be allowed to make technical changes to the substitute amendment regarding references to titles, divisions, page and line numbers.

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

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT AND EXPORT-IMPORT BANK AMENDMENTS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, later today the Senate will vote on one or more motions to overturn rulings of the Chair brought by disgruntled Republican Senators. At another time, Republican Senators would have called this a number of things, not the least of which is the nuclear option.

Republicans have controlled the Senate for about 7 months now. It has become increasingly clear that what is wrong with the Senate today is the same thing that has troubled the Senate before Republicans took control—dysfunction in the Republican caucus.

Republicans probably will not succeed in overturning the rules of the Senate today, but an honest observer of the Senate will recognize that the day is coming when they will, unless the Republicans become the party of Eisenhower, Dodd, Dirksen, and even President Reagan.

I was amused to hear the Republican leader say he looks forward to amendments. Many Senators on our side look forward to being able to offer amendments; for example, to improve work safety provisions in the bill, but the amendment tree is filled. They are not going to have that opportunity unless something untoward happens.

Today, the Senate will vote on two amendments. How Senators vote on these amendments will demonstrate their priorities—who is for American families and who is doing the bidding of special interests. Consider today's vote on yet another Republican attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act—ObamaCare.

By all accounts, it is working and working well. Is it perfect? Of course not. That is why we have invited the Republicans for years now to join with us in having a better health care delivery system, but ObamaCare is helping families all across this great Nation. There are many facts.

Insurance companies can no longer discriminate against people with pre-existing conditions. They can't discriminate against anyone as they did when they discriminated, basically, against everyone. Twelve million more people now have coverage through Medicaid programs and CHIP programs. Health care costs are growing but very slowly—the slowest rate of growth in a long time. Perhaps, most importantly, the share of Americans who lack health insurance coverage has dramatically declined.

After the latest Supreme Court victory less than a month ago, I urged, at that time, my Republican friends to stop banging their heads against the wall because obviously it doesn't feel

good. Why do they continually try to repeal the Affordable Care Act? Apparently, two Supreme Court wins and more than 50 votes by congressional Republicans to repeal or undermine the Affordable Care Act are not enough for the Republican leader and his friends. They are insisting on yet another partisan attempt to strip health insurance coverage from more than 19 million Americans—coverage that a recent Commonwealth Fund survey found that more than 80 percent of Americans are satisfied with this program.

Republicans claim this ObamaCare repeal is part of their crusade to reduce the deficit, but the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office recently estimated that repealing the Affordable Care Act will increase the Federal budget by more than \$350 billion.

So today's vote isn't going to be about reducing the deficit. This is about caving to special interests. This is about the Republicans and their leader desperately trying to appease their base.

I am appalled and, more than that, disappointed by these continued partisan attempts to strip away insurance coverage for almost 20 million Americans. Congress passed the Affordable Care Act. The President signed it into law, and the Supreme Court has put a stamp of approval on it, not once but twice.

It is time for Republicans to move on and not take another politically motivated vote that is going nowhere.

Finally, on another subject, the Export-Import Bank. After the ObamaCare vote, we will then consider the reauthorization of the Export-Import Bank—in fact, their charter. Once again, how Senators vote on the Export-Import Bank will reveal their loyalties.

Companies like Boeing, Caterpillar, General Electric, Honeywell, along with dozens of companies in sparsely populated Nevada, along with thousands of small businesses across this country, use this Bank to find a market for billions of dollars of their exports. It is not only for Boeing, Caterpillar, and these big companies; it is for thousands and thousands of small businesses.

Most of the jobs in America are created not by the great big companies but by small businesses, and they need this. They want this. That is why even the U.S. Chamber of Commerce must have been desperate.

Finally, siding with us on something, they support the Ex-Im Bank. This year alone, the Export-Import Bank supported 165,000 jobs in America. A vote for the Export-Import Bank is a vote for jobs, a healthy economy, and the prosperity of American families. Conversely, a vote against reauthorization is nothing more than a shameless attempt to garner the affection of the Koch brothers. After all, opposition to the Export-Import Bank is a prerequisite to having their support. All candidates running for President stumble over themselves to say: What do