

First, some basic facts. According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the affordable care act will reduce the deficit over the next 10 years by over \$200 billion; then, another \$1 trillion in the second decade. This is an important measure to reduce health care costs, reduce government outlays, and reduce the deficit. So the decision of the Court will have an impact on that particular element.

The law does a number of specific things to reduce health care costs while saving lives. Because of the affordable care act, preventive services for many Americans are now free. In my home State of Illinois, last year 1.3 million people on Medicare—that is about 10 percent of our population—and 2.4 million people with private health insurance received preventive care at no cost. This is important, because preventive services such as mammograms and cholesterol screenings can help lower costs, prevent illness, and save lives. On the subject of prevention, the law provides help for States with their prevention programs—programs, for example, that try to discourage kids from smoking; programs that detect and treat diabetes at an early stage; heart disease, arthritis, and so many other areas that can be treated successfully if there are preventive efforts.

Another reason this law is important is because of lifetime limits. Before this law was enacted, insurance companies routinely told families: Sorry, you hit your limit. We are not going to pay for any more of your chemotherapy or your premature baby's illness. People did not know there was a limit until it was too late. The law changed that.

Because of this law, 4.6 million people in my State, Illinois—4.6 million—got the care they needed last year without having to worry about the insurance companies cutting them off, saying they reached their limit.

In these tough economic times many young adults are having trouble finding work. Another thing this bill did was to extend the coverage of family health insurance to cover those through the age of 25. Because of the affordable care act, parents can keep their kids under their policy until the young people reach the age of 26. Across the country 2.5 million young adults, including 102,000 in my State of Illinois, have been able to stay on their parents' insurance plan.

The law also requires companies to spend more of their money on actual health care. One might think that is obvious, but it turns out it is not. The law says insurance companies have to spend at least 85 percent of their premiums on health care rather than spend it on advertising, overhead, or executive compensation.

Mr. President, \$61 million has been returned in my State to over 300,000 people in the form of rebates because of this "medical loss ratio"—85 percent to be spent on health care. That is money that flows back to families and individuals and businesses.

The affordable care act has had a profound impact on seniors and those living with disabilities. Because of this law, seniors and those living with disabilities on the Medicare Program in Illinois have saved more than \$155 million on prescription drugs. Seniors taking their medicine as they are supposed to are likely to stay healthy longer and be less of a cost to the system and lead more independent and stronger lives.

We have talked and talked in this Senate about how we need to help seniors afford to buy prescription drugs. We know this bill that will be decided by the Supreme Court tomorrow has been closing the doughnut hole that was created by Medicare Part D. When we passed the affordable care act, we did something about it.

Illinois seniors saved \$155 million because the affordable care act was signed into law. By 2020—if the Supreme Court does not strike this law or this provision—the doughnut hole will be fully closed and seniors will not have to worry anymore about that gap in coverage that eats into their savings.

I have been working for years to help small businesses find ways to afford health care for their employees. I introduced a bill in 2009 with the help of the small business community and the insurance industry that would allow small businesses to work together in a health care exchange. The affordable care act built on that principle and improved it dramatically.

The new health care law provides a tax break for small businesses that are doing the right thing and buying health insurance for their employees. So far, across the country, more than 228,000 businesses have taken advantage of this new tax credit and saved \$278 million.

For those who say the affordable care act really has not helped small business, here is proof otherwise.

Another 30 million people who have no health care coverage today will be covered when the affordable care act is implemented. By 2019, 15 million of those will be able to participate in Medicaid, and the States will not be left on the hook. The affordable care act provides help to the States for the first several years.

The affordable care act provides much needed assistance to community health centers—centers such as the Erie Family Health Center in Chicago. In fact, because of a \$650,000 grant from the Department of Health and Human Services, Erie is going to open a new health center in Evanston—one that is desperately needed.

So these are but a few of the reasons the Supreme Court, I hope, will uphold this law to continue to help move us toward a day when the rate of growth in the cost of health care is brought under control. We have a long way to go, but this bill is a step forward. For those who have campaigned from one side of America to the other, saying they would eliminate the affordable

care act, which they derisively call ObamaCare, let me tell them: There are real people in Illinois and across the Nation who have benefited from this act and will in the future.

