

knows she is risking her home and economic security without health coverage, but, basic health insurance is a luxury she and her husband simply can't afford.

When it comes to health care, small business owners have been facing higher administrative costs, lower bargaining power, greater price volatility and fewer pooling options. These are not minor details. They are major problems and health care reform includes concrete solutions to begin solving them.

Now, with this new law, West Virginia businesses will have access to far more affordable coverage options. In 6 months, as many as 20,000 small businesses in West Virginia like Kate's will have access to tax credits for up to 35 percent of the cost of health coverage for their employees.

And new State-based health insurance exchanges will be designed to help small businesses cover their employees in the small group market. By expanding the pool and spreading risk across every individual in the State exchanges, we can significantly decrease premiums for small businesses and lower administrative costs for small business coverage by as much as 30 percent.

Many people have heard about Sarah Wildman, a woman who purchased insurance on the individual market right here in Washington, DC.

Sarah was an informed consumer and specifically chose a policy she believed included good maternity coverage—one of the few policies on the individual market that cover maternity care at all.

Of course, her so-called "Maternity" coverage didn't cover labor, delivery, or even her stay in the hospital. And as a result, Sarah was left with a \$22,000 bill.

And, because she gave birth by cesarean section—she now has a "pre-existing" condition and can no longer get coverage elsewhere.

Sarah's situation would seem absurd, if it were not so deadly serious. And it begs the question: What is the value of health insurance that offers no coverage when it's needed?

But soon she won't have to worry. This new law will mean the elimination of preexisting condition exclusions—right away for our children and as soon as the exchanges are up and running for adults.

Both the House and the Senate have spent more than a year working on a meaningful plan to move our health system forward.

For many of us this journey started in earnest three years ago in our effort to reauthorize the Children's Health Insurance Program. Protecting that program—which will cover more than 14 million children by 2013—represents yet another of this new law's enormous achievements.

But today's achievement is built on more than 50 years of effort and incremental change—some quite meaningful, but none truly comprehensive.

At last, our work has brought fundamental changes to a broken health care system, and takes an enormous step to begin making people's lives better.

I was so proud to be there with the President when he signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law—after spending my entire career in public service committed to this cause, it was a chance to witness history in the making.

I want to thank my colleagues in the House and Senate who did the right thing for the American people. I know we are walking on the right side of history. I know many wanted to do even more, and go further. I know this bill is not perfect, but it will be transformative and that is a good thing.

I particularly want to thank two courageous colleagues on the House side—Congressmen ALLAN MOLLOHAN and NICK RAHALL who took a stand for the American people and voted to pass this legislation.

I want to thank HARRY REID for his leadership, and his unwavering vision which helped deliver a final bill to the President's desk.

And finally, I want to thank the President who came to the White House as a champion of change. And now, he has delivered.

We knew it would not be easy to change our health care system, but we persevered. All of us have stories like the ones I told.

I am enormously proud to have supported this legislation, which, more than anything, means a better health care system. It means a better America and a better life for families everywhere.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The VICE PRESIDENT. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BURRIS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

UNANIMOUS-CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, at this time I wish to give a short statement for the RECORD, and then I will ask for the Senate to consider the nomination of Winslow Lorenzo Sargeant, of Wisconsin, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, for the Small Business Administration.

This is very troubling to me, as the chair of the Small Business Com-

mittee. Months ago now, we had Dr. Winslow Sargeant before our committee. The President nominated him to be the Chief Counsel of the Office of Advocacy for the Small Business Administration. For my colleagues who may not be aware of this office and how important it is to have a qualified individual leading it, let me say that the Office of Advocacy works to reduce the burdens of Federal policies and regulations on small business, which is an important effort that is undertaken when either Republicans or Democrats are in the majority.

We recognize that sometimes regulations, particularly overly burdensome regulations, can be difficult for small business, so this position in the Small Business Administration was actually created to advocate not on behalf of the regulations, not on behalf of the government, but on behalf of the small businesses—the millions of them that are out there struggling right now to create jobs. We want to be helpful to them, not hurtful. So it is puzzling to me why this nomination is being held up, particularly because he passed out of our committee with bipartisan support.

He has three degrees, including a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in electrical engineering, and a background as a very successful small business owner himself. He not only is well educated but well aware of the many difficult challenges facing businesses today.

