

Kentucky has an amendment to offer, offer it, debate it, and vote. But just blocking us from exercising our right to vote is not the American way. The American way is to vote, to act, to make decisions, not to block. We have seen way too much of blocking democracy from our Republican colleagues in these last months and months.

I also want to speak to other provisions in this bill because I find it interesting that within hours of the health care summit last Thursday, the blocking of this bill showed us what the health care plan is by Republicans: cut people off from help with COBRA, cut doctors' benefits. That came within hours of the health care summit. We are now getting calls from people who are concerned about whether their doctor is going to be available.

Are senior citizens under Medicare going to be able to see their same doctor because of the cuts that will happen if we do not act immediately? People who one day lost their job, the next day lost their health care—we have been able to help them through the jobs bill we passed last February to be able to continue their health insurance through work. It is expensive to do under something called COBRA, but we have been able to help them do that by helping to pay on a short-term basis for part of that cost.

So the health care summit happens on Thursday, and hours later there is an objection that will stop health care for hundreds of thousands if not millions of Americans, and stop the ability of doctors to be reimbursed at a fair rate to be able to care for their patients. This is, in my judgment, an absolutely outrageous situation, and it has to stop.

I thank our chairman of the Finance Committee for his work and advocacy and being here on the floor calling for us to vote. I am hopeful people around the country will speak out loudly between tonight and tomorrow and that we will be able to come to the floor and stop what is effectively blocking the democratic process and blocking our ability to vote, to make decisions, and to move forward.

We have millions of Americans who are counting on us to understand what is happening in real people's lives every day—not political games, not all the partisanship, but real people's lives—who are going to get up tomorrow morning and say: OK, what do I do now? How am I going to keep my roof over my head? And how am I going to continue to go to school to get that new skills I need? How am I going to put food on the table for my family? That is what is affecting people across this country.

In addition to the millions of people who have lost their job and are on unemployment, we have millions of others who are one paycheck away from being in the very same situation—people who could be spending in the economy now to be able to help move things forward, who are afraid of what

happens next. Part of that fear is not only will they have a job, but what happens if they do not? And what is the message that is sent if we do not make it clear we will be there for them if that happens? Will they be able to continue to have the basics to keep their family going?

I strongly urge we do everything possible. I know we will stop this obstruction, to allow the democratic process to go forward, to allow us to vote, to solve problems, to move this bill forward, and send a very strong message that we understand what is happening to millions of families who have faced a disaster of epic proportions. It is truly as much a disaster as anything else any community has ever felt in terms of losing their jobs and fighting and working to get something.

I thank the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana.

Mr. BAUCUS. Madam President, we are here to do the people's business. The folks in our home States elected us to do what is right. Most folks don't care too much about the process, as long as we get our job done and as long as it is reasonable, within the boundaries of reasonableness, and as long as they think we give the subject considerable thought. I think we agree that is true. I think it is largely true that most of the people would think: Well, gee, why don't you go ahead and pass that extenders thing you are talking about back there because it is the right thing to do.

People need to collect their unemployment checks. They need their health insurance. Some of these tax provisions need to be continued; otherwise, this is a job-killer action the other side is taking. It is a job destroyer. To not continue these provisions actually destroys jobs. That is not what we want to do.

On another matter: The Senator from South Dakota proposes an amendment to make a series of tax cuts for small business. I might say that some of these tax cuts, the ones he proposes, actually have merit. We in the Finance Committee hope to address small business tax cuts in a markup perhaps as early as this month. This is a jobs agenda. It is additional legislation to help create jobs, preserve jobs, and help the recovery come along a little more quickly.

The offset, however, that the Senator from South Dakota proposes is another matter. The Senator from South Dakota seeks to pay for his amendment by cutting funding from the Recovery Act, and that idea does not have much merit, at least not in this Senator's judgment. Pretty much the last thing we should do is to be seeking to cut the Recovery Act.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the independent organization we rely upon around here—both sides of the aisle in both bodies—says the Recovery Act is working. The Congressional Budget Act says that in the

third quarter of last year, for example, the Recovery Act caused between 600,000 and 1.6 million people to have jobs. That sounds as though it is working to me. The CBO also said these people had jobs who would not otherwise have had jobs. I, therefore, think we should not be cutting back on the Recovery Act; rather, we should let it work its will.