Now is the time for us to work together to improve the act where it needs improvement but to use it as the basis for building a future of security and quality health care for all Americans.

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

INTENTION TO OBJECT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I intend to object to proceeding to the nominations of Mark J. Mazur, to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and Matthew S. Rutherford to be an Assistant Secretary of the Treasury.

My support for the final confirmation of these nominees will depend on both Treasury and Internal Revenue Service responses to questions I have posed regarding their implementation of the tax whistleblower program. I rewrote the statute in 2006 to encourage whistleblowing on big-dollar tax cheats. However, nearly six years since those changes were enacted, Treasury has yet to issue much needed regulations and IRS has paid less than a half dozen awards under the new program.

I have sent several letters to Secretary Geithner and Commissioner Shulman to get to the bottom of this. Our staffs have been meeting, including most recently on June 26, 2012. I understand that Secretary Geithner and Commissioner Shulman intend to provide written responses to my questions. Until I receive those responses, I will object to proceeding with the nominations of Mr. Rutherford and Dr. Mazur.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, I fully support the passage of S. 3187, the Food and Drug Administration, FDA, Safety and Innovation Act. This important piece of legislation reauthorizes and establishes important user fee agreements for drugs, devices, generic drugs and biosimilar biological products. Furthermore, the bill improves the medical device approval process and modernizes FDA's global drug supply chain authority to ensure that the drug manufacturing process is safer.

The legislation also contains provisions to incentivize development of pediatric drugs and devices, spur innovation of new drug therapies for life-threatening medical conditions, mitigate drug shortages, and improve agency accountability and transparency in the drug and device approval process.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, I was necessarily absent from the Senate and, therefore, unable to cast my vote in support of this bill.

TRIBUTE TO MONTFORD POINT MARINES

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. President, it is my privilege to honor the Montford Point Marines, who today will be collectively decorated with the Congressional Gold Medal.

The Montford Point Marines served our country bravely during World War II, despite being segregated from their fellow servicemembers. In 1942, President Roosevelt directed that African Americans be recruited into the Marine Corps. These men were not sent to the traditional Marine recruit depots of Parris Island or San Diego. Instead, they were segregated and trained at Montford Point in Camp Lejeune, NC. Collectively, these Marines—who became known as the “Montford Point Marines”—served in the Pacific Theater as part of the 51st and 52nd Marine Defense Battalions, and with various Depot and Ammunition Companies.

The Defense Battalions saw action against surviving Japanese troops on the captured island of Guam, while the Depot and Ammunition Companies participated in the fighting at Saipan, Tinian, Guam, Peleliu, Iwo Jima, and Okinawa. Their jobs consisted of loading and unloading supplies, resupplying frontline units, and evacuating the dead and wounded—sometimes under heavy enemy fire. All together, the Depot and Ammunition Companies suffered seven killed and 78 wounded. Of the nearly 20,000 African-American Marines in World War II, about 13,000 served overseas. In July 1948, President Harry S. Truman issued his executive order ending military segregation. In September 1949, Montford Marine Camp was deactivated, ending 7 years of segregation.

The commitment and sacrifice of African-American servicemembers during World War II is embodied in the lives of two cousins, Howard and Kenneth Tibbs. Howard served this Nation as one of the Tuskegee Airmen. I had the privilege of honoring him in 2007 when the Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to the Tuskegee Airmen. Today, I am able to honor his cousin, Kenneth Tibbs, who served as a Montford Point Marine. Kenneth was born on May 30, 1925, in Lancaster, OH, and served from 1943 to 1944 as part of the 20th Marine Depot Company. Ultimately, PFC Kenneth Tibbs was killed in action during the invasion of Saipan. He was his unit's only fatality.