Dr. Sargeant cofounded Aanetcom, a technology company that was ultimately acquired. He is currently the managing director of Venture Investors, a Midwest venture capital company which focuses on funding startup health care and technology companies. In this role, Dr. Sargeant works closely with technology transfer organizations to develop policies which enable the formation of startups, giving him an unmatched insight into the needs of entrepreneurs in this challenging economic environment.

This is exactly what we need to be doing here: nominating and confirming people such as this to step into positions of power, to advocate on behalf of small businesses. So it is very troubling to me this nomination has been held up. I am going to ask for his nomination to be cleared in a moment.

I am also puzzled because he has the support of many business organizations: the National Small Business Association, the Small Business Association of California, the Small Business Technology Council, and the Small Business Association of New England—very well-respected small business organizations from one side of the country to the other that are familiar with him and his work.

With more than 80 percent of job losses coming from small businesses since the current recession began, it is critical, I believe, as the chair of this committee, that we provide our Nation's 29 million small business owners

with a strong and effective advocate here in Washington.

This position is empty. There is no one sitting in the office, at a time when small business needs a voice. There are regulatory matters coming from all sides. There are new challenges in this environment. There are trade opportunities for businesses all over the world. Our small businesses must break into those markets. Let's not even begin to talk about the regulatory nightmares here at home—just think about those regulatory nightmares as our small businesses seek markets across the oceans and over our borders. Why—why—would anyone want to hold up this position? But someone is, and we are going to find out who and why.

Dr. Sargeant also has spent a great deal of time sitting on different boards, helping to advise others on building strong businesses. He is a Kauffman Fellow, a member of the New York Academy of Sciences, and Sigma Xi. He serves as a director of the University of Wisconsin Foundation, a trustee for the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, and a member of the corporation board of Northeastern University. He is an advisory board member for WiCell, the Waisman BioManufacturing Facility, the University of Wisconsin Astronomy Department, and Purdue University Discovery Research Park.

And the list of his accomplishments goes on. He has served as a technical advisory board member for startup company Intersymbol Communications, Madison-based venture firm Venture Investors, LLC, managing member of Xcelis Communications, LLC and as an advisory board member for the Maryland Venture Fund. Dr. Sargeant received the inaugural 2002 Wisconsin distinguished Young Alumni Award and was the 2003 Outstanding Engineering Alumni Awardee from Northeastern University.

Dr. Sargeant's work also extends to the community. He has been a member of the Board of Directors for the Boys and Girls Club of Madison, Wisconsin, since 2006; a member of the Accelerate Madison, Inc., a Madison, WI, organization dedicated to using information technology to spur economic growth; and active alumni organizations, such as the University of Wisconsin Foundation.

I have no doubt that Dr. Sargeant will make an excellent Chief Counsel for Advocacy and I remain baffled as to why his nomination has yet to be confirmed.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 427, the nomination of Winslow Lorenzo Sargeant, to be Chief Counsel for Advocacy, Small Business Administration; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, any statements relating to the nomination be printed in the RECORD, the President be imme-

diately notified of the Senate's action, and the Senate then resume legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. I thank the Senator from Louisiana for her concerns about this matter. I am not a member of the committee and am not personally familiar with the nomination. But I know it is controversial with some Members on our side. I think as to the question of why, it is because we agree with the Senator that the nomination is to an important position, and there is concern about whether this is the right person for it. Therefore, Mr. President, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Ms. LANDRIEU. I thank my good friend, the Senator from Alabama. He and I have worked on many important issues together. He is not a member of the committee, and I appreciate that. But I wish to, through the Chair, let the Senator from Alabama know that he might want to consult with some of the members of the Small Business Committee because when we come back I am going to be asking every day on the floor of the Senate for this nomination to proceed.

I think it is fair, in the spirit of openness that so many people have called for, that we have these discussions now in a very open way on the floor of the Senate. So I hope the Senator will understand the spirit of this. This gentleman is extremely well qualified. I have had numerous calls to my office urging us to move forward.

I thank the Senator from Alabama for those comments. But if you would relay that to not only the members of the Small Business Committee but to the Republican Caucus, that would be wonderful. Thank you.

