

At present, FHA allows lenders to charge interest on a mortgagor's loan through the end of the month, even if the mortgagor pays the loan off at the beginning of the month, to cover the contractual obligation to pay investors in mortgage backed securities for the full month. Mortgagors with conventional mortgages or with Veterans Administration-backed mortgages stop accruing interest once the principal is repaid, despite there being a similar contractual obligation to pay such investors. I have deep concerns about the impact these excess interest payments have on FHA borrowers, who typically have limited resources, but may end up paying more interest on their loans than other borrowers. While some might argue that this is merely an issue of educating the borrowers to encourage them to repay their principal at the end of the month, I am skeptical about whether the FHA mortgagors, who often repay their loans through selling their homes or refinancing their mortgages, have much ability to choose the day on which their transaction closes and the principal is repaid.

I understand that the Banking Committee and the Department of Housing & Urban Development, HUD, are willing to work with Senator ISAKSON and me and our staffs to further understand this issue and make sure that FHA policies regarding interest charges protect borrowers to the extent possible. Is that right?

Mr. JOHNSON of South Dakota. Yes, that is correct. My understanding is that HUD has been working to determine the impact of a change in how interest is accrued on FHA loans and the Department is committed to working with the junior Senator from Maryland on this issue. At the Banking Committee, my staff and I will also continue to study the issue and work with the Senator's staff and various stakeholders to discern the impact that such a change would have on interest rates and on the mortgage-backed securities market. With help from the Department and the junior Senators from Maryland and Georgia, we will move this process forward to bring about the best outcome for FHA borrowers.

I want to assure the junior Senator from Maryland that I share his concern for FHA borrowers and am committed to pursuing policies that protect borrowers while also ensuring robust real estate and mortgage markets. I thank my colleague for bringing this issue to the attention of the Senate and I look forward to working with him.

Mr. CARDIN. I thank the distinguished Senator from South Dakota for his consideration, and I compliment him for the excellent work he has done thus far in working to strengthen the real estate market and the economy in general during the economic downturn. I am sure the Senator will be pleased to learn that HUD committed to me and my staff that it would deliver within the next 2 to 3 weeks an anal-

ysis of how many borrowers are affected by the current interest policy and are required to pay excess interest. The last data published are from 2000 to 2003 but indicate what is at stake. Total excess interest payments from that period, according to the National Association of Realtors, amounted to more than \$1.3 billion. If hundreds of thousands of FHA borrowers could save hundreds of millions of dollars in excess interest payments each year, those savings could provide an economic stimulus in communities across the Nation that would not cost taxpayers anything. Additionally, in the next 60 to 90 days, HUD will complete a study on the impact of changing interest calculations on its systems, and those of large and small lenders, and share those results with the Banking Committee and me.

Mr. President, with these assurances and commitments from the chairman and from HUD firmly in place, I will withdraw the amendment I offered on behalf of myself and the junior senator from Georgia, Senate Amendment 407, at the appropriate time.

PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENT EFFICIENCY AND STREAMLINING ACT—MOTION TO PROCEED

Mr. REID. I now move to proceed to Calendar No. 75, S. 679, the Presidential appointment efficiency and streamlining bill.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The motion to proceed is now pending.

Mr. REID. Madam President, before I leave the floor, I wish to say a word to and about my friend, the Senator from California. As I have indicated, she is the chair of this most important committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, which I had the good fortune of chairing on two separate occasions. She has been tireless in bringing legislation to this floor—attempting to. She has been talking about this bill for months, about how good it is.

When she sat down and reminded me of the merits of this legislation, I thought: This should be a good one, a job-creating measure. We need that right now. I have been very disappointed that we haven't been able to move forward. But it is not because of any lack of effort on her part.

She and I came to Washington together many years ago and served together in the House of Representatives. She is my friend, but she is also one of the most outstanding legislators we have had in this body, bar none.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business until 6 p.m. this evening, with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each during that time.

