

I understand the Government is trying to prevent drug stockpiling. But this rigid program requirement does not give doctors the flexibility they need to practice medicine. This is especially true in emergency situations.

So who is liable when a patient comes to the doctor's office needing immediate treatment but the doctor cannot help because he has to call the Government to send the medicine in the first place, even if he has a supply on hand for another patient? The program's current design has turned out to be a bureaucratic nightmare.

After only 3 months in the program, Randy Johnston wrote Medicare a letter begging—I say begging—to be let out of the program. Why? Well, it was not just the excessive paperwork and the excessive phone calls to get the medication; Randy saw how absolutely wasteful this Government program had become.

When Dr. Johnston purchased Medicaid vials himself from a local pharmacy, the local pharmacy would divide it into multiple doses that could be used for different patients. Using the new Medicare program, Dr. Johnston had to order an entire vial for each patient, use the one dose the patient needed, and then throw the rest away.

Why would Medicare force seniors and taxpayers to foot the bill for an entire vial of medication containing 400 doses when the patient only needed 1 dose? At a time when Americans are facing such painful financial times, this wasteful Government spending is appalling. We are talking about life-saving medicine, expensive medicine. I do not know anyone who buys a loaf of bread, takes out one piece and eats it, and throws away the rest of the loaf. This makes no sense to anyone.

It is well past the time that Washington bureaucrats start treating taxpayer dollars like the money in their own personal checkbooks. When emergencies, illnesses, or major household repairs occur in our families, we find a way to pay the bill. We look at our budgets, we tighten our belts, and we find alternative places to save. We eliminate luxury items. We stop wasteful spending.

Dr. Johnston was absolutely right to try to get out of this absolutely wrong, wasteful program. Washington bureaucrats who have never been on the front lines treating Medicare patients developed this program. They do not understand the practical applications. So I was not surprised when Medicare announced in September of this year they were putting the entire program on hold starting in January 2009. Washington bureaucrats claim they are considering alternative ways—alternative ways—to improve the program because they want it to succeed.

The new administration has a tremendous opportunity to learn from Randy Johnston and from the 4,200 other participating doctors. Rather than hamstring providers, perhaps Washington should start to focus its ef-

forts on eliminating waste, eliminating fraud, and eliminating abuse in the Medicare system.

This year alone, we have seen one news report after another uncovering Medicare wasting money. These news reports sound the alarm to every hard-working taxpayer in the sound of my voice and all hard-working taxpayers across America.

Who is holding these bureaucrats accountable? Just this week, the Department of Health and Human Services issued the Agency Financial Report. This document shows that in fiscal year 2008, these Government check writers made \$10.4 billion—\$10.4 billion—in improper Medicare fee-for-service payments. We can do better. We can do much better than this.

Wasteful spending strips Medicare of the vital resources that are needed to care for our elderly, to care for our frail, to care for the vulnerable. The new administration has a real opportunity to show leadership. Working together, we can fix this flawed policy. Medicare patients, doctors who take care of Medicare patients, and the American taxpayers deserve nothing less.

Mr. President, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll of the Senate.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

#### RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until the hour of 4 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 2:28 p.m., recessed until 4 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. McCASKILL).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate will come to order.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, 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. BYRD. Madam 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 West Virginia is recognized.

#### ECONOMIC STIMULUS

Mr. BYRD. Madam President, in September, the Senate considered a \$56 billion economic recovery bill, authored by Senator REID and myself. While the bill received 52 votes, the minority succeeded in blocking its consideration.

In the following 2 months, the economy has continued to deteriorate. On

Monday, Senator REID and I renewed our effort to stimulate the economy and help the millions of Americans hurt by the recession by introducing a \$100 billion economic recovery bill.

In response to higher unemployment, rising food costs, higher energy costs, State budgets in crisis, and increased dependence on foreign oil, President-elect Obama has called for passage of a second stimulus bill. I spoke with the President-elect yesterday, and I committed myself to helping the President implement his agenda.

Madam President, it is time to deliver to Main Street USA. S. 3689 is a \$100.3 billion economic stimulus package that would create over 635,000 jobs. I will repeat that. S. 3689 is a \$100.3 billion economic stimulus package that would create over 635,000 jobs. The unemployment rate now stands at 6.5 percent, the highest rate since March 1994. The unemployment rate is up by 1.7 percentage points since October 2007. The U.S. economy has lost jobs every month this year—a total of 1.2 million jobs, with almost half of the job losses coming in the last 3 months alone. New unemployment claims filed exceeded 500,000, the highest number since just after 9/11.

In order to respond to these grim statistics—and they are grim—the stimulus package extends unemployment benefits by 7 weeks in all States, as well as another 13 weeks in high-unemployment States. Thirty-seven States are facing a shortfall of over \$70 billion in their fiscal year 2009 budget, necessitating cutbacks in education, cutbacks in health care, and cutbacks in law enforcement.

The stimulus package includes \$37.8 billion—that is \$37.80 for every minute since Jesus Christ was born—to reduce the State's share of Medicaid costs by increasing the Federal share—increasing, I say—the Federal share by 8 percent.

The economic recovery package also—I emphasize the word “also”—includes a temporary increase in food stamp benefits. These funds—hear me now—these funds will be spent quickly, and they will help to stimulate the economy.

Over \$37 billion is included for essential infrastructure and investment programs. Now hear me, listen closely. I measure each word. There are consequences for failing to invest in America. For 8 years—8 long years—we have failed to make adequate investments in highways, transit systems, housing, in clean and safe drinking water systems, and in energy independence. This bill funds such investments, as well as small business loans, assistance for rural communities, and disaster relief for farmers hurt by the hurricanes and the floods this summer.