Mr. President, how many more minutes do I have?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is 3 minutes 20 seconds.

Ms. LANDRIEU. Thank you.

Let me, while I have the floor, call attention to this document that is on our desks. It is the Executive Calendar that is placed every day on our desks. Since we have been at our desks now for many hours, I actually had the opportunity to read it, which I do not often do.

Although the pages are not numbered, I counted them and I believe there are 12 pages. This is documentation of every person pending on the Executive Calendar for confirmation. It might be interesting to the people observing our session today to note that all of these nominations—from the Judiciary, to the Federal Elections Commission, to the Department of Energy, to military positions, Corps of Engineers positions, the Army, the Executive Office of the President, members

appointed to the Amtrak Board of Directors, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Farm Credit Administration, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Housing and Urban Development—these are people—pages and pages of names—who the President has suggested would be wonderful people to serve our government.

They have passed the committee process, most of them—or many of them, I understand—with bipartisan votes. Why they are sitting on this calendar I do not know. But we are going to find out. I realize there is sort of a place and a time and a process in the Senate, but it is important for us to know, and for these individuals who have put their lives and their careers on the line, who put their homes up for sale, who have left their former jobs thinking they were going to come to work for the Government of the United States—proud to work for our government—many at much less than they were making before they were nominated by the President. I am going to ask my colleagues on the Republican side, Why are they being held up?

There are actually two individuals I know personally—two judicial candidates from the State of Louisiana: Beth Foote and Brian Jackson—one outstanding lawyer from the Western District of Louisiana, and one outstanding lawyer from the Middle District of Louisiana. They are not technically being held up, but they are not moving forward. So we need to be moving them forward. The chairman of the committee, Chairman LEAHY, has done a wonderful job moving them through. In fact, the Senator from Alabama was extremely complimentary—who is on the Judiciary Committee—of both of those nominees because I happened to be present at their hearing. The Senator from Alabama was extremely complimentary in his views, and he is, of course, the ranking member on that committee.

When we get back, on behalf of Beth Foote and Brian Jackson and Winslow Sargeant, I hope some of my other colleagues will be happy to join me in very open and public discussions on the floor of the Senate about what might be a problem that we should know about so that we can get these people in positions of power and authority and of service, might I say, to the people of the United States of America.

I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

The Republican leader is recognized.

Mr. McCONNELL. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

CONTINUING EXTENSION ACT OF
2010—MOTION TO PROCEED

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to Calendar No. 333, S. 3153, and I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion, having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to S. 3153, Calendar No. 333:

Tom Coburn, Jim DeMint, Mike Johanns, George S. LeMieux, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Lamar Alexander, Saxby Chambliss, Mike Crapo, John Cornyn, Jim Bunning, Michael B. Enzi, John McCain, Judd Gregg, Jeff Sessions, Robert F. Bennett, John Inhofe, Mitch McConnell.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. FRANKEN). The Senator from Oklahoma.

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I wish to spend a few minutes talking about where we are as a nation and what the future is for our children.

We have at this point in time \$12.6 trillion worth of debt. We now have equivalent debt for every man, woman, and child in this country of \$42,000. For our children who are under 25 years of age, in the year 2030, each one of them will be responsible for \$1,113,000 worth of debt and unfunded obligations. If we think about what that means, it means that for our children who are under 25 years of age, the ability for them to experience the opportunity that we as a nation have experienced in the past 230-plus years is going to be put at risk.

We have before us some things that need to get done. They have to get done. We have two options: We can add another \$9.2 billion to that \$12.6 trillion we have today and bump up more than that \$1,113,000, or we can relook into the mirror and say: Should we as Americans start making some of the hard choices that are going to be necessary for us to get out of the mess we have created for our children?

When I travel around the country—and I travel in Oklahoma—Americans are concerned about our future right now. What are their concerns? What does it boil down to in their hearts? In their hearts, they have this gripping sensation that what they have experienced as an American may not be available for their children. It is a painful realization. Their hope for us is that we might change that outcome for their children. We have an opportunity to start that right now.