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

The Senator from California.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REVITALIZATION BILL

Mrs. BOXER. Madam President, I want to thank the Senator from Nevada, my friend, the majority leader, Senator REID, for his remarks. And I want to thank him for filing cloture on the EDA bill. He said the Economic Development Administration was started by Richard Nixon. Actually it was continued by Richard Nixon. It was started by Lyndon Johnson in 1965 and supported by Presidents whether they were Republican, Democrat, liberal, moderate, or conservative.

Congress has supported this legislation. The last time the EDA was authorized, it was authorized by a voice vote in the Senate when George W. Bush was President and he signed it into law.

So one has to ask one's self: Why do we find ourselves in the middle of a filibuster? Why do we find ourselves with 91 amendments filed to this little bill that takes a \$500 million authorization and, because of the effect it has on the private sector, draws in private sector matching funds 7 to 1 and means it is a \$3 billion a year, basically, jobs bill? This is a jobs bill. Every Republican and every Democrat I know around here says: jobs, jobs, jobs. But they are killing another jobs bill. I think the American people have to understand, this list of amendments that has been filed—Senator REID went through a few of them. There is even one that relates to the prairie chicken. With all due respect, there may be a lot of issues surrounding the prairie chicken, but it has nothing to do with an Economic Development Act bill.

It goes on and on. It talks about protecting free choice for workers to refrain from participating in labor unions. This sounds familiar from a Governor from the Midwest. It talks about amending the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

Let's face it, we were not born yesterday. I wish I were, but I was not. The fact is—the print on this list is too small to even show up on the screen—we have a three-page list of amendments. We have 91 amendments filed to this bill—which is a jobs bill, which is a simple bill to reauthorize the Economic Development Administration's programs.

EDA is a great job creator. In our committee, every single Democrat and Republican, save one individual, voted for this bill. So it is bipartisan. It has been supported by Presidents since Lyndon Johnson. It has created, over time, millions of jobs. We know this particular bill, at its current funding level, would support up to 200,000 jobs a year or up to a million jobs over 5 years. And they are good jobs.

How does that happen? Because the EDA goes into local communities that have high unemployment rates. They bring together the local governments,

the State government, the private sector, the nonprofits, and they say: What do you want to do here to attract industry, to attract consumers here? What do you want to do to rehabilitate this community?

Sometimes they say: We need a new road. We need a new water project. We want to build an industrial park for new businesses. And this is what EDA does. So they are locally controlled ideas and a coming together of the Federal Government, the local government, the State government, and the nonprofits in a beautiful package that has resulted in millions of jobs over time since it started.

Here is what I want to say today as I go through my statement. The first thing I want to say is, we know what the other side is doing. They are killing these jobs bills by a frivolous list of amendment after amendment after amendment that has nothing to do with the bill.

This is not the first time. In this very spot, a few weeks ago, stood another Senator with a southern accent, MARY LANDRIEU from Louisiana. She is the chairman of the Small Business Committee. She had a fantastic bill called SBIR. It is a small business innovation research program that has been in place since the 1980s, brought to us by a Republican Senator named Warren Rudman.

Again, it is a bill that has always been without controversy. What did they do to that bill, my Republican friends? Death by filibuster, death by amendment, kill that jobs bill right here on the floor.

If you put that in the context of everything the Republicans have done since they picked up more seats around here, and they took over the House, here is the list: They still have not appointed conferees to the FAA, Federal Aviation Administration, bill conference. That bill will create 280,000 jobs. It modernizes our airports. It gets rid of the old ways we track planes and brings our air traffic control system into the 21st century.

Senator ROCKEFELLER has worked so hard. It is sitting over there waiting for conferees. I am a conferee here on this side. I am waiting to go get this bill done. It is essential. It has a passenger bill of rights attached to it, which is so important. It will make sure our systems work properly. It will put in place safety features. Jobs, jobs, and jobs. They have not done a thing.

