

\$4,200 in additional out-of-pocket prescription costs—a huge transfer of wealth from America's seniors to the big drug companies.

Repealing the Affordable Care Act would not just harm seniors, it would also mean that insurance plans would no longer have to cover young adults up to age 26 on their parents' plans. This moves over 3 million young Americans—just getting out of college, still looking for that first job that has health insurance coverage—back on to the rolls of the uninsured.

The radical Ryan budget would also hurt young people by slashing Pell grants, making college less affordable. Students and graduates are already struggling to pay a record trillion dollars that Americans now owe in outstanding student loans, and the Ryan plan would force students to take on even greater debt burdens.

On top of these specific cuts, the Ryan budget takes an additional \$1 trillion in unspecified discretionary spending cuts. Domestic discretionary funding is the money that is used to keep the government operating each year—FBI agents investigating cases, Border Patrol agents working our borders, doctors and nurses treating veterans at the VA, employees mailing out Social Security checks, and many other important programs and functions.

It is already at its lowest level as a share of GDP since the 1950s. It is hard to imagine any Federal investment—whether it is education or housing or highways or law enforcement, you name it—not being jeopardized by such Draconian cuts.

That is why President Reagan's—President Reagan's—former economic adviser said about this Ryan budget plan:

The Ryan plan is a monstrosity.

Ronald Reagan's economic advisor said: "The Ryan plan is a monstrosity."

The rich would receive huge tax cuts while the social safety net would be shredded to pay for it. . . . It is less of a wish list than a fairy tale utterly disconnected from the real world, backed up by make-believe numbers and unreasonable assumptions.

If that is what Ronald Reagan's economic advisor thought about it, think what regular people might think about it.

Ryan's plan isn't even an act of courage; it's just pandering to the Tea Party.

But that is what is being held hostage on this sequester.

I hope when the election season is over, no matter who wins, that Republicans will work with us—without insisting on a monstrosity, without insisting on the end of Medicare—on a balanced and reasonable plan to reduce the deficit. With a record national debt, now is no time for more tax giveaways to billionaires, as Mr. RYAN proposes, but, rather, it is the time to ensure an America where everyone gets a fair shot, everyone pitches in their fair share, and we go forward as a country

together, as we always have in our best days.

I thank the Chair and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Washington is recognized.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I caught some of the dog-and-pony show that Republicans put on this morning on the floor of the Senate, and I thought it was pretty indicative of their approach to this entire Congress—all politics, no participation. Someone must have reminded them this morning that they are 47 days away from an election and that for the last 624 days of this Congress, they have done nothing but say no.

But I am here to say that an hour of speeches on the Senate floor cannot erase an entire Congress of obstruction. In fact, the Republicans' show this morning reminded me of a move I have seen many times before as a former preschool teacher and as a mom who has watched a lot of kids go through school. It reminded me how on the very last day of school before summer there was always one student who had not done their homework all year long, and on that last day they showed up on their best behavior, homework in hand, hoping to leave a good impression. They thought maybe this last-ditch effort could help them avoid a bad grade.

Unfortunately, it does not work that way.

So let me assure Republicans of one thing: Their record of obstruction and their refusal to compromise will not go away at the eleventh hour. One-minute speeches on the day before they go to face voters cannot paper over 100 filibusters. It will not change the fact that almost 2 years ago the Senate minority leader revealed that his No. 1 priority was—not working to get Americans back to work, it was not bringing our economy back from the brink, it was not ensuring that America remained a leader at home and abroad, no—to defeat President Obama, it was playing politics, just as we saw this morning.

There has been, seemingly, no group of Americans—well, with the exception of millionaires and billionaires—who have been spared in the Republicans' efforts to achieve their goals—not our teachers, not our college students, not our farmers, not construction workers, not first responders, not even our Nation's veterans have been spared their efforts to destroy the work of this Congress.

There was no better example of that than yesterday here on the floor of the U.S. Senate. The Veterans Jobs Corps bill that we brought to the floor included 12 provisions to help veterans find jobs.

Eight of them. Let me repeat that. Eight of those provisions were Republican ideas. This bill was fully paid for. It was based on existing grant programs that are putting Americans to

work. It would have allowed the veterans to serve their communities. It would have given unemployed veterans the self-esteem that a job provides. It would have allowed them to support their families and help ease that transition back home.

That bill came at a time when one in four young veterans today is out of work. It came at a time when our military and veteran suicide rates are outpacing combat deaths and when more and more, as we all know, veterans are coming home today. The American Legion supported it. The Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America supported it. The problem was, it seemed, President Obama supported it. So we know from everything we have seen and attempted on the Senate floor, no matter how good or bad of an idea, no matter which struggling American would benefit, it seems that if the President supports it, you can pretty much guarantee Senate Republicans will not.