The investments the Senator from South Dakota seeks to cut in addition are largely within the jurisdiction of the Appropriations Committee and, thus, I will defer to the chairman of the Appropriations Committee who I think at the appropriate time will have quite a bit to say about this Thune amendment and will speak to it at greater length. I suggest that is an appropriate time to have a more lengthy discussion on this matter.

Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

MORNING BUSINESS

CONGRATULATIONS TO MINNESOTA'S 2010 OLYMPIANS

Mr. FRANKEN. Madam President, 50 years ago this month, a group of athletes gathered in Squaw Valley, CA, for the Winter Olympics. A part of the U.S. contingent—the 1960 men's ice hockey team—unexpectedly surprised the world and brought home the Olympic gold medal by defeating the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Canada. Of these 17 remarkable men, 8 were from my home State, the great State of Minnesota. As anyone could see from watching this year's games, this outsized contribution from Minnesotans continues to this day.

Twenty years after this “forgotten miracle,” Team USA again shocked the world by miraculously defeating Finland and the vaunted Soviet Union to again win the gold medal. Thirteen Minnesotans played for the 1980 “Miracle on Ice” team, and a 14th was their coach.

This year's Olympic men's ice hockey team was considered by many not to have a chance for a medal. They were too young, too inexperienced; they had not played together before. And the U.S. men had not defeated Canada in Olympic play in 50 years. Yet a week ago, despite being the underdog, Team USA upset the favored Canadians in their own arena.

After defeating Switzerland and soundly beating Finland in the semifinals, Team USA played Canada a second time last night for the gold medal. Although we fell behind early, Zach

Parise—a Prior Lake, MN, native—tied the game with under a minute to play. Sadly for us, Canada would end up scoring in overtime to win the gold medal. But that cannot take away from what was truly a golden performance by the Americans. Jamie Langenbrunner, from Cloquet, did a stand-up job as captain, leading and pulling together a team that also included Minnesotans Erik Johnson, from Bloomington, and David Backes, from Blaine.

The American women's ice hockey team was expected to be great. And they were. Before falling to Canada, they had outscored their opponents 40–2. With Edina native Natalie Darwitz as captain, as well as Jenny Potter from Edina and Gigi Marvin from Warroad, they brought home a well-earned silver medal.

And of the 12 members of the U.S. Olympic curling team, 8 are from Minnesota. Natalie Nicholson of Bemidji and Allison Pottinger of Eden Prairie were on the women's team. The men's team was an all-Minnesota affair with John Shuster and Jason Smith of Chisholm, Chris Plys and Jeff Isaacson of Duluth and John Benton of St. Michael. Even their coach, Phil Drobnick is from Eveleth, MN.

Tony Benshoof of White Bear Lake is an Olympic luger. Kaylin Richardson of Edina was in her second Olympics, competing in alpine skiing. Wynn Roberts of Battle Lake was a competitor in the biathlon. Rebekah Bradford of Apple Valley is an Olympic speedskater. And Caitlin Compton and Garrett Kuzzy, each of Minneapolis, competed in cross-country skiing.

And there are many other Olympic athletes, like Lindsey Vonn, who have strong Minnesota ties but reside now in other States—which have mountains.

Yesterday marked the end of the 2010 Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver. I am so proud to see that there were more athletes in this year's Olympics from Minnesota than from any other State. Twenty-one Minnesotans took part in these games. Most were in their first Olympics. A few others were in their second Games. Natalie Darwitz has been to three. Jenny Potter has now been to four, winning a medal every time. Isn't that something—four-time medal-winning Olympian and mother of two.

Twenty-one athletes from all over Minnesota who now will be going back to tending a bar or being a teacher or being an engineer or a mom. Natalie Nicholson will return to Red Lake Indian Reservation as a nurse practitioner. The men's ice hockey players will be going back to finish the National Hockey League season. John Shuster will be getting married. All will continue to inspire us.

I congratulate every single one of these competitors. Each has shown tremendous grit and determination to earn a place representing our Nation at these Winter Olympics. Whether you won a medal, or simply gave it your all

and competed, each of you is a champion.