The patent bill. I had some problems with the patent bill because I did not like one or two provisions. But the bottom line is, the patent bill is expected to create 300,000 jobs. It is sitting over in the House. No action. So since they took over, they have passed a bill to destroy Medicare, destroy education—it is known as their budget. But when it comes to jobs, there is no beef. And we are perplexed.

This bill has attached to it—the EDA bill—now an ending of the ethanol subsidy. I happened to vote for that. The

fact of the matter is, whether you supported it or you did not, it is going to save billions. So now the EDA bill is not only a jobs bill that leverages billions of dollars to create jobs from the private sector, but it reduces the deficit because it has this amendment on ethanol.

I would say to my friends who may be listening from their offices, when we come back next week, vote “yes” to cut off debate and get this bill done. Get this bill done.

I have talked about the fact that Senate Republicans have supported this program continually. I wish to tell you some of the things they have said about the EDA. Remember, I am quoting Senate Republicans who are trying to kill this bill by loading it up and filibustering it.

Twenty-six of the current Republican Senators have made positive statements about EDA or put out great press releases in their States, and I agree with what they said.

For example, Senator COCHRAN of Mississippi praised the EDA grant intended to help spur economic development in northeast Mississippi. He said:

This region has suffered during the economic downturn, but the Three Rivers has been diligent about working to help create jobs. . . .

This is what he said about an EDA grant.

Senator CORNYN of Texas said a \$2 million EDA grant for a water tower will “pave the way for creation of new jobs and business opportunities” in Palestine, TX.

But they are filibustering this bill.

Senator CRAPO says EDA business grants will help “keep Idaho firms on the cutting edge in various fields. . . .” He says:

This can make Idaho firms successful, which translates into more jobs and revenue in Idaho.

So my Republican friends, while they are trying to kill this bill by filibuster, have said laudatory things about the EDA. You explain it to me. I think I have an answer as to why they are doing it. But I will continue.

Let’s see what Senator WICKER said when he got a grant:

These federal dollars will fund rail improvements and help bring new jobs and economic growth. . . . I am glad the federal government has taken this step to continue its investment in South Mississippi’s recovery.

These are all the Republicans who are killing this bill with a filibuster.

Senator COLLINS—a \$1.1 million grant to fund renovations at Loring Development Authority. She and Senator SNOWE praised the EDA. They said:

This investment by EDA will allow for improvements and upgrades . . . which in turn, will help encourage further business growth. Loring will continue to be an economic driver for the region, creating good jobs in Aroostook County.

This is just a small sample of more than 26 Republican Senators who have praised the EDA. Yet each one of them seems to be supporting endless debate,

amendments that have nothing to do with the bill. But they all have a chance to do the right thing on Tuesday and vote to cut off debate.

We have had some tough amendments to this bill already. It has gone a couple of weeks. It is time we had a clean vote because—guess what—jobs are what it is all about.

I am going to not go on too much longer, but I felt it is important to explain to the American people—who, by the way, give Congress an 18-percent positive rating. Hello. Is it no wonder? We are doing nothing about jobs. Every time we try to do something, it is stymied.

I laid out what they have done, the Republicans. End Medicare as we know it. By the way, pass a slew of abortion bills. It is unbelievable to me. And these straightforward jobs bills go nowhere. So do not tell me you are for jobs and then come down to this floor and offer amendment after amendment on the prairie chicken, on the border fence, on issue after issue that has nothing to do with this EDA bill.

EDA creates a job for every \$3,000 invested. That is incredibly good. We invest \$3,000 and a good-paying job comes about. Why? Because the matching funds come in.

This is the time we have a chance to create 200,000 jobs a year over the 5 years of this bill. So here is the thing. Again, we need, in these tough times, as we are going to get our arms around this deficit—and here is the thing I find interesting: There is lots of talk about how to cure the deficit from the other side. But they forget some of the easiest ways to do it. One is, say to billionaires: Thank you very much. You have gotten millions back a year. Let’s go back to your rate that you had when Bill Clinton was President. You made a fortune then. You will still make a fortune and help out with this deficit, millionaires and billionaires.