By way of background, most of us know there is a tremendous amount of waste, fraud, abuse, and duplication in the Federal Government. Oftentimes, it is hard to weed out because every program, whether it is efficient or ef-

fective or not, has people who tout it. Our nature as politicians is to offend no one. That is our nature. How in the world do we accomplish what is going to be necessary in the next 5 to 10 years and solve this most difficult problem that we, the politicians, have created? America didn't create this. The States didn't create this. This problem was created in Washington.

As has often been said, the easiest thing in the world is to spend somebody else's money. So the earnestness with which I come to the floor is to say we ought not be doing that, especially when we know there is waste and there is fraud and there is duplication and there is abuse in much of the Federal Government.

I was reminded of the trouble the State of New Jersey is in. What the people of the State of New Jersey have said is: We recognize the problem, and we need to change things. So they elected a new Governor on the basis that he would make the tough decisions about priorities to change the future path—that he might change the path of the future for the citizens of New Jersey. He put forth a bold budget. As a matter of fact, one of the Senate Democratic leaders is helping him fix the problem.

So we have a Republican Governor with a bold plan who has come forward to the people of the State of New Jersey. They elected him by a fairly large margin and said: For us to have this great future we all want for our kids, we are going to have to do some things that aren't necessarily pleasant, but they are necessary. It is kind of like when you have a child and they have to take a medicine, or the first time you take a child to the pediatrician's office for their first set of shots. That is an easy visit. The hard visit is the second visit because they have a memory of getting the injections the first time. So all of a sudden you have resistance, you have resistance, you have resistance to a medicine or a vaccine that actually fixes the problem, but there is a small amount of pain with it.

So the Governor of New Jersey has started out on a bold, fresh course not because he is a Republican—it doesn't matter the label. The fact is, the people in New Jersey, in a bipartisan manner, recognized they had to make changes. So we have unemployment insurance. We have COBRA. We have flood insurance. We have the doc fix for 30 days. We have all of these things in front of us that we all agree we want to get done.

Where lies our disagreement? It is very simple. One says we will declare it an emergency, not pay for it, and send the bill to our grandkids. The other says: Maybe it is time we quit doing that.

What is the expectation of the American people in terms of how we should respond to that? A recent poll said 72 percent of the American people, not divided by party, pretty neutral between both parties, say the No. 1 issue in front of us as a nation is our debt.

We had a warning from the rating agencies just 2 weeks ago that the United States of America is about to lose its AAA credit rating on its bonds. If you watched bond prices yesterday, what you saw was the yield shot up. The interest payment we are going to have to pay for when we borrow a huge amount of money is going to rise.

One of the most significant things we could do to help ourselves is send a signal to the world that we are not going to wait until our bond rating crashes, that we are going to start taking the steps that are necessary for us to get back on a road to fiscal health.

With all good faith, I think the majority leader and the minority leader tried to work out an agreement where we could perhaps accomplish this. We did not get there. Therefore, we find ourselves where we are going to have to have a debate, and we are going to have to discuss in front of the American people if we do these good things—and they are good—should we get rid of things that are a whole lot less good or should we take the immoral choice and not make any choice at all and pass it on to our children and grandchildren.

That is the question of where the American people are today. The majority and the President have had a great victory on health care, with not partisan differences but policy differences with my side of the aisle. That is now the law of the land. Whether you believe CBO and how it is scored, the fact is, even if it saves that amount of money, that does not come close to solving any of our problems.

We have had these multiple month-long extensions, of which none have been paid for, at about \$9 billion to \$10 billion a month. We find ourselves, because we want to go home or we want to go on a codel or we want to campaign or we want to fundraise, we want to make it easy and just pass it on down to the next generation.

I cannot agree to that anymore, ever again; that, in fact, if we are going to spend money on things we know we ought to do, then the obligation ought to be on us to get rid of funds that are spent on things that are very much less important. That is the hardest thing a political body does, is that they end up isolating and irritating those who are well connected who have an interest in those lower priority items. It is hard for us because, as is our nature, we want to offend no one. But we are going to have to talk that out. I guess we are going to have to talk it out on the floor, and we are going to have to debate it. We are going to talk about what our true long-term future is if we do not change.

I would rather us not be at this point, but when I wrestle with my own conscience and as I visualize my grandchildren and the grandchildren of everybody in this body, I think it would be immoral for us not to have this debate.

I don't know what the outcome of the debate is going to be and the ultimate