Private Tibbs and all of the Montford Point Marines exemplified the qualities for which the Montford Point Marines are so admired. Our Nation is indebted to him and his fellow Marines for their sacrifice. Not only did they contribute to the America's victory in the Pacific, but they did so within a highly segregated military. Many went

on to serve in Korea and Vietnam, alongside their white counterparts. Montford Point Marine Edgar Huff became the first African-American in the United States Marine Corps to be promoted to the rank of Sergeant Major. His brother-in-law, Gilbert “Hashmark” Johnson, also served at Montford Point and earned the rank of Sergeant Major. Today, Montford Point's Camp Johnson at Camp Lejeune is named after him. I am proud to have been an original cosponsor of the 2006 House Resolution 80 to honor these Marines, and it is my privilege to recount their legacy today in the United States Senate.

I proudly celebrate the life and sacrifice of PFC Kenneth J. Tibbs, and all Montford Point Marines, on the occasion of this award of the Congressional Gold Medal.

MORRILL ACT 150TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, this year marks the 150 anniversary of the Morrill Act of 1862, which led to the creation of our Nation's land-grant universities. In 1862, there were only six engineering or agricultural colleges in the entire United States. By 1880, there were 85, and by 1917 the total number had grown to 126. Two outstanding universities from Virginia are the beneficiaries of this legislation and carry on important traditions as land-grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State University.

Founded in 1872 as an agricultural and mechanical land-grant college, Virginia Tech is the oldest land-grant college in the Commonwealth. Today, the school has the largest full-time student population in Virginia and the largest number of degree offerings of any Virginia university. As a leading research institution, Virginia Tech prepares its students to make an impact in the fields of technology and agriculture, among many others. Virginia Tech graduates have a positive impact everyday on the Commonwealth and on our country.

Virginia State University, founded in 1882, is the country's first fully State-supported 4-year historically black college and also a Virginia land-grant institution. Throughout the school's history, it has enriched the lives of its students and faculty as well as its surrounding community and indeed the entire Commonwealth. Virginia State University's leadership in providing an expansive academic program, a variety of student organizations, and a devotion to community service makes the school a model for historically black colleges across the nation.

Both of these superb academic institutions demonstrate exceptional leadership in the agricultural and mechanical arts in line with the original intent of the Morrill Act. As we remember the creation of this landmark legislation, Virginia Tech and Virginia State University stand as shining ex-

amples of its continued legacy. I am pleased to join my colleagues in celebrating the sesquicentennial of the Morrill Act.

TRIBUTE TO POET LAUREATE NATASHA TRETHEWEY

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I rise today to commend the accomplishments of an extraordinary Mississippian. Natasha Trethewey, a native of Gulfport, Mississippi, has been named the United States Poet Laureate. I join my fellow Mississippians and fellow Americans in celebrating Ms. Trethewey, a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet, for receiving our country's highest distinction in the field of poetry.

This honor is the first of its kind for my State, but literary excellence is not new to Mississippi. Our great State has a rich literary history because of Mississippians like William Faulkner, Eudora Welty, and Tennessee Williams, who have paved the way for Ms. Trethewey's success in literature.

At the young age of 46, Ms. Trethewey has proven herself to be a talented and accomplished American writer. A prolific artist, she explored the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in her nonfiction work, “Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast.”

Our incoming Poet Laureate has captured the hearts and minds of her colleagues and peers, earning her a fan base across our State and Nation. Librarian of Congress James Billington is among those captivated by Ms. Trethewey's brilliance. In 2004, at the National Book Festival, Dr. Billington described Ms. Trethewey as an American who is “absolutely unique.” Today, I am proud to repeat Dr. Billington's praise for this gifted Mississippian.

Natasha Trethewey is not only a leader in her field but also a teacher for this Nation's future leaders. She is a professor and Phillis Wheatley Distinguished Chair in Poetry at Emory University and is the Louis D. Rubin Writer-in-Residence for 2012 at Hollins University. She received her Pulitzer Prize in Poetry in 2007 for her 2006 work, *Native Guard*. In the past year, Ms. Trethewey was named the Poet Laureate of Mississippi, an esteemed position my State is proud for her to hold.

Mr. President, I have the highest admiration for this accomplished poet, author, and Mississippian. I know that my fellow Mississippians share this pride in Ms. Trethewey's work and national recognition. I am honored to congratulate Natasha Trethewey on her appointment as the 2012 United States Poet Laureate.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO L.L.BEAN

• Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, today I wish to congratulate the men and