Oh, they do not want to do that, our friends on the other side. They want to destroy the EPA. They want to destroy the Department of Energy. They want to destroy the Department of Education. They want to destroy Medicare. That is their answer. Why? To pay for tax cuts for the richest of the richest of the richest. Explain to me how that helps the middle class in this great Nation.

Another way. You want to cure the deficit and the debt? End the wars. End the combat mission. Bring home the troops. Let’s work diplomatically in Iraq and Afghanistan. I met with the Afghanistan women who are struggling there. They do not want combat troops. They want help to get a peace and reconciliation process going. It is time to end the wars.

Our highway trust fund, which is so critical, is short \$6 billion. And it is difficult. That is the trust fund that pays for the highways, for the bridges that are falling down, for the infrastructure improvements for our transportation system. And I know it is hard to find \$6 billion.

But we are spending \$12 billion a month on the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Bring the money home. It is time we spend it in this country for our people. We are not going to walk away from our responsibility. We are still going to have the counterterrorism going on. We are still going to protect our personnel who are there. We are still going to work for peace and reconciliation.

But you want to talk about the ways to cure this deficit, it is not that hard. We did it before, we can do it again. The Democrats balanced the budget under Bill Clinton—the only time it was done in recent history—and we created 23 million jobs, not by threatening Medicare and Social Security, and the Department of Education, and the EPA, and the Clean Air Act, and all of the things they are going after here, but by doing the right thing by our children and our grandchildren and making the right investment, to become energy independent.

So for me, the argument of not being able to do anything because of the deficit, something is wrong with that. You have to cure the deficit problem and make the investments that make sense. Here is an investment that makes sense. For every dollar of EDA investment, you get \$7 in private sector investment. That is what we ought to be doing.

I said this before, I will say it again: For every one job we create, it costs us approximately \$3,000 per job. These are good jobs. It is a smart program for us. That is why it has lasted since the 1960s. I said before, up to 200,000 jobs a year could be created here, 1 million jobs over the life of this bill. What are we doing loading down a beautiful bill such as this with all of these extra-neous amendments?

We will look at a couple more charts. If you want to know how many jobs were created between 2005 and 2010, 450,000 jobs, and 85,000 jobs were saved. So we are not talking about some ethereal idea of a new jobs bill. This is a jobs bill that has worked, and it is a jobs bill that should not be filibustered. It should not be stalled. It should not be loaded up with things that have nothing to do with it while the American people worry and give us an 18-percent approval rating. I am surprised it is that high at the rate we are going.

Look at some of the folks who support this: the United States Conference of Mayors, the American Public Works Association, the National Association of Counties, the AFL-CIO, the Council on Competitiveness, the Association of University Research Parks, the National Association of Development Organizations, the National Business Incubation Association, the State Science and Technology Institute, and an arm of the Chamber of Commerce has come in with a letter.

I ask unanimous consent that this letter be printed in the RECORD.

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

JUNE 7, 2011.

Hon. BARBARA BOXER,
U.S. Senator, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR BOXER: I am writing to share with you the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Business Civic Leadership Center (BCLC)'s positive experience in working with the Economic Development Administration (EDA). BCLC has worked with EDA on numerous projects over the past ten years to help local communities with their economic development, regional sustainability, and disaster recovery initiatives. EDA has served as a valuable partner in many communities that BCLC has worked in including: San Jose, CA, Seattle, WA, Cedar Rapids, IA, Mobile, AL, New Orleans, LA, Atlanta, GA, Boca Raton, FL, Minneapolis, MN, Newark, NJ and many others.

We have worked with EDA on projects including:

Conducting regional forums designed to bring corporate contributions professionals together with economic development experts and civic sector innovators to discuss how businesses' corporate citizenship practices can advance the competitiveness and long-term development of their communities.

Providing opportunities to build up relationships between and among companies and government agencies at the local and national levels.

Developing a report that maps how and why companies invest in communities across the United States.

