

prohibitive. I have sons in the middle of their careers. They can't really afford the insurance they are being offered today. I feel it firsthand in my own life.

Premiums right now, though—if we put into place the suggestions we have on the table right now, the HHS Department has estimated just last week with a very credible model that rates could come down as much as 78 percent in the next 4 years. Has anybody heard the other side remind us of that data point? No. Why do those rates come down? Because the free-market system gets to act again, instead of being shackled in choices being removed. All of a sudden, now we move into it.

By the way, they talk about these made-up fantasy policies. Wait a minute. I had one of those made-up fantasy policies that you can't get today under ObamaCare. It is called catastrophic coverage. For some people with a high deductible, catastrophic coverage—that works. They are denied that today because Big Government knows more about what you need in your personal life.

The third thing we had to do—and this was very important. The second part of this problem is that Medicaid was not on a sustainable path. I am sorry. They have overpromised, and they cannot deliver. There is no way over the next 30 years that we can sustain Medicaid. Just as Medicare and Social Security are going bankrupt, we cannot afford to do what they are promising people we are going to do. They know that. They already know that.

Just like the Great Society, these Big Government programs that they promise all the time are going to work have never worked. The Great Society, the War on Poverty was going to remove poverty from America. I remember that.

I sit at a desk where that bill was signed by the then-Democratic leader of the Senate, Richard Russell, before it went to the White House. I am reminded every day of how Big Government has failed the American people. That war on poverty has spent trillions of dollars trying to reduce poverty in America. Yet, today, the poverty rate is fundamentally the same as it was in 1965 when that was signed into law.

Big Government does not work in situations like this. I lived under a single payer. My son lived under a single payer. This is the alternative they are after. I have heard it mentioned three times on the floor of the Senate to-

night. We cannot go there. It bifurcates delivery. It would add \$3.2 trillion. That is more than we spend on all of our mandatory expenses today—\$3.2 trillion every single year. That is impossible. If you think that would work, imagine this. Go home and look at your tax bill. Whatever you paid the Federal Government last year, double it. That is what that would mean. It is not workable.

The fourth thing we had to do was make sure preexisting conditions were protected. I worried about that through my entire career. If I changed jobs, if I had been sick or my family had been sick, I might have been denied insurance. We can't allow that. This bill doesn't allow that. We protected preexisting conditions. We put Medicaid on a sustainable path for the long term. We also bring premiums down. That was a major priority here. And we give everybody in America access to healthcare—period, end of the conversation.

That is not good enough. The other side is not going to be happy until this Federal Government steps in and takes over 18 percent of our economy called healthcare. They tried to do it in 1992 to 1994, under HillaryCare. They tried to do it here. I remember the Speaker of the House saying: If you want to know what is in this bill, you have to vote for the bill. We are not doing that today. This cloud of innuendo that the other side has perpetrated on the American people is just not true.

In 2010, not one Republican voted for ObamaCare. Not one amendment got to the floor of this Senate. Yet they want to talk about this great open policy. They had 7 years to fix this mess. People in my State have been hurt by it. It is unforgivable, and we can do something about it this week.

Senator JOHN MCCAIN is very sick. He is a fighter. He will take care of this. I hope he will be back this week to help us. If he can, I think he will. We are going to vote on it this week. We have to do this for the American people.

I want to remind everybody what is at stake here. If we don't pass this tomorrow, then we end up moving toward a single-payer system. Let me remind everybody of the other Big Government failures we talk about: the VA and the Postal Service. Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac are bankrupt. We talk about the ObamaCare failures. Then there is the Great Society of rural poverty. I want to remind everybody.

Let me close with this. I heard tonight that this is a reckless action, the

new policy. I heard New Testament examples about how to take care of your brethren. It is shocking to me that somebody on the other side would say that when they know these statistics of what they have done—8 million of the poorest people in America have been fined \$1.8 billion. Half of them make under \$25,000 a year. That is taking care of your brethren all right. I am embarrassed. We can fix that.

I believe we heard the rain of devastation: No one is helped by this bill; it is a reckless act. Here is the one I love: We want to work with you. We want to work with you to help fix this thing. Just a year ago, I didn't hear any speeches in here—I don't think you did from that Chair—where anybody on that side acknowledged that there was anything wrong with ObamaCare. You hear today: We want to work with you to help fix ObamaCare. It is 7 years too late, in my opinion. It would have been nice to have been included in the conversation in 2009 and 2010 when it was crammed down the throats of Republicans.

I believe this is a historic moment in America, not just for healthcare. Healthcare is very important, but it is bigger than that. This is about the direction of our country. Are we going to try to trust Big Government again and again until we can't afford it? We are already well down that rabbit hole. We cannot afford this chance again. We have already proven it doesn't work.

I hope that this week colleagues on our side will get together and we will vote this thing in. I welcome any Democratic support as well. I know we are not going to get it. This is a time to stand. I hope we will have that vote. I fully encourage my colleagues here to support that. Let's get on with business.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

Mr. PERDUE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 11:19 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, July 25, 2017, at 12 noon.

CONFIRMATION

Executive nomination confirmed by the Senate July 24, 2017:

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

DAVID BERNHARDT, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR.