

Memphis police officer following his graduation from college.

In 1983, the Secret Service recruited Mr. Prewitt to serve as a special agent in the Memphis field office. Over the years, he rose through the ranks of the Service. He has served both on the frontlines and in supervisory positions, which have led him to his leadership role today.

Mr. Prewitt is regarded by his peers as one of the best in the field. He has been described as a man of high value and honor who views each day as a training day and is extremely dedicated to his work and loyal to the people who work with him.

One of his peers at the National Association of Black Law Enforcement Officers stated that Mr. Prewitt "identifies challenges for the organization and seeks to change the status quo to make things better." His tireless efforts to improve the performance of the Secret Service have made him a true asset to the agency, the President, the Vice President, and to our country.

I hope my colleagues will join me in honoring Keith Prewitt, a truly great civil servant, and all those in the U.S. Secret Service for their hard work and dedication to our Nation.

It is also my hope that we can conclude the budget for the balance of this fiscal year so we can give Mr. Prewitt, countless other Federal employees, and literally millions of Americans who depend upon the ongoing workings of the Federal Government, the confidence and respect they need by passing the balance of the continuing resolution for this year before we break for the Passover-Easter recess.

With that, I yield the floor and suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BROWN of Ohio). Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I rise today to explain why I am voting no on the budget deal later this afternoon.

First and foremost, I am voting no because I do not think this is a meaningful, substantial start to getting our hands around what is the biggest threat and potential crisis we face as a nation—out-of-control spending and debt. I suppose \$38 billion is more of a cut than we have ever done. But if we put it in any other context, it is very modest indeed.

Take a look at the 8 days leading up to the announcement of this deal and those 8 days alone—barely more than a week. We as a nation racked up \$54 billion of brandnew debt, way more than the \$38 billion of cuts in just 8 days. That gives some perspective on exactly

how modest and how limited in meaning this is.

When you dig a little deeper to look at the details of the cuts, I am afraid the picture gets even worse. A lot of these cuts are paper cuts only—only cuts on paper that do not have a meaningful impact in the real world. There has been significant reporting about this. The Justice Department fund and other examples—that probably accounts for \$12 billion or \$13 billion of the cuts.

In addition, yesterday the CBO issued a report that said only 1 percent of those cuts—\$350 million or so—would have an impact this fiscal year. All the rest is pushed off well into the future. Because of that, I am voting no. I think we need a much stronger start to getting our fiscal house in order.

In addition, I am very concerned about what this budget deal continues to fund in terms of policy, in terms of impact on Americans' lives. The clearest example of that for me is the continuing funding of Planned Parenthood. I believe it is morally wrong to end an innocent human life. I also believe it is morally reprehensible to take tax dollars of millions of pro-life Americans in order to fund organizations that do just that. Americans should not be forced to subsidize abortions, much less fund our Nation's largest abortion provider. That is what Planned Parenthood is, pure and simple.

Opponents of defunding Planned Parenthood have argued in the news and even on the Senate floor that the organization provides many other health care services other than abortions, such as mammograms. We have seen recently that is a big fiction. Planned Parenthood's CEO repeated this assertion recently on news shows. She claimed:

If this bill ever becomes law—

Meaning the defunding of Planned Parenthood—

millions of women in this country are going to lose their healthcare access—not to abortion services—to basic family planning, you know, mammograms.

As I said, in recent days, this has been shown to be a huge fiction. Live Action, which is a pro-life group, recorded calls in the last several days to 30 Planned Parenthood clinics in 27 States. In each conversation, a woman calls in and asks if she can schedule an appointment for a mammogram. And in each conversation, without exception, the Planned Parenthood representative tells her they do not provide mammograms. Period. One staffer admits:

We do not provide those services whatsoever.

Another explains:

We actually don't have a mammogram machine at our clinics.

The staffer at Planned Parenthood in DC was perhaps clearest. She said:

We do not provide mammograms . . . we don't deal with the health side of it so much. We're mostly a surgical facility.

By the way, surgery means one thing: abortion.

This Planned Parenthood staffer is exactly right: 98 percent of their services to pregnant women constitute abortions—98 percent.

This chart lays this out very clearly. This pie chart represents 2009 Planned Parenthood services to pregnant women. The universe of services to pregnant women, abortions is in dark red, 98 percent. Adoption referrals is in blue. I apologize if you cannot see that. The sliver is that tiny. You have to be up close. And all other prenatal care is in green. That is the reality of Planned Parenthood.

We have also seen a recent onslaught of ads that claim Planned Parenthood is simply a leading provider of women health services, but abortion accounts for roughly one-third of the \$1 billion generated by its clinics. In fact, Planned Parenthood's annual report acknowledges it provides primary care to 19,700 of its 3 million clients. Number of clients: 3 million; those to whom it provided primary health care: 19,700.