Writing a report on economic recovery and rebuilding in Cedar Rapids after the flooding in 2008.

Sending economic development teams to cities across the Gulf Coast to provide valuable oil spill recovery resources and information.

Working with local chambers of commerce in disaster affected areas regions to provide local recovery grants.

BCLC is the corporate citizenship arm of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, and in this capacity we work with thousands of businesses and local chambers of commerce on community development and disaster recovery issues across the country. These local chambers and businesses are consistently looking for national best practices, lessons learned, technical assistance, planning and strategy support, and other insights, tools, and techniques to make their communities as economically competitive as possible.

In our experience, EDA staff members have displayed a high degree of professionalism and technical expertise. They have engaged with us on multiple levels, from consultations at the national level, to sharing valuable field experience at the state and local levels.

We have canvassed many businesses and local chambers about their community development needs, and they almost unanimously tell us that some of their highest local priorities include business recruitment and retention, and helping small and medium-sized businesses grow. They also tell us that support for regional economic development planning that transcends municipal boundaries is an increasing area of interest, and that this is a unique capability that EDA can and does support.

As you consider EDA's future roles and responsibilities, we would be happy to share with you our experiences and lessons learned in working with the agency, and to provide

you with additional information upon request.

Sincerely,

STEPHEN JORDAN,
Executive Director,
Business Civic Leadership Center.

Mrs. BOXER. It is a letter from an arm of the Chamber of Commerce. I will tell you, it is rare when you get the AFL-CIO and an arm of the Chamber of Commerce singing from the same book. They do not want to see filibusters. They want to see jobs. They do not want to see filibusters. They want to see progress. They want to see us work across party lines.

So I kept asking during my remarks, why would they do this to us? Why would they do this to the American people? I have an answer. I wish this were not true, but it has been stated by some of the Republican Presidential candidates and it has been stated by the Republican leader here: Their priority is defeating Barack Obama. Their priority is defeating our President. Their priority is not job creation, it is not business creation, it is not fair tax policy, it is defeating this President. When you look at it through that lens, then you say to yourself, wait a minute. If we got something done around here and the President had a signing ceremony—as we used to do in the good old days when we worked together—and he had a Republican here, a Democrat here, and an Independent there, and we all came together as we always have—unanimous consent. We passed this in 2004 by unanimous consent. They are afraid if we did that, the President would take out his pen and he would sign this bill and we would create jobs. I hate to say it, but I am not making it up. That is what they have said. I hope over this weekend when we go home and we meet with our people, and they say, Senators, you have got to do something about jobs, I hope the public will say to us, be we Democrats or Republicans: Do not filibuster jobs bills. We cannot afford to lose more jobs. We need to create jobs.

The EDA bill is a jobs bill. It was created as a jobs bill. It has been a jobs bill since 1965, signed by Presidents, passed by Congress, never loaded down with amendment after amendment that is not germane, that weighs it down. I hope the people at home will pay attention to this.

I will say this: There is a pattern. This is not the first bill. I told you about the small business bill, same thing; FAA bill, sitting over there, no conferees; patent bill, sitting over there, no action. And millions of jobs are at stake.

I just found this out about the small business bill that they killed here a few weeks ago. Each year that bill provides support for 6,000 businesses, and over the lifetime of the program it has provided almost 26,000 awards to firms in California to help them get started. That bill was filibustered to death. I do not get it, except if what I say is true and that is what the motivation is, and

all I can come up with. I have looked into the hearts of my friends and wondered how could they do this. They voted for this bill in committee. Why would they load it up like this and put all of these amendments on it? There is only one reason, to not make progress. And who gets hurt by that? They think the President.

