

passed tomorrow. That is the first step in the right direction. The State has entered as a partner also. With the State, they will work out power contracts and things of this sort. How important are power prices? How important is the coal and the power that coal produces? Without that, we would be dead in the water.

There is so much promising going on. But when you see a community come together—Governor Earl Ray Tomblin, our friend, worked hard in the legislature. This is not a story we see today in America that much.

In 2009, the plant closed. Over 600 people lost their jobs in a little town of 4,200 people. Now we have a chance to at least get 400 or 500 back on the job. We have not seen that turn around too much. You can imagine why Senator ROCKEFELLER and I are so excited, and I think more than anything we are so proud that we represent a State that has so much resilience. They have stuck together. So our hat is off, from the corporate end to the union end, to the people working together from the community.

I need to say that the President of the Steelworkers Union, Leo Girard, has just been a rock. Leo gets right in there. The Steelworkers stood behind their retirees. They stood behind them. They would not take anything less than the retirees being treated fairly. That brought everybody to the table and gave us the glue it took.

Senator ROCKEFELLER is persuasive, as you know, in his ability to get involved and persuade people to do the right thing, and all of us were behind this effort. It came to fruition. Today, West Virginia is a brighter spot, and Ravenswood is a brighter place. Hopes are up again. The people are enthusiastic, and we can see they have a little skip in their step. That means an awful lot. These are the hardest working people, who don't ask for a whole lot—just an opportunity to take care of themselves and their families.

To Lucy Harbert, Karen Gorrell, Mike Bless, and Leo Girard, Senator ROCKEFELLER, and the entire West Virginia delegation, I think everybody should be extremely pleased. Tomorrow we know it will be a successful vote. We are going to show the country we can compete with anybody in the world. I know the occupant of the chair feels the same way in Maryland, and you have been able to. We will work together on this and start rebuilding America one job at a time. This is 400 jobs at one time.

With that, I say thank you to all of the good people in West Virginia who made this happen. I thank Senator ROCKEFELLER for his leadership over the years. I have been honored to work with him. He has been a tremendous mentor. We will continue to work together for many years.

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

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

#### A SECOND OPINION

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today, as I have for the last 2 years since the health care law was signed by the President, to give a doctor's second opinion about the health care law. I do this week after week because we need to recall that it was NANCY PELOSI, then Speaker of the House, who famously said that Congress had to first pass President Obama's health care bill to find out what was in it.

It has now been 2 years, and we continue to find out more and more what is in the law as people read it. Even this morning the Wall Street Journal had a story about the upcoming 2-year anniversary and, of course, the Supreme Court hearings, which will begin in a little over a week, as to whether this health care law is constitutional. I believe it is not, but there will be 3 days devoted to that discussion. And the Wall Street Journal article today has a poll covering the time period since this health care law was passed all the way through today which reflects that the health care law is still more unpopular than it is popular. More people are opposed to the health care law even 2 years after it was passed than are supportive of it.

Interestingly, other studies of the American populace show that the more people know more about the health care law, the less they are actually likely to support it. And for those people who have talked to a health care provider—a nurse, a doctor, or a therapist—they are even less likely to be supportive of the health care law. The more people learn about the health care law, the more they do not like it.

So much of this specifically relates to the mandate that everyone in the country is going to be obligated to buy a government-approved product. That is the crux of the debate that will be held within the Supreme Court in the weeks ahead and in the decision to come within the next couple of months.

It is interesting to go through the process of how this law was passed: a party-line vote, votes in the middle of the night, closed-door negotiations in spite of the President saying all deliberations and discussions would be on C-SPAN, and the American people saying: No, do not pass this. In spite of the objections of people all across the country, this bill was crammed through the House and the Senate and signed by the President at a time when people said: This isn't going to give us what we want. What we want is the care we need from a doctor we want at a price we can afford.