The provision to cut title X funding for health services, such as breast cancer screenings, HIV testing, counseling, and other valuable family planning services, would not block funding for those services at nonabortion providers. It would simply block funds from subsidizing America's largest abortion provider, and abortion is almost everything Planned Parenthood does.

Furthermore, Medicaid spends \$1.4 billion on family planning each year. Not \$1 of those funds would be affected by this resolution and this proposal. The question we face today is not if family planning and women's health services will be provided but, instead, if we are going to use that as an excuse to fund the biggest abortion provider in the country which does little else.

Although I personally believe abortion is not a right guaranteed by the Constitution, I recognize the sad reality that abortion on demand is legal in this country. Again, this debate is not about that. It is not about whether Planned Parenthood has the right to perform abortions, and it is not about funding true health care services. The question before us is whether millions of pro-life taxpayers have to fund this entity.

Every year since 2000, the government has increased its funding of Planned Parenthood on average \$22.2 million per year. As a direct reflection of that, the number of abortions they perform has dramatically increased, even though the overall abortion rate, thank God, in the United States has declined until 2008.

This chart lays out the situation clearly. What is in green represents government grants and contracts to Planned Parenthood. It has consistently gone up and up, a significant increase virtually every year. What is in red represents abortions by Planned Parenthood. Very interesting. There is

virtually the same slope of an increase, while at the same time for this entire period until 2008 abortions nationwide were actually going down.

I do not understand how anyone can look at this and say there is not a connection, say we are not using taxpayer dollars to promote and fund abortion. This notion that it is not used directly for abortion services is a convenient fiction because it is a shell game, because it, in fact, funds Planned Parenthood, and 98 percent of what they do is about abortion.

According to their latest annual report, Planned Parenthood boasted more than \$363 million in taxpayer funding, the same year it performed an unprecedented 324,000 abortions.

Planned Parenthood's abortion rate massively outpaces its adoption referrals in particular. In 2008, a woman entering a Planned Parenthood clinic was 134 times more likely to have an abortion than to be referred for an adoption.

In fact, this final chart shows that as Planned Parenthood's abortion rate steadily increased to that staggering number of 332,000 in 2009, its adoption referrals actually decreased to 977 that same year. So again, abortions are in deep red, adoption referrals are in blue, and all other prenatal care is in green. What is the reality, what is the history, what are the facts? Abortions go up dramatically in Planned Parenthood, prenatal services go down, and adoption services go down as abortions go up.

Planned Parenthood has made a profit every year since 1987, including a \$63.4 million return in 2009. There is no justification for subsidizing Planned Parenthood's profitable venture with taxpayer dollars, particularly when roughly half or more of those taxpayers deeply disagree with abortion. The sanctity of human life is a principle Congress should proclaim at every opportunity, and the time has come to respect the wishes of so many millions of Americans who have adamantly opposed using taxpayer dollars for abortions by denying all Federal funding to this abortion machine.

This is a social issue, of course. It is also a fiscal issue. Our Federal budget is out of control. We are facing unsustainable debt. So given that, in particular, isn't it time to stop funding an organization that millions of Americans have fundamental problems with? If our Federal Government has any hope of regaining fiscal restraint, we have to make significant cuts—more significant than are being proposed in the deal before us today.

I refuse to believe that Planned Parenthood is the one sacred cow that should stand untouched and be untouchable. The time has come to change this situation and to respect the wishes of the huge majority of Americans who, whether they are pro-life or pro-choice, think taxpayer dollars should not subsidize abortion. And that is clearly what is going on with Planned Parenthood.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and 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.

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

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

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am so amazed that the lies that have been stated about Planned Parenthood on this floor have been repeated again and again. You know, it gets pretty bad when you are so outrageous that Stephen Colbert and Jon Stewart start to look at what you are saying on the Senate floor. That is a rarity.

This all started when Senator KYL took to the floor and said that 90 percent of what Planned Parenthood does is abortions. Well, that was a little bit wrong. Ninety percent of what Planned Parenthood does is health care—no abortions. As a matter of fact, it is 97 percent. And every dollar of Federal funds that goes to health care may not, since the 1970s—not one slim dime—go toward abortion.

Senator VITTER upped that just now and says that 98 percent of what Planned Parenthood does is abortion. I don't know what he is thinking. But let me reiterate, Planned Parenthood is a nonprofit organization. He says they make a profit. You could say anything, but that doesn't make it true.

I think it is interesting that in the 1960s and 1970s Planned Parenthood, which has become the prime target of the rightwing of Republicans, drew the support of prominent members of the GOP. Richard Nixon signed family planning legislation that authorized Federal funding for groups such as Planned Parenthood. Former Senator Barry Goldwater's wife Peggy was a founding member of Planned Parenthood in Arizona, and former President George Herbert Walker Bush, as a Republican Congressman from Houston, spoke frequently on the House floor about the issue. So it is astounding how the rightwing of the Republican Party has walked so far away from their most revered leaders. That is their choice. But it is also our choice as to whether we are going to stand here and take it or come here and rebut what they are saying.

So count me in and count the Democratic women and many men on this side of the aisle who have stood sentry on this and told the truth about this. And the truth is we are in a budget debate. Everything the Republicans have said is that we have to close the deficit gap, we have to cut spending, cut spending, cut spending. And we said: Okay, we will join you, but where were you during George Bush's day? You never said a word. But putting that aside, we will meet you. When we had the majority and Bill Clinton was the President, we were the only ones who did get a balanced budget and 23 mil-

lion jobs. So we know how to do it, and of course we are going to work with our colleagues. We met them over 70 percent of the way on spending cuts. But guess what. They are so ideological and so extreme that what we heard from Senator VITTER today is not a discussion about the budget deficit and the fact that we have to get on top of it and get that budget balanced, as we did under the Clinton administration. We heard about abortion, abortion, abortion, which has nothing to do with the issue at hand. Because, as I said, not one slim dime of Federal money has been able to be used for abortion since the 1970s, and 97 percent of what Planned Parenthood does is health care, not abortion.

We know the real priority of these Republicans in Congress. We know the real priority. We know what it is. It is an ideological agenda that, frankly, puts women's health and women's lives at risk. Here we had this huge debate over the budget—tough, getting down where we were all sweating it out to within an hour of the moment the government would shut down—and the two things the Republicans insisted on voting on, on a budget bill, have nothing to do with the budget.

For every dollar that Planned Parenthood gets to help them do cancer screenings for women, Pap smears, breast cancer screenings, STDs—and they do for men as well—HIV testing, blood pressure checks, diabetes checks, they charge a sliding scale. You walk in there, you have no insurance, you have no money, you get the services for free. If you have some, you pay some.

The bottom line is, this is what they are holding up this agreement over, and they are forcing us to vote on Planned Parenthood and repealing health care reform. I say that is extraordinary, because we met them on the numbers. But in order to appease their rightwing agenda, they are forcing these votes. If these bills were to pass, who gets hurt? Women and their families.

I have some letters I have received from Californians, because 750,000 women are served by Planned Parenthood clinics in California—750,000 women. That is actually more than some States have. I am going to share a letter. I have shared a few of them, but I got this one today.

Dear Senator BOXER, I don't write to you often because you already stand up and fight for everything I believe in. I heard you on NPR this morning talking about women's health and the cuts the Republicans want to make to Planned Parenthood.

I'm a 42 year old married professional. My husband and I aren't in the highest bracket, but our combined income puts us in the \$170,000 year range. Frankly, we're happy, more than happy to pay our fair share of taxes for the things that will help our society as a whole.

We are appalled by the budget discussions. If you really want to cut spending, do so where it is really outrageous . . . defense and military. There's 60 percent right there. However, what has me outraged right now is . . .

The Republican Party is.

. . . willing to shut down the government over a few dollars for Planned Parenthood.

If you really cared about limiting abortion funding, family planning is the first step. When I was 20 years old, I was working my way through school. I was a sophomore in college with limited income, no parental support, no health insurance. The one thing I did have access to medically was Planned Parenthood. The services were on a sliding scale, so at my income of \$850 a month, a gynecological exam was \$10. This meant that I went.

. . . I also got birth control pills there . . . However, probably the most significant cross road in my life came about because of Planned Parenthood. My family has a history of female cancers. I had a Pap smear come back abnormal when I was 21.

1). Had it not been for Planned Parenthood, I would not have been able to afford the annual Pap smear.

2). Planned Parenthood did a biopsy on the "abnormality." Again, it was a sliding scale and while I can't recall exactly how much this was, it was something I could manage . . .

3). Biopsy showed that it was a potentially very dangerous pre-cancerous growth that needed to be removed.

4). I did eat beans and rice for the next 2 months to pay my share to Planned Parenthood for removing this growth.

5). I had to have Paps 2 times a year for the next several years . . . Again, all I could afford was Planned Parenthood.

Frankly, if it wasn't for Planned Parenthood, there's a pretty good chance I wouldn't be here today. It's not about abortion, it's about women's health.

I have to say, these are the letters I have been getting day after day after day, and I am very proud of the people who have stood up and told the truth to counter the lies I have heard, frankly from Members of Congress. This woman's name is Heather Jones from Costa Mesa.

The bottom line is, if you turn and look at the two votes we are going to have today, they both hurt women disproportionately. This isn't about the budget. If it were about a budget, they would give more money to the Title X program because for every dollar we invest, we save \$4 on the other side. What would have happened if Heather hadn't found out she had a dangerous precancerous growth? That would have gone forward, she would have gotten cancer, and Lord knows what it would have cost. She didn't make any money at that time, so she would have had to have help from her county. It would have cost taxpayers. She would have been ill and gone through hell and back fighting this, and who knows if she would have made it.