That is the legacy the Senate Republicans are going to take home to voters, the legacy that when middle-class American families needed their help the most, they refused to compromise to get things done; that when Americans were hurting, they put politics before people; that they set a goal of not participating, and they followed through on that at every single turn. No amount of snappy speeches is going to change that. No last-minute appeals for leniency will change that record.

In fact, it is ironic that this morning all of the Republican Senators showed up on the floor because for the last 2 years, when the American people have needed them the most, they have been absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. RUBIO. Mr. President, I come to the floor of the Senate to talk briefly about an amendment on which we may or may not get a vote. It is an amendment by my colleague, Senator PAUL. It really is directly related to the issues that have happened around the world in the last week and a half. We certainly watched in horror as our Ambassador, a fantastic and honorable American, along with three of his colleagues in the American consulate in Benghazi, was murdered last week. So I wanted to talk briefly about that because it really is an important moment in our foreign policy in the region.

Let me begin by expressing our deep condolences for that loss. All the members of the families of those folks who have died over there, our hearts are with them, our prayers are with them. We thank them for their brave service to our country and to the cause of freedom.

We have the right to be angry. The American people are angry and rightfully so. For years we have been investing our taxpayer dollars in aid to that region, and yet we turn on the television and we see these protests

against us. On one hand, every single year we send billions of dollars and hundreds of millions of dollars to help people in the region. We help them to stand and fight for themselves, to get rid of dictators. Then we turn on the television and we see people attacking our embassies or burning images of our President and burning our flag and chanting anti-American slogans. So the American people are both confused and angry. How can this be happening? But I think it is important for us that while we have the right to be angry, we should still remain smart in our foreign policy.

What I would like to talk about today is what it means to have a smart foreign policy, a pro-American foreign policy in that region of the world given these factors we are facing.

The amendment on which Senator PAUL is asking for a vote would condition foreign aid to three particular countries. Let me begin my conversation by saying that this is a complicated issue, and not all these countries are the same. Let me contrast two of them, for example.

Let's talk about Egypt for a moment. Now, of course, the Egyptian people got rid of a dictator. They had an election. It was a very close election that was won by the current President, Mursi, who comes from the Muslim Brotherhood. But Egypt has a well-organized security apparatus, a well-organized and well-funded security apparatus. Egypt has the capability to conduct counterterrorism in Egypt. Egypt has the capability, they have the people and the resources to protect our Embassy in Egypt. They have no excuse for not doing that, if they fail to do that, because they are able to do it.

What was really troubling to me about Egypt, however, was that President Mursi, rather than immediately condemning the attack against the United States and the murder of our Ambassador, his first reaction was to condemn a YouTube video. That is what we are talking about here—a YouTube video. Anybody can make a YouTube video.

Now, there is a belief, by the way, in the Muslim world that because in their countries, if you produce a YouTube video or any movie, for that matter, your government had to approve it—they think, well then in America, your government must have approved it as well. But that is not true, and their leaders know better. The leaders of these countries know better. Some of these leaders in the Egyptian Government were educated in this country. They know full well that anyone can make a YouTube video. But instead of standing and explaining that to their people, they go along with this stuff. They say one thing in Arabic to their people and another thing to the rest of the world in English.

There is a long pattern of double-playing behavior that we should not stand for and should not tolerate. It is, in my mind, unacceptable that a full 2

days went by before the Egyptian Government clearly condemned the attack on Benghazi and clearly condemned these actions against America.

Contrast that with Libya for a moment. Libya had an election as well where two-thirds of the Libyan people rejected the Islamists and they elected pro-Western, pro-modern, pro-progress leaders to their government. But, unlike Egypt, Libya does not have the ability to protect our consulate as well. They did not inherit from Qadhafi a well-organized security apparatus. In fact, it was one of the reasons why I argued for a more forceful American engagement in Libya. I did not want the conflict to last that long. That protracted and long conflict in Libya—what it did is it created more time and more space for these independent militias—these are literally independent gangs who got their hands on weapons and fought in this revolution against Qadhafi, but now the central government cannot get these groups to give up their arms because to do so would be to give up their power. That is why having this go on for as long as it did is a terrible idea. The fact is, though, the Libyans do not even have control over large portions of the country. There are entire areas of Libya that the government does not control.

There is an increasing body of evidence that shows that what happened in Benghazi was not an anti-American protest, it was not as a result of a YouTube video; it was an orchestrated anti-American terrorist attack by terrorists—not by Libya, not by Libyans, by terrorists.