But I have news for them. America is going to wake up, because I am going to be here every day talking about this. I know my colleagues are going to be here talking about it. Jobs, jobs, and jobs. I hope this bill gets cloture and we can move on with it on Tuesday. That would be a wonderful thing, if we do that. That is a change in the atmosphere. Then we can pass this bill and get on with the next jobs bill and pass that bill and get on to the next jobs bill, and the spirits of the people will be lifted. Look, we know government does not create the jobs. The private sector creates most of the jobs. But the beauty of bills such as the SBA bill, that small business bill, is private sector jobs. The beauty of this bill? Private sector jobs. So it would lift the spirits of the people instead of having them watch this, watch me, and think: They will never get together and do anything. Then I will not be shocked if our ratings—the Congress—hit the bottom of the barrel. They are already close. I hope the people will insist on our passing these jobs bills. Things are tough out there. People are unemployed, they are underemployed. Businesses are sitting on mounds of cash. They have learned to be able to be profitable without hiring more people.

Things are shifting. The sands are shifting between the middle class. Thank God this President rescued the auto industry and that we had a majority here to stand with him to do that. Thank goodness we took some of the steps that we took to get banks lending again when credit was frozen. But you know what. Our progress is being stymied because partisanship has taken over the process. Partisanship means when you get bills out of a committee, people who voted for them suddenly disappear. They are nowhere in sight, and they file all of these amendments to bring down the bill.

We can only hope that when we come back next week there will be a change of heart. I certainly hope so. I have been here a long time. I have been in the House 10 years, here a lot of years, since 1993. I have served with Republican Presidents and Democratic Presidents. But I want to say this. I fought hard when election time came. I just had one. It was tough. You know that, Madam President, 2010 was tough. Every time we have elections they are tough. That is the time that politics is in your blood, it is in your veins. You are out there, you are working hard, you are fighting for your life.

But when we are here, we have to do the people's business. And however we feel about who we want to be President, who we admire, who we did not

admire, that ought to be left somewhere else. I hope it will be left somewhere else. I hope that on Tuesday we vote for cloture on this EDA bill. I would hate to see this die. I would hate to see this die. Because when you deal a death blow to the EDA, you deal a death blow to 1 million jobs.

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.

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

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

SECOND OPINION

Mr. BARRASSO. I come to the floor today, as I do each week, as a doctor who practiced medicine in Wyoming for 25 years, as someone who has taken care of families all around the State of Wyoming, as a doctor who has great concerns about what has happened to the American health care system, and will continue to happen under the health care law that has been passed by this body and signed into law at the insistence of this President.

I come as a doctor giving a second opinion, because I have great concerns about this health care law. In talking with patients, in talking with doctors, and from my own personal knowledge, I believe this health care law is going to be bad for patients, bad for providers—the nurses and the doctors who take care of those patients—and bad for the payers, the taxpayers of this country who are going to be left to pay the bill.

Recently my friends on the other side of the aisle have been using what I believe to be significant scare tactics about my party and Medicare.

Medicare is the program for our senior citizens. I believe it is important that the American people receive the truth. They deserve to have the truth about the future of Medicare, not scare tactics.

The fact is, unless Congress takes action, Medicare will go broke in 13 years. Again, in 13 years, Medicare will go broke. Today, more money is going out than is coming in. A bankrupt Medicare equals no Medicare for our seniors. These are people who have paid into Medicare, but a bankrupt Medicare means no Medicare.

If Washington doesn't show leadership now—today, this year—this program will run out of money and Medicare patients will run out of care. Many of my friends on the other side of the aisle continue to ignore the ticking clock and ignore reality.

Let's take a look at some of the reality the other side is ignoring. They are ignoring the fact that the life expectancy in the United States has risen significantly since Medicare was signed into law. When Medicare became law, in 1965, the average life expectancy was about 70. So, on average, you are talk-

ing about people being on Medicare for a certain number of years. Now, with the advances of medicine, the life expectancy is almost 80—the high seventies for men, but the low eighties for women. People are living about 10 years longer now, on average, than at the time Medicare was signed into law in 1965. It is an undeniable fact.