The second vote we are having has to do with rolling back health care reform—another attack on women. It is an attack on everyone, but I want to look at what it does to women. I know the Presiding Officer knows this, because he has been a leader on this issue, but before we passed our health reform law, being a woman was a pre-existing condition.

If you were the victim of domestic violence and you were a woman, they wouldn't insure you. They would say:

You have a preexisting condition. What is that? Well, your husband beat you. And guess what. He could do it again, so you are a high risk. Goodbye. We said no. No, that can't happen. If you had a cesarean section and you tried to get insurance, they would say: No, no. Since you had a cesarean section, you could have another one. It is too expensive. Bye.

We said, no; you can't do that. You can't turn away people simply because they were the victim of domestic violence or had a Caesarean. You cannot turn away a person because she is a woman. In 2014, insurance companies will not be able to deny anyone coverage because of a preexisting condition.

Another issue my colleague fought hard on, along with all of us, is gender rating. Insurance companies charge women in California nearly 40 percent more than men for similar coverage. Can you imagine? So when they say let's repeal health reform, who are they hurting? Disproportionately women. When they say no more funding for Planned Parenthood to continue their great work on basic health care, who are they hurting disproportionately? Women.

Preventive care was a key in that health reform. I thank the Presiding Officer. He served on the appropriate committee that made that decision. I will tell you, right now women delay or avoid getting preventive care, but once health reform goes into place we know there will be preventive health care services such as mammograms without a copay or a deductible. So when you repeal the health reform and everything we did for the people, who do you hurt? Women. Who is going to get sick more than any other group? Women.

Maternity care is not covered by many insurance companies. We changed all that. By 2014 insurance will be required to cover maternity care services.

Let's look at Medicare. We made many reforms in health care dealing with Medicare. More than half of the people who depend on Medicare are women; 56 percent of Medicare recipients are women. When you end Medicare, as Mr. RYAN does in his so-called Ryan budget where he ends Medicare—let's call it what it is—you are throwing women under the bus. This time it is elderly women. How proud are you of that, Mr. RYAN? I am not proud that kind of proposal would come out, and it is starting here today, when we vote to repeal health care reform.

Health care reform extended the life of the Medicare trust fund by 12 years, to 2037. Why on Earth would the Republicans want to repeal a law that strengthens Medicare and makes it viable until 2037?

Let me tell you what else would be repealed if they have their way today. Every senior on Medicare is going to get a free annual wellness exam. Let me repeat that. Every person on Medicare is going to get a free annual

wellness exam. It will get them access to preventive health services such as vaccinations and cancer screenings with no copay and no deductible. Why did we do that? First and foremost, we did it because it is the right thing to do, but it saves money at the end of the day when we invest up front in prevention.

That is why the Congressional Budget Office said our bill saves billions of dollars over time. Investing in prevention—just like Planned Parenthood did with my constituent, Heather, where a cancer was discovered early—means that an individual will get the care early, will get on top of this and will not have to spend a lot of money on it and will be spared the pain and suffering and all the rest that goes with cancer.

There is one more thing that they repeal. I didn't see this one. If they get their way today, seniors are not going to see that infamous doughnut hole that they fall into on their prescription drugs closed. They are not going to see that closed. Right now it happens after they pay a certain amount of money for their prescription drugs, a couple of thousand dollars. Then they say Medicare prescription drug coverage is not going to cover them. So they fall into that doughnut hole. We close that forever by 2020. They want to cancel that so seniors are going to have to pay more for their prescription drugs.

We live in the greatest country in the world, and we have access to so many wonderful health advances—be they medical devices, be they prescription drugs. But what good does it do if we cannot get those things?

By repealing health care reform—which our Republican friends want to do, and today we have a vote to do it—seniors, women, and their families will lose access to lifesaving drugs. They will lose access to preventive care. They will lose access to fair insurance coverage. Again, disproportionately it impacts women. That is just the way the demographics are because 56 percent of Medicare recipients are women.

Let's be very clear. Let's send a strong message tonight, or whatever time it is that we vote on these two amendments, that we are standing strong—if we vote them down—we are standing strong for women, we are standing strong for their families, we are standing strong for Americans. Anyone who would take these important reforms away, anyone who would say we do not care about the 3 million people who get their health care from Planned Parenthood, are saying they do not care much about those people.

By the way, there was some news program that said: What do you need Planned Parenthood for? You can go to Walgreens and get all those services? Somebody said. I never heard of getting a Pap smear at Walgreens or a breast cancer screening, that doesn't come to mind. So Walgreens actually had to put out a press release stating they do not do those things.