Olympians make the children of our State and Nation dream of what they might do, and grownups like me dream of what we wish we could do, all while fulfilling their dreams on the world's stage and representing our Nation admirably. We owe them thanks for their hard work, their perseverance, and most of all their heart. And I hope I have the chance in the coming weeks to meet with each of these Minnesota athletes so I can congratulate them in person.

RECOGNIZING JESSE WHITE TUMBLERS

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I rise to congratulate a well-loved Chicago institution on a landmark anniversary.

For 50 years, the Jesse White Tumblers troupe has delighted audiences in Illinois and beyond and opened doors of opportunity for thousands of young people.

Jesse White, the man who gave the team its name, is probably best known today as Illinois' secretary of state and the first African American ever elected to statewide office in the "Land of Lincoln."

As a child, Jesse White was studious and well behaved. He was also a phenomenal athlete. His passion for sports won him a scholarship to Alabama State University, where he was all-conference in baseball and basketball for all 4 years.

After college, Jesse White served 2 years in the U.S. Army as a paratrooper.

Then sports opened another door for him. Jesse White was able to fulfill what for many of us is only a dream. He played professional baseball for the Chicago Cubs Triple-A farm team.

Returning to Chicago after his baseball days, Jesse White decided to become a Chicago Public Schools teacher. He also worked nights as a physical education teacher for the Chicago Park District.

In 1959, the park district asked him to create an acrobatic show. The result was so impressive that the troupe began performing on a regular basis. Its mission was—and remains—to keep children in school, off of drugs, and out of gangs in the Chicago area. And it has been a huge success.

A half century later, more than 11,000 young people have participated in the Jesse White Tumblers. Becoming a Jesse White Tumbler is no easy task. Thousands of young people apply every year but only a fraction are chosen. To make the team, members must stay in school and maintain at least a C average. They have to obey the law and stay out of gangs and away from drugs and alcohol. In exchange, the young athletes get to experience the excitement and glory of performing before appreciative fans. They also receive tutoring and college scholarship opportu-

nities, performance fees, and a chance to travel and perform around the world.

The power of the Jesse White Tumblers to transform young lives and open new doors may be best illustrated by the story of three brothers. They performed together with the Tumblers, but at some point they decided together to drop out and join a gang. One of the brothers was murdered by a rival gang. The second brother, seeking to avenge his brother's death, killed an innocent man by mistake and ended up going to jail for murder. Instead of following in his brothers' footsteps, the third brother decided to rejoin the Jesse White Tumblers. The direction and discipline he received helped him not only avoid the pitfalls of his siblings but helped him earn a college education and eventually a law degree from the University of Notre Dame.

Multiply that story hundreds or even thousands of times and you begin to understand the importance of the Jesse White Tumblers.

The Jesse White Tumblers have earned their reputation as an icon in the State of Illinois. The program has done wonders, and I wish it another 50 years of continued success.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS OFFICE IN JAKARTA, INDONESIA

Mr. LUGAR. Madam President, as my colleagues are aware, the Library of Congress, LOC, diligently works to keep the Congress fully informed on a plethora of issues. Today I would like to highlight the important work of a component of the LOC that is less known to colleagues, and that is its operation in Southeast Asia. The work of this regional operation immensely contributes to U.S. understanding of Southeast Asia, the Pacific Islands, China and India, thereby facilitating our foreign policy objectives.

The LOC office is one of six overseas offices operated by the Overseas Operations Division of the LOC. Staff to the overseas offices "acquire, catalog, preserve and distribute library and research materials . . . and provide assistance to the U.S. Congress."

For too many Americans, Southeast Asia is a distant unknown. In reality, the region is of significant economic importance to the American people. The approximately 580-million citizens—and consumers—of the 10 nations comprising the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, ASEAN, represent the fourth largest market for American exports.

Based in Jakarta, the mission of the LOC regional operation is diverse. Primary among its responsibilities is to provide research and information services to the U.S. Congress and the Congressional Research Service. Jakarta LOC staff also manage the Cooperative Acquisitions Program, CAPSEA, whereby they acquire materials from countries in the region on behalf of the LOC and member institutions, which