The President made lots of speeches and lots of promises to let the public

know he was listening to them. But he wasn't listening to the public. He wasn't listening to this side of the aisle. That is why this health care law actually fails patients, it fails providers—the nurses and the doctors who take care of those patients—and it fails the American taxpayers.

I remember the President saying: If you like your plan, you can keep it. And when he was running for the Presidency, he said: You will not have to change plans. He said: For those who have insurance now, nothing will change under the Obama plan except you will pay less. That is what he said. Yet at a townhall meeting in Wyoming—I go home to Wyoming every weekend and visit with people—when I asked a group of 100 citizens how many, under the President's health care plan, believe they are actually going to pay more, every hand went up—every one. The President said the law would save \$2,500 per family. The American people haven't seen that. So they listened to the President's promises, but now they say: I am not sure I can believe what he has to say.

The President talked about protecting Medicare. He did that in an address to Congress in 2009. Yet, with the health care law, they took \$500 billion away from Medicare—not to save it or to strengthen it but to start a whole new government program for other people. So when I talk to seniors, they have great concerns about the way Medicare has been handled in this health care law. Specifically, their concern is that they are not going to be able to find a doctor to take care of them.

First of all, in terms of the health care law, it has failed in helping us have more doctors and nurses and nurse practitioners and physician assistants. But when I talk to doctors at home in Wyoming—and I practiced medicine for 25 years—what I see is offices that are full, and what I hear is that they continue to care for patients they have taken care of for years who are on Medicare, and they continue to care for patients who are currently Medicare age, but in terms of someone who may move to a new town or someone whose doctor may retire, it is getting harder and harder for patients on Medicare to find doctors to take care of them.

A lot of it has to do with the concerns about reimbursement—the so-called doc fix that was part of the debate recently when we extended that with the payroll tax holiday legislation. But there is very little certainty that comes out of Congress, and doctors look at that and say: How can I make decisions about my practice and my life when I don't know if they are going to cut Medicare fees by 27 or 30 percent at the end of the year? They faced a similar situation at the end of last year, and they faced a similar situation at the end of February. So it is not a surprise that doctors are more and more reluctant to accept new

Medicare patients when their offices are already full with patients.

When we look at all of this, we wonder, is it surprising that this health care law is as unpopular as it is?

The President said that this health care law will not add one dime to our deficit. It will add not a dime to our deficit. We had another budget this year, another deficit looking at \$1 trillion. The CBO report came out yesterday talking about more money being spent than had been anticipated—a higher deficit. The President promised. He said: I will not sign a health care plan that adds one dime to our deficits either now or anytime in the future, period. But if you take a look at an honest accounting of the health care law, it is going to find that this will increase the deficit by hundreds of billions of dollars in the first 10 years alone and much higher beyond that.

I remember listening to the debate in 2008—and now here we are, in another Presidential election year—when President Obama, who was then a Senator, a Member of this body, and Hillary Clinton, who was also a Senator and Member of this body, were debating what they saw as the future for health care. At the time candidate Obama opposed a mandate to buy insurance—a mandate which is now part of and which, actually, many call the linchpin of this health care law. It is the very thing that is going to be argued before the Supreme Court and upon which the Court will rule whether it is constitutional. It is at the heart of President Obama's health care law. He opposed it when he was a candidate. He actually made his opposition to the mandate one of the hallmarks of his primary campaign against then-Senator Clinton. So people scratch their heads and say: What is he really for? What does he stand for? When he was a Senator, he claimed that penalizing people for not buying health insurance was like "solving homelessness by mandating everyone buy a house." Those were his words in talking about the impact of a mandate.

So here we are now, 2 years later, and three-quarters of the American people believe it is unconstitutional for this body, for Congress, and for any President to sign something that mandates they buy a government-approved product. We don't know what the Supreme Court will do, but the American people are significantly opposed to the key component of the President's health care law.

The President also said he wouldn't raise taxes. Yet there is a list of taxes that have been raised as a result of this health care law.