Let's start talking the truth on the floor of the Senate. The truth is, there is an ideological agenda around this place, and it is crystallizing. My Republican friends have gone a bridge too far. People are catching on because now it is starting to affect them. They are Republicans, they are Independents, they are Democrats. This is not about party. I can assure you, the people who are writing me who go to Planned Parenthood to get their health care, their preventive care, their blood pressure checked, their diabetes checked, they come from every political party.

The Title X program, in the beginning, and when it was formed, had the strongest support from Republicans. That is how it was. But these Republicans today have walked so far away from their own party that they are looking at a bill signed by Richard Nixon, voted for by George Herbert Walker Bush, and saying: No, we are not interested in family planning. They are distorting the debate.

If people want fewer abortions there is one place we can all walk together; that is, prevention of unwanted pregnancies, birth control, contraception. They do not even want that. They do not even want that. They have just overreached.

I am a person who says I respect you know matter what your views are. I would stand in front of a truck to protect your right to state your views, whatever they are. I do not tell people what to think about issues. I think they should be respected for what they decide. But big government should not be telling people what to think about the most personal decisions. That is not what America is about.

We have, over the years, crafted some good compromises in the area of reproductive health care. We have said people have a right to choose in the early stages of a pregnancy. That is what the Supreme Court has said. It has been upheld since the 1970s. In the beginning of a pregnancy, a woman and her family and her doctor and her God, that is who will be consulted. It is up to her to make that decision, early in the pregnancy.

As the pregnancy moves on, the State has an interest in the decision on this issue. As the pregnancy moves on—but always her life and health must be protected. That is the law. Not one penny of Federal funds can be used for abortion except in the case of rape, incest, life of the mother.

I happen to be the one who carried that amendment on rape and incest because before that, we did not have that amendment. That was over on the House side many years ago. We have a compromise. I would say to my friends, if you do not like that compromise then come on the Senate floor and make a woman a criminal and make a doctor a criminal—introduce your legislation. We will fight it out and the people will weigh in. What the people will say is: Compromise. Compromise

is fair. It is not perfect, but it is fair. But, no, that is not what they will do because they know if they say a woman is a criminal, it is a bridge too far.

So what they try to do is vilify an organization that has been in place for 95 years, Planned Parenthood. They will vilify an organization when 97 percent of their work goes to basic health care and family planning. It is really sad. It is wrong. I am here to say every time it comes up—the women Democrats, we have been on the Senate floor already. We are going to continue this battle with our male friends because nobody can tell me they care about women when they are about to vote to deny women basic health care. No one can tell me they care about families when they are about to deny families basic health care. No one can tell me they care about families when they want to repeal a law that outlaws gender discrimination, that outlaws the ability of an insurance company to turn you away if you were the victim of domestic violence or had a Cesarean section.

Nobody can tell me you care about seniors when you embrace the Ryan budget that ends Medicare. No one can tell me you care about seniors when, today, you are going to have a vote to repeal health care reform that gives them more funding for their prescription drugs, that gives them free wellness checks without a copay or deductible.

We always say around here: Whose side are you on? Are you on the side of the people, or are you on the side of the insurance companies? Are you on the side of the people, or are you more interested in scoring political, ideological points with the extreme wing of your party? Those are the questions. I think the answer is going to come back tonight. I think we are going to defeat these two radical amendments. I hope it will send a message to our House friends who are going to have a radical budget that the experts tell us is going to lose hundreds of thousands of jobs—I correct myself, the experts tell us the Ryan budget would lead to the loss of 2.2 million jobs. Can you imagine?

The only beneficiary of that budget is billionaires and multimillionaires. I am happy to be in the Senate at this moment in history because, to me, these are the issues. I have to say, these are the issues I had in my campaign, and they were very direct.

I thank the people of California for sending me back here. We have 38 million people, the largest State in the Union. Every time you take away something from a Planned Parenthood or another health care center, you hurt more of my people than anybody else because we are such a large State. Today we start the votes, and I am grateful I could stand up and speak out against both of these radical amendments—one to defund an organization that is helping 3 million people a year in America, and, second, repeal of health care reform that does so much good. I think we are going to win those votes, and I certainly hope so.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alabama is recognized.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. President, we as a country are in a very serious financial situation. We all know we have to reduce spending. This year we will spend \$3.7 trillion but take in only \$2.2 trillion—40 cents of every \$1 is borrowed.

The President has acknowledged a stunning revelation, that under his budget he submitted 2 months ago, something I repeatedly have talked about—in the 10th year, the amount of interest on our debt will be almost \$1 trillion. This is fact.

We are on an unsustainable course. As every witness to come before the Budget Committee has told us: You have to do better. You cannot continue in this fashion any longer. The President's debt commission Chairmen, Mr. Erskine Bowles and former Senator Alan Simpson, told us we are facing the most predictable debt crisis in our history if we do not change.