I understand, I am sorry to say, there is going to be an objection to debating this bill. This would be a mistake. I will say that again. I understand there will be an objection to debating this bill. This would be a mistake—a mistake. Why? Because it is time to act.

Delaying is not acceptable. And so I ask all Senators, every Senator, to do the right thing for this country—your country, our country—and support this measure.

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD information related to rule XLIV of the Standing Rules of the Senate for title I of S. 3689.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

## CONGRESSIONALLY DIRECTED SPENDING ITEMS

Account	Project	Funding	Member
Department of Agriculture: Farm Service Agency .....	SUBCOMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES Agricultural crop disaster assistance .....	.....	Senators Landrieu, Hutchison, and Vitter.
Department of Energy .....	SUBCOMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND WATER DEVELOPMENT Extend a certain cooperative agreement to carry out the FutureGen program .....	.....	Senators Durbin and Bond
GSA .....	SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT District of Columbia, DHS Consolidation and development of St. Elizabeths campus .....	\$346,639,000	The President, Senators Lieberman and Collins

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

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

## TRIBUTE TO SENATORS

ELIZABETH DOLE

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, it is my sad task today to say farewell to our friend, the Senator from North Carolina, ELIZABETH DOLE. It is hard to know where to begin with a woman who has done it all and is admired across America.

There is an old saying that all politics is local. That is true even for the Senator from North Carolina, who was the first viable female candidate for President, held two different Cabinet positions, and worked for four Presidents. You see, ELIZABETH's first campaign was for the presidency of her third grade Bird Club. She won that race.

ELIZABETH began impressing many early on as she earned her bachelor's degree from Duke University and both a master's and a law degree from Harvard. Of the 550 members of her Harvard Law class, only 29 were women.

From there, ELIZABETH went to the White House Office of Consumer Affairs, and then the Federal Trade Commission. In 1972, she met a Senator from Kansas when she lobbied him on a consumer-affairs issue.

In 1975, ELIZABETH and Bob Dole were married in Washington Cathedral, creating one of the most prominent and successful partnerships in American public life.

ELIZABETH later headed President Reagan's Public Liaison Office, and then in 1983 became his Secretary of Transportation. She served for 4½ years, longer than any previous transportation secretary at that time. And as transportation secretary, she was fond of pointing out that she was the first woman to ever head a branch of the Armed Services: the Coast Guard.

When her husband Bob introduced ELIZABETH at her confirmation hearings, he displayed some of his trade-

mark wit by remarking, "I only regret that I have but one wife to give for my country's infrastructure."

When ELIZABETH had her turn at the microphone, she got him right back. She assured the committee that she knew all about airbags, because she had been driving around with one for years.

In 1989, ELIZABETH became one of the few Americans honored to lead more than one Federal department by becoming the first President Bush's Secretary of Labor. Among the highlights of her tenure there was playing a key role in resolving a bitter 11-month coal strike in southwest Virginia.

I would even go so far as to say that ELIZABETH was the second-best Secretary of Labor this country's ever had.

ELIZABETH went on to become the president of the Red Cross, and revitalized that important institution. And of course, she became a familiar face to all Americans in 1996 when Bob became the Republican nominee for President of the United States, and when ELIZABETH blazed yet another trail in 2000 as the first viable female candidate for that same office.

During her time here in the Senate, ELIZABETH used the same desk her husband used. From behind that desk, she has been a powerful advocate for her State and her country.

North Carolinians can be proud of her record to strengthen our military and to support military personnel and veterans. She worked to craft a farm bill to benefit North Carolina agriculture. She has done much to address hunger in America, by championing tax incentives to encourage volunteerism and charitable giving, and through grant programs to benefit food banks and relief organizations.

The "Dole" in the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program may be for her husband, Bob, as the program is named after him and former Senator George McGovern. But it was ELIZABETH DOLE who secured more than \$400 million for the McGovern-Dole program to go toward school-feeding and child-nutrition programs in the world's poorest countries.

Let me take this moment to say, on behalf of my wife Elaine and myself, that ELIZABETH and Bob have been dear friends of ours for many years. In fact,

had it not been for ELIZABETH, Elaine probably never would have come to Washington in the first place, therefore I obviously never would have met her, so I feel a special obligation to—and thanks to—Senator DOLE for that. We value their friendship, and I know we will continue to do so for many years to come.

ELIZABETH, I want to thank you for always bringing wisdom, grace and integrity to this chamber. Over decades of accomplishments in many prominent posts, you have served the people of America and of North Carolina extremely well.

I know your constituents are proud, and Bob is proud, of your service. Elaine and I wish you both well in whatever the future has in store for you. And we look forward to hearing all about it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina is recognized.

Mrs. DOLE. Madam President, I wish to express my deepest thanks for the very kind words of the distinguished "gentleman" from Kentucky. I feel very close to this gentleman because we have been very good friends for so many years. Certainly your wife, Elaine Chao, who is doing a tremendous job as Secretary of Labor, has been a friend for many years. In fact, we worked together at the Department of Transportation as colleagues and then also when she was president of United Way and I was president of the American Red Cross. So our paths have continued to cross in terms of our professions but also in terms of personal relationships and the warmth and friendship.

MITCH, I can't tell you how proud I am of your leadership as the Republican leader, and I am so proud you have been reelected by your colleagues. You do a tremendous job. You are a master of the Senate. Through the years, you and I have had a chance to work together on many issues. Of course, it was my privilege early on—I believe in my first year in the Senate—to visit the University of Louisville and the McConnell Center for Political Leadership and to speak to the McConnell Scholars. That is just one of many things you are doing to help others outside the Senate as well as the tremendous work within the Senate.

Just know I treasure your friendship. I look forward to being in close touch