So it is not surprising that 2 years later there are more people opposed to the health care law than are supportive. Think about the President and the statements he has made and the statements made on the other side of the aisle in the runup to the health care law, and it is not a surprise that 2 years later people are saying: That is not what happened.

I remember the discussions and the debate on this floor about small businesses and the expenses this would place on our small businesses. The President said that 4 million small businesses may be eligible for tax credits. The key word there, of course, was "may." In fact, the IRS spent \$1 million in taxpayer money to mail millions of postcards to small businesses promoting the so-called tax credit. But the Treasury Department's inspector general—now 2 years later—testified recently that the volume of credit claims has been lower than expected—lower than Democrats promised, lower than the President talked about, but not lower than people who actually read the bill thought would occur because of the requirements and what would need to happen to apply, what the incentives were, and what the consequences were. Out of these promised 4 million small businesses that would get help, the Treasury Department's inspector general says only 309,000 firms have received the credit. That is 7 percent of the 4 million firms the administration and the Democrats in the Senate said would receive the tax credit. So when people look at that, they say: Did they really help me? The answer is no.

That is why, when I ask the second question at a townhall meeting—not the first, which is, Do you think you will end up paying more under the Obama health care law, the one that promised you would pay \$2,500 less, and all the hands go up, that they believe they are going to pay more—the second question is, Do you believe the availability and quality of your care under the Obama health care law is going to go down? And nobody wants that for themselves or their parents or their kids. When I ask, how many of you believe it is going to go down, everyone raises their hand. They all believe they will receive less—less availability, less quality, less timely care than they were able to achieve before the health care law was passed.

So that is why I come to the floor each and every week with a doctor's second opinion about the health care law, because each and every week there is something new that has been found out or a new regulation that comes out because let's not forget that in this very lengthy, very heavy health care law, 1,700 times it says the Secretary of Health and Human Services will write rules and regulations, really describing what the law says.

When they take a very small part of the law, 4 or 6 pages relating to accountable care organizations, and come out with 400 pages of regulations about accountable care organizations, even those places the President holds up as models of where it works well, places such as the Mayo Clinic or the Utah health care system or Geisinger in Pennsylvania, many of those say: We cannot comply with all these rules and regulations that are now coming out from the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Every week, a new series of rules and regulations comes out, a new series of mandates. Doctors and nurses are finding they are spending less time with patients and more time with paper and it is hurting the job creators of the country. They don't know what it is going to cost them, but they know it is going to cost more. The incentives and the consequences within the law are not those that are going to encourage businesses to continue to provide health insurance. I believe it is going to result in more and more people being dumped by their employers onto a different system, with significant expense to taxpayers around the country.

That is why I come to the floor, week after week, to talk about this health care law and say it is bad for patients, it is bad for the providers—the nurses and doctors who take care of those patients—and it is going to be terrible for taxpayers. That is why I believe we need to repeal and replace this terrible, broken health care law with something that is actually patient centered, which puts the patient at the center of the discussion. It is not government centered, it is not insurance company centered but patient centered.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MERKLEY). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business.

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

#### JUMPSTART OUR BUSINESS STARTUPS ACT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, there is a bill that passed the House of Representatives with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. Its supporters have characterized it as a jobs bill. It is a bill which, frankly, changes many laws and comes over to the Senate. The minority leader, the Republican leader, has been on the Senate floor almost every single day urging us to take up this bill as quickly as possible and to pass it because of the impact it might have on employment across America.

I might say for the record, I believe the bill we passed today, the Transportation bill, is the true jobs bill—2.8 million jobs across America. I will tell you, the House bill will not even get close to that on a good day. Our bill will save and create millions of jobs. It will build an infrastructure for our economy for years to come, and it passed with an overwhelming bipartisan vote. Over 70 Members of the Senate, Democrats and Republicans, voted for this bill. An extraordinary effort by