They did not say it could happen to our children and grandchildren, they said it could happen in 2 years. Mr. Bowles said maybe earlier than 2 years, maybe some time after that. Senator Simpson said, I think we can have a debt crisis in 1 year. Hopefully, this will not happen.

But we have to get spending under control. There are two ways to do it. One is to work hard, do what we are paid to do as legislators and identify the less-productive, less-defensible spending programs and eliminate them and try to protect as much as we can the programs that are more productive and doing good for America.

Another way to do it is reduce everything across the board and just cut it all by a certain percentage, and reduce spending that way. You could do either. I think most people would say, we should eliminate the programs that are least defensible first, before we have to reduce spending in programs that are more justified.

So, regardless, how do we make the decision?

I have heard the debate about Planned Parenthood and the money they get. I have not been particularly knowledgeable about it until recently. I serve as ranking member of the Budget Committee, so I know something about the debt crisis we are in. So the question is, Is Planned Parenthood a program that is less defensible and ought to have its funding eliminated or reduced significantly so other programs that are more defensible do not have to be cut?

Looking at the facts, I find that Planned Parenthood has far more difficulty defending its legitimacy as a Federal recipient of millions of dollars than other institutions. This is a private group that sets about to do all kinds of things. One of the largest things it does is provide abortions. They have a very strong ideological agenda that a lot of the American people do not agree with. Why should we

fund it? There are many other organizations out there, all over America, that do what they think to be good things and are not funded by the U.S. Government.

So let's just look at it a little bit. I was sort of surprised actually. In 2009, the last year we have gotten a report, Planned Parenthood reported providing 332,278 abortions in the United States. I didn't know that—332,000. This is the highest total ever recorded, and the 15th consecutive year that the number of abortions they have provided has increased.

Overall, though, abortions in the United States are going down. You see that sonogram and you see that unborn child and the American people are getting a lot more uneasy about this idea taking an unborn life.

Overall, abortions have decreased by almost 25 percent in the past two decades nationwide, voluntarily reduced by individual decisions by Americans. Yet during that same time, Planned Parenthood abortions have doubled.

Planned Parenthood consistently claims that abortions account for only 3 percent of their services; 97 percent is spent on other projects, they say. But yet in that same fact sheet on which they make that assertion, they state that 12 percent—that is more than 1 in 10—of their health care patients receive an abortion.

That is a surprise to me. Think about that. They state that 12 percent—that is more than the 1 in 10—of their health care patients who come in to Planned Parenthood receive an abortion. So what about the other solutions? Are there not other solutions to pregnancies other than abortion?

In 2009, their report indicates that Planned Parenthood made 1 adoption referral for every 340 abortions performed. They made a scant 977 adoption referrals compared to over 330,000 abortions. That is a decline of almost 60 percent from 2008. In 2008, they did 60 percent more referrals when it made 2,400 adoption referrals. So this is a major change in what is going on at Planned Parenthood.

It appears this is an advocacy organization that is committed to one solution for people struggling with pregnancies. I tell you, I have a letter here, I will not quote it, but I have a letter from a woman in Alabama who had an abortion who still feels pain about that and wrote me saying not to fund this. I just say that because my colleague suggested only men would favor reducing this funding.

I tell you another thing that I did not know and was very surprised about: the amount of Federal money that they receive. No wonder there is a big brouhaha here, because this is a lot of money. Congress is providing \$363 million a year to Planned Parenthood. That is a lot. Over 10 years—as we have been scoring everything here over a 10-year budget—that is \$4 billion—quite a lot of money.

Many people in the country feel strongly that, OK, they say the Su-

preme Court has ruled on this. They have said that under the Constitution abortions under some circumstances cannot be prohibited. But they are saying the Federal Government does not have to pay for it, does not have to fund it, and should not use taxpayer money to do so.

So my colleagues say: Well, we agree with that principle and Planned Parenthood money does not directly fund abortions. We are giving the money to Planned Parenthood, but they are not able to use it for abortions. But if 12 percent of their patients are obtaining abortions, and they are getting \$363 million per year, I think it is a fact that the Federal funding furthers their ability to grow and expand their lead as the No. 1 abortion provider in the country.

I think, all in all, we do not have enough money to do a lot of good things. We have, some people forget, rural health clinics and urban health clinics that are funded and organized by the government to meet health needs of the poor. We do not have to use money to help fund this private entity that has an agenda. I do not believe it is radical to say this is one place we could save money. I do not think it is extreme.

My best judgment tells me that if we do not have enough money, and 40 percent of what we spend is borrowed, we shouldn't borrow \$363 million this year to fund a program like Planned Parenthood. This is one program that we could legitimately say does not have to have taxpayers' money and should have its funding terminated.