In addition to evidence that this was a terrorist attack, not a Libyan anti-American uprising, look at the reaction in Libya since the attack. I wish the media in the United States would give more coverage to the Libyans in the streets protesting the terrorists, holding up signs apologizing.

Our Ambassador in Benghazi was loved by the Libyan people, especially the people of Benghazi, who credited him for saving their lives when Muammar Qadhafi's troops were on the outskirts of the city about to massacre them. I wish more attention were paid to that. I wish more attention were paid to the ceremonies that are happening today in Tripoli honoring—our Under Secretary William Burns is there honoring the service of Ambassador Stevens. The demonstrations in Benghazi are going to occur tomorrow honoring him as well.

I am not saying everyone in Libya is pro-American. I am saying we have a government in Libya that is trying to do the right thing. There is open source reporting in the press today. Fifty American FBI agents are there now investigating this. Those are the actions of a cooperative government. They are trying to help us, but they just do not have the resources to do it well. Cutting off aid to them does not make sense to me.

On the one hand, we are demanding that they protect our embassies. They

are saying: We want to, but we do not have the resources to do it. On the other hand, we are threatening to take away their resources.

So not all these countries are the same.

There are a lot of misconceptions floating around out there. I have heard some people say: You know what, maybe we were better off with dictators in the Middle East because they could maintain order. Let me tell you, that is a false choice. Here is why. These dictators were no friends of America.

Let me give you an example of Egypt, where people now say: Well, this stuff did not happen when Mubarak was there. No, it happened but in a different way. Let me tell you about the deal Mubarak and other dictatorial leaders in the region cut with extremists. Here is the deal they cut with extremists: As long as you do not do anything against us, you can do anything you want anywhere in the world. Conduct all the terrorism you want. Attack Americans. Blow up a train in Spain. Do whatever you want, just do not do it here. Do it in your country. If you do it in our country, we will cut your head off. If you do it somewhere else, that is not our business.

That is the deal these dictators cut with extremists.

It was not a coincidence that there were Egyptians involved in the 9/11 plot. These were not Egyptians who came from poor families; they came from prominent and distinguished families in Egypt, which leads me to the second point. These dictators allow anti-Americanism, because—imagine if you lived in a dictatorial country—you are not allowed to protest the government. You are not allowed to protest your leaders. There are only two things you are allowed to protest—America and Israel. So that is what everybody does. It is almost a relief valve for frustration. Then they have a state-controlled media that feeds into anti-Americanism. Do you know that there were media outlets in Egypt under Mubarak and even now that tell the people in Egypt that in America denying the Holocaust is a crime? Denying the Holocaust is dumb, it is outrageous, but it is not a crime in America. Yet they spread these lies, these anti-American lies through the region. Of course there are people in the region who hate us because our so-called dictatorial friends and allies have allowed anti-Americanism to grow and be fostered because it has helped them hold on to the power.

So these dictators are not good for the region, not good for America. And the choice should not be between dictators and democracy. The second fallacy is, well, we will just have an election and everything will be better. That is not true either. Democracies can elect people who do not like us too. So this is not an easy issue to confront, but disengaging from the region is not the solution.

Now, I do not have a magic solution. I have only been here in the Senate for about a year and a half, so these are issues I am engaging in for the first time over the last year, but here are my opinions given what I have learned in the first 2 years I have been here, some points I would like to make.

The first is that we should expect more. We should expect more from leaders in the region. We should expect Mursi and the Muslim Brotherhood and others to stand up to people and say: Look, we understand you are upset about this video, but you do not have the right to burn down an embassy. By the way, in America the government does not control these videos. Anyone can make a YouTube video. They are a free society.

No. 2, we should expect them to say the same things in Arabic as they are saying in English. Do not express condolences and outrage in English on the attack against America but in Arabic completely ignore it and only talk about the YouTube video.

We should expect more from them. They want a true partnership. They want American and Western aid. They want tourists to return. They want economic interchange between our two countries. We should expect more from them.

Here is the second point. This stuff is not happening because of a video, because people are upset. You know what, let me explain something to you. For radical Islam, our entire culture is offensive. They are not just offended about a YouTube video. They are offended that women serve in the Senate. They are offended that women drive. They are offended that little girls get to go to school. In some of these countries, converting to Christianity is punishable by death. So our whole culture is offensive to them, not just a YouTube video.

Here is the third point we have to accept. This is a critical moment not just for America, this is a critical moment for the Muslim world, where they have to decide what kind of future they want for themselves. Is this the future they want, a future isolated from the world, a future isolated from the promises of the 21st century, or do they want a different future? I know there are millions of people in the Muslim world who do not want this future, but they are afraid to speak up. They are intimidated from speaking up because of these radical forces that need to be defeated.