Another fact is that there are about 10,000 new Medicare recipients adding to the rolls every day as the baby boomers turn 65. An entire generation of baby boomers is retiring. The other side seems to ignore the fact that there are far more retirees today than ever before, and they are getting more money paid out of the program than they ever put in. I have townhall meetings and I travel around my State of Wyoming. People say: I paid into Medicare. They are absolutely right. On average, a couple who is retiring this week has paid into Medicare about \$110,000—that is over a lifetime of working. That is significant money they have paid in. What kinds of services will they receive over the remainder of their lifetime, adjusted for today's dollars? It is \$343,000. So you are talking about \$109,000 that they paid into the system, and they are taking out \$343,000.

American seniors know Medicare is in trouble. They understand the math doesn't add up, that this \$3 coming out for every \$1 paid in cannot work forever and ever. My friends on the other side, who attack Republicans for wanting to address this problem in a responsible way, tend to want to ignore this reality.

To make matters worse, Members on the other side actually voted for a health care law that puts Medicare on an even faster track to bankruptcy. In fact, the President's health care law cuts \$500 billion from Medicare—not to save or strengthen or secure Medicare for the next generation. No, they took \$500 billion from our seniors on Medicare to start a whole new government program for someone else. So it was no surprise to me when I read recently that those folks who look at the numbers, who work for the government, say Medicare is going to be broke 5 years sooner than even they had anticipated. It is odd how Democrats never even mention this when they attack Republican plans to save Medicare. Well, when they run advertisements and hold press conferences focused on scare tactics, why don't they ever explain their own \$500 billion cut to Medicare?

It is also odd to me that the Democrats never talk about the other very significant piece of the President's health care law that attacks our seniors on Medicare. Hidden away in the bill is the President's Independent Payment Advisory Board, or IPAB. As a doctor who practiced medicine for 25 years in Casper, WY, I can tell you what this board is. It is a rationing board—a board to ration the health care of our seniors.

Rationing, some may say, is a very strong word. But that is exactly what

it is. The President's health care law puts Medicare on the road to rationing. This health care law creates an unelected, unaccountable board of Washington bureaucrats, who will decide how much Medicare pays for certain Medicare services.

Starting in 2014, after the next Presidential election, members of the board will decide how much they will reimburse hospitals and doctors for taking care of Medicare patients. Then providers all across this country will have to decide whether they can continue to care for American seniors.

Let's face it, even today doctors are running away from taking care of patients on Medicare. According to the American Medical Association, one in three primary care doctors already limits how many Medicare patients they are willing to see. According to the same survey of the American Medical Association, 60 percent of doctors say they are looking for ways to get out of Medicare completely.

Even more providers are going to stop seeing Medicare patients, and this situation will continue to get worse. If you don't believe me, ask seniors in your own community what happens when their doctor retires. Ask somebody on Medicare how easy it is for them to find a doctor to take care of them. If they happen to be with a doctor, and they turn 65, ask if they are allowed to stay with that doctor or if they move to another community to be closer to their children and grandchildren, ask them how difficult it is for those on Medicare to find a doctor. The reason is, of course, because Medicare pays a lot less than the going rate.

Yet, the Democrats' and the President's solution is to pay even a lower amount and continue to ration and ratchet down that amount, resulting significantly in additional rationing of care as our seniors find it harder and harder to find physicians and nurses to take care of them.

The other thing about this rationing board is that it gets worse when you look at the details. It will be practically impossible for this Congress—or any Congress—to overturn the rationing board's recommendations.

Again, to me it seems very odd that my friends on the other side don't talk about this rationing board when they hold their Medicare events. But as NANCY PELOSI said, first you have to pass it before you get to find out what is in it. The American people continue to find out what is in this health care law, and they continue to oppose it. I say to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, if you are so proud of the work you have done on Medicare, then you should stand and defend this rationing board. My colleagues on the other side of the aisle should explain to American seniors how it will work and how it will impact their care. America deserves a thorough and honest debate about the future of Medicare, how we got to this point, and how we can, in a responsible way, strengthen and secure

Medicare for those on Medicare and for the next generation.