I also would support the resolution concerning the health care bill. It is clearly a piece of legislation that costs the taxpayers large sums of money. It is not a piece of legislation that adds money to the Treasury, as has been suggested. The Congressional Budget Office has written a letter to me that stated explicitly that the administration is double-counting money to claim savings. If they were not double-counting the money they took from Medicare to fund this new program, then the health care bill would score to be a clear drain on the Treasury.

They have to use a gimmick of double accounting to justify that. It is not the right way to do it and is the reason the country is going broke.

So, while today's vote may largely be symbolic, it is a crucial step in showing the necessity of eliminating this intrusive and costly healthcare law and replacing it with reforms that will provide Americans with access to quality, affordable health care, reduce skyrocketing health care costs and put our Nation on a more sustainable fiscal path.

The Democrats' health legislation was sold as a package that would reduce insurance premiums by \$2,500 per family, trim the Federal deficit, and immediately create 400,000 new jobs. Sadly, none of these promises have been met.

Instead, the new health care law will cause health care spending to surge over the next decade, and Americans will see dramatic increases in their premiums, and many of them already have. Half of those recently polled in a Kaiser Family Foundation poll claim that their premiums have gone up recently. The Federal deficit will increase by an additional \$700 billion, and the law's expensive mandates, penalties, and tax hikes will lead to job losses and persistent economic uncertainty, as many small business owners have told me.

As our Nation's reckless fiscal policy brings us ever closer to a tipping point, respected economists across the country have stressed the need for Congress to reduce Federal spending and contain our mounting health costs.

Rather than tackle these problems that threaten the long-term stability of our Nation, the new health care law exacerbates our fiscal crisis by creating an open-ended entitlement and introducing \$2.6 trillion in new Federal spending.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the new health care law will cause insurance premiums in the individual market to soar by 10 to 13 percent for American families, translating to a \$2,100 increase for families purchasing their own health care coverage by 2016.

Total health care spending in the U.S. already consumes 17.3 percent of GDP, the largest of any industrialized nation. Under the new law, national health care spending will approach 20 percent of GDP by the end of the decade.

Sadly, many supporters of the health care law continue to perpetuate the myth that it will not increase the deficit. A thorough examination of the law pulls back the curtain to expose the deceptive budget gimmicks and reveal its true cost.

When the bill was first introduced, the Democrats sold the plan to Americans by double-counting \$398 billion in Medicare cuts and taxes, \$29 billion in Social Security taxes, and \$70 billion in new long-term care premiums to pay for the new health care spending. This is according to a CBO report I requested. This double accounting was stunning and existed to justify the claim that the law will reduce costs.

Additionally, since CBO reports evaluate legislative proposals over a 10-year budget window, the new law was written to delay most of the new spending until 2014, while immediately implementing the program cuts and tax increases to allow 10 years of offsets to pay for only 6 years of spending. In order to convince Americans of the plan's merits, which they failed to do, they had to use accounting gimmicks that hide the true long-term costs of this monstrous law.

Only in Washington will people claim that spending \$2.6 trillion and dramatically expanding the size and scope of the Federal Government is good for our Nation's fiscal health.

Former Director of the Congressional Budget Office Douglas Holz-Eakin, an economist who understands the budget gimmicks used in Washington, cowrote an article in the Wall Street Journal in January that eliminates any confusion about the law's impact. This article titled "Health Care Repeal Won't Add to the Deficit" clearly refutes the law's supporters:

Repeal is the logical first step toward restoring fiscal sanity. . . . How, then, does the Affordable Care Act magically convert \$1 trillion in new spending into painless deficit reduction? It's all about budget gimmicks, deceptive accounting, and implausible assumptions used to create the false impression of fiscal discipline. . . . Repeal isn't a budget buster; keeping the Affordable Care Act is.

A poll by the Kaiser Family Foundation and Harvard University conducted around the same time that this article was written revealed that the American people are seeing through these ploys: 60 percent of the country believes the health care law will increase the deficit over the next 10 years, while only 11 percent thinks it will lower the deficit.

Once again, the American people prove that they are wiser than Washington. The final point I wish to make about the health care law is its debilitating impact on jobs and our economic recovery. In meeting with many small businesses, they are passionate on this point.

The expensive mandates and penalties included in the health care law coupled with the rising costs of insurance facing families and businesses have enveloped our economy in a cloud of uncertainty. Already, over 6,000 pages of new health care regulations have been written by the Obama administration, burdening employers of all sizes as they make strategic decisions about business expansion, hiring additional employees, and long-term investments, three keys to the private sector recovery essential to getting Americans back to work.

Economic estimates indicate that repealing the health care law that threatens our economic recovery would save 700,000 American jobs.

It is imperative that Congress repeal this law that is burdening employers and stifling economic growth, and replace it with solutions that will lower health costs and avert the mounting fiscal crisis facing our Republic.