This brings me to my last point. We need to be very clear. We will support those who want a better future, like we should have supported the Green Revolution in Iran when brave young Iranians took to the streets to protest a fraudulent election, and instead of taking their side, the President disengaged and said nothing. We will support those who want a new future and a better future for their region. We are not asking them to abandon their religion or their beliefs, but they have to respect ours.

We are not asking them to walk away from the Koran, but they have to respect our beliefs and tolerate our beliefs as well. We will support those who are willing to do that. We want to work with them. It benefits no one to have violence and destruction in the region. But we also have to accept the hard cold fact that there are people, there are radical Islamists in that part of the world with whom you can never and will never be able to reason. They are never going to change their minds. They are never going to come around. They are never going to one day all of a sudden change their behavior because we engaged them more, because we give more speeches at their universities. They are radical Islamists, violent people. It is a very clear choice: Either they win or we win. And the sooner we accept that, the better off we are going to be.

So we have to accept that on the one hand there are millions of people in that region who want a new and better future. We will side with them. We will support their aspirations. We will work with their hopes for civilian leadership and peace and economic prosperity. But for those who are radical Islamists, whose view is they want to conquer and bring under their control everyone who is not who they are, we have to defeat them. I wish it weren't the case, but it is. And the sooner we accept that, the clearer our policies are going to be.

So this is not just a critical moment for America in our foreign policy; this is a critical moment for them as well, for they are going to have to decide. If Egypt truly wants a better future for their people, one where their economy is growing and prosperous and young people can fulfill their aspirations, they are going to have to unequivocally reject this type of stuff or they will be trapped in the 18th century forever.

In Libya, they are trying to cooperate with us. They are allowing us to move forward. We should work with them and strengthen them, not abandon them.

And I didn't mention Pakistan, but that is important too. Let me just say that I think it is outrageous that doctor is being held there. I believe every charge against him is trumped up, and I think we should demand—I think it is right to condition some, if not all, of our foreign aid and cooperation with Pakistan on his status and on his release. So I hope Senator PAUL and those who support his amendment will consider, at a minimum, restructuring that amendment to recognize there is a difference between Libya and Egypt and that we should take different approaches in that regard; that we have a right to be outraged; that we have a right to be angry, but we should never abandon being smart.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 15 minutes as in morning business.

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

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

CORPORAL DARRION TERRELL HICKS, PETTY OFFICER SECOND CLASS SEAN E. BRAZAS, LANCE CORPORAL CHRISTOPHER PHOENIX JACOB LEVY

Mrs. HAGAN. Mr. President, 11 years have now passed since the attacks of September 11, that horrific day that forever changed the world. Although we have killed Osama bin Laden, the fight against the al-Qaida militants is not over. Al-Qaida remains a threat to America, and the brave men and women of our Armed Forces are still fighting every day to protect our way of life.

Mr. President, I want us to honor and think about these men and women. There are over 77,000 U.S. servicemembers deployed in Afghanistan right now who remain in harm's way. These men and women willingly joined the military during a time of war. They want nothing more than to serve our country. They fight for our way of life so we don't have to and so that our children and grandchildren will not have to.

I am going to highlight three servicemen from North Carolina who have made the ultimate sacrifice. I have personally spoken with their families, and I want to share their great love of country with you because it is so important that all Americans understand our military and their families who sacrifice so much for all of us.

From my home State of North Carolina alone there are more than 6,000 of our finest sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, moms and dads deployed in Afghanistan. They are the men and women of the II Marine Expeditionary Force, 2nd Marine Division, 2nd Marine Aircraft Wing, and 2nd Marine Logistics Group from Camp Lejeune and Cherry Point. They are the men and women of the 82nd Airborne Division from Fort Bragg. They are the men and women from the National Guard and Reserve Units from North Carolina. And they are the thousands of other soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines deployed to foreign lands to stand watch over the world and keep us safe.

Sometimes I feel as if the war is hardly an issue in the news, in daily life, anywhere, except for those who are personally affected by it. Our focus is too often drawn to the news of the elections, of the economy, of politics, of celebrities, of scandals, of the rich and famous, and of the simply bizarre. We do not hear enough about the brave souls who have lost their lives while trying to make the world safer for the rest of us, who willingly joined the military during a time of war, who want to serve our country.

We all need to pay respect, to honor, and to remember the very men and women whose commitment, dedication, and courage are what make our country safe and to respect and remember the families they left behind.

As we scale down our presence in Afghanistan and bring our service men