I bring this to you today because today a new study came out in the *New England Journal of Medicine*. It has to do not with Medicare—a program for our seniors—but with Medicaid, a program for low-income people—specifically, in many cases, for children. The study from the *New England Journal of Medicine* today talks about how very difficult it is for people—specifically children—on Medicaid to even get an appointment to see a doctor.

During the health care debate over the last year, I have come to the floor continuously and talked about the fact that many physicians refuse to take patients on Medicaid, because the reimbursement from the government is lower than the cost of actually even treating the patient—considering rent, office expenses, and other costs.

This study out today in the *New England Journal of Medicine* talks about researchers in Chicago who called a number of doctors' offices with an identical voice, the same person calling—actually, the same office—a month apart with the same symptoms, whether it was for asthma or different conditions such as diabetes, for the child's care, and the question came: Do you have insurance or are you on Medicaid?

What they found is that for 89 percent of those with insurance, they were able to get an appointment—regular insurance. Of those saying, no, we have Medicaid—and they called hundreds and hundreds of offices and clinics—only one in three was able to get an appointment. Think about that. It is something for our seniors to think about, as well as the President's rationing board. It pays less and less for a visit to a doctor.

We have talked about the fact that Medicare rates, as a result of the \$500 billion cut from Medicare, will be in many places similar to Medicaid rates. So I would assume that at some point soon seniors will have the exact same amount of trouble getting an appointment to see a physician, as the *New England Journal of Medicine* found today, for children on Medicaid.

With that, I say that I will continue to come to the Senate floor week after week with a doctor's second opinion about the health care law, because week after week we see new information, new relevant information about how the impact of this broad, sweeping law, significant changes for the health care of all Americans—how it is, in my opinion, bad for patients, bad for providers, the nurses and doctors who take care of them, and bad for taxpayers.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ETHANOL

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I rise today to speak to the proceedings that just occurred in this body with regard to ethanol and to talk about how I see them from the perspective of my home State of Delaware.

Today, the Senate agreed on a path forward to end Federal subsidies for corn-based ethanol. As Senators, we are often asked to make tough choices, and the bipartisan votes on today's amendments were largely a reflection of where we are from.

For Delaware, agriculture is the single largest part of our economy. We grow a lot of corn, we grow a lot of soybeans, we have companies investing in advanced biofuels, and we have a major poultry industry. Today, I voted for Delaware's poultry growers and for our consumers. Lots of folks across this country in the last few years have lost their jobs, lost their homes, and lost their livelihoods. It is very important to me that the people of Delaware know, on the record, that the vote I cast today to end Federal subsidies for ethanol was about making sure we are supporting our home State poultry industry.

My main concerns are that one of the most important economic engines—not just in Delaware but in the whole Delmarva Peninsula—is the poultry industry. That industry has its back against the wall and is struggling to survive. At a time when many other agricultural industries are seeing record prices—and that is a positive, a boon for them—for the poultry industry, the rising cost of feed is forcing decades-old companies to rethink their business models or, sadly, as in one case just last week for one of the most important and vital poultry companies in Delaware, to shut their doors and go into bankruptcy.

We need to move away from corn-based ethanol and toward homegrown advanced biofuels if we are going to accomplish three goals at the same time. One is to reduce our deficit, to end unwise and unnecessary Federal spending; second is to support and advance and defend our poultry industry, whether in Delmarva or throughout the rest of the country; and third is to continue to make progress toward the future of clean, promising biofuels that are not from grain.

The amendment I just voted for closes the door on corn-based ethanol, but that should not prevent us from finding a path forward to advanced biofuels, those not from grain, whether cellulosic ethanol or drop-in biofuels from algae or otherwise.

Today, I also filed an amendment with Senator CARPER, the senior Senator from Delaware, that makes it clear that as we close the door on corn-based ethanol, we need to do two other things going forward: first, use those billions of dollars in savings to reduce the deficit and, second, redirect funds, formerly committed to VEETC, to support an important but just beginning, a nascent advanced biofuels industry.