During the recent election, the American public rebelled against the unchecked spending and unprecedented government expansion that threaten our children's future. Their message to Congress was clear: adopt policies to change our unsustainable trajectory and rein in the cost and size of the government. Congressman PAUL RYAN has submitted a budget for 2012 that is responsible, honest, and straightforward in the way that it deals with the debt problem facing our children and grandchildren. Repealing this flawed and fiscally unsustainable health care law, which is an important part of his plan,

would be another step in the right direction and would help to change the devastating trajectory that we are on.

I urge my colleagues to heed the public's call and repeal this legislation. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri is recognized.

SBIR/STTR

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to talk about another topic. Senator KIRK and 36 other Members of the Senate are cosponsoring an amendment we would hope to add to the small business bill if we ever get back to it.

This is an amendment we offered independently as a bill 1 month ago, the Gas Accessibility and Sustainability Act. What this bill does is take further an effort that was put into law in 2005, right before Hurricane Katrina, that allowed the President to suspend the unique boutique fuel standards in the country if there was a natural disaster.

That happened immediately—within a couple weeks, as I recall—after the bill became law. The President used that authority. In the 6 months following Katrina, even though the gulf was obviously disrupted and a couple of refineries were very disrupted, gas prices did not go up because, for the first time since the passage of the Clean Air Act, gasoline was a commodity again.

What this bill would do, as we now see gasoline prices at \$4.37 in Hawaii, at \$3.88 in St. Louis, and particularly prices that are high in communities that have a unique blend of fuel that is only available in that community, is allow the President to have that authority, if there is any kind of disruption, if the Suez Canal was shut down for some period of time, if a refinery went down, if there was a pipeline disruption that truly made it very difficult for communities to get their unique blend of fuel but was much easier for them to get fuel that met the standard of being "fuel" at the gas pump.

Senator KIRK and I introduced this together. He was a great advocate of this bill when it passed the House. I would like to turn to him for a moment and see what he has to say today about this bill that allows us to look at the gas prices that are creating real problems in the country today.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. President, I note that under the Blunt legislation, we would correct a growing problem in the United States with gas prices. Right now, for example, in the Chicagoland area, gas prices total about \$4.14 a gallon. I am sure in Missouri it is probably quite high.

Mr. BLUNT. It is \$3.88 in St. Louis, which would be the area that we have that uses specialty fuel.

Mr. KIRK. This map shows that by Federal regulation the Federal Government has divided the national gasoline market into 17 separate submarkets.

These 17 submarkets all have their unique recipe of gasoline. By Federal regulation, one cannot use gasoline that was sold in Chicagoland, which under this chart is the Chicago and Milwaukee RFG ethanol standard, in the St. Louis area, the SRFG standard with ethanol. By creating small, tiny monopolies, we create higher prices for the American people. I think that is why the Blunt legislation is necessary.

Mr. BLUNT. I thank the Senator for those comments. Using his chart, in Missouri you can buy one blend of gas in St. Louis, another blend of fuel in the Kansas City area, and a third blend yet in between. So, clearly, these areas are not even unique in the fuel that is used there. If you buy fuel driving from one city to the other and use the other half of the tank while you are driving around in St. Louis, you are using fuel that is available generally anyhow.

This does a couple of things. One, it allows, in a time where it is hard to get fuel for any reason, the President to waive those standards. The other thing it does is, it caps these fuels so if the EPA decides under the Clean Air Act that you have a clean air attainment problem in your city, you have to go and look at the existing fuel blends and choose from one of them rather than what had happened in the country up until 2005, which was every city somehow became convinced there was a unique fuel blend for them that only would work there that never would quite work anywhere else. That doesn't make sense. We have headed in the other direction. This legislation heads us a little further and a little faster in a direction to where we don't have these unique blends. We have fuel as fuel again. Whether it is the restaurateurs whom some of us may have seen today or various businesses, if fuel is \$4 a gallon, something has to give, and it goes throughout the entire economy. This helps solve that problem.

Hopefully, we can be talking about an energy bill before too long. But, clearly, whether it is a small business bill or any other bill, the cost of fuel makes a real difference in the country today. This amendment that we hope to offer eventually to the small business bill is one of the things that will help solve the problem.

Mr. KIRK. The unhighlighted areas are where regular gasoline is sold. The highlighted areas are where these little gasoline monopolies, by Federal regulation, have been created. What happens if another hurricane hits the gulf? If this area was lacking its specific kind of gasoline under current regulations, it could not borrow gasoline from Missouri or Chicagoland or anywhere else. So we have created an incredible price rigidity in the system. Long term, I think we should move the country to one clean burning fuel. But the one thing we should not do is have 17 different submarkets, all now with the ability to charge the American driving public much higher prices than would otherwise be the case.