

By the way, at a moment when these people are saying they are shutting the government down, mostly because of the health care bill but also because of their concern about a growing government and widening deficits, the immigration bill reduces the deficit by \$900 billion over a 20-year period. That is real money even in Washington, DC. They could be passing that bill over there. Instead, the government is shut down, and it has been a catastrophic failure of leadership that has brought us to this place.

I have absolutely no doubt, from all the press reports I have read and what I hear from my Republican colleagues in the Senate, my friends in the Senate who are Republicans, that if Speaker BOEHNER put on the floor of the House the Senate version of the so-called continuing resolution, it would pass with a broad majority of Democrats and Republicans, and the American people would cheer because that is what they want. They want us working together. And the standard of success needs to be something greater than that we kept the lights on, which in this instance we haven't. We haven't even done that. What is the signal we are trying to send to this complicated world in which we live by shutting this government down? Why is it that people here get away with things that no local elected official would ever get away with?

So we have to continue to fight to get this government open. We are going to have another fight to make sure that, for the first time in the United States, we don't fail to pay our bills and blow up the full faith and credit of the United States—which is one of our most important assets, right up there with the rule of law, right up there with our capitalist economy. From our founding, the full faith and credit of the United States has been a bulwark for us.

But once we get past that, what we need to fight for is the next generation of Americans. That is why we have been sent here. Whether we are Democrats or Republicans, that is why we are here. And they are waiting to see whether we are willing to be the first generation of American leadership to provide less opportunity—not more—to the people that are coming after us.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HEINRICH). The Senator from Connecticut.

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the period of morning business for debate only be extended to 5 p.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, the Founding Fathers set up a system of government which intentionally made social change in this country hard to achieve. They set up a pretty complicated legislative process with an innovative bicameral legislature in which you have to get the exact same bill with the exact same text passed through two different Chambers. They set up courts that could overturn those laws if they didn't abide by the Constitution. They set up an office down the street in the White House with a veto power that could cancel out actions of the majoritarian legislature. Then they built in pretty frequent elections so that if people didn't like what happened here, they could change the composition of the legislature to try to get something different to happen. So I imagine that is why it took 100 years since Teddy Roosevelt first proposed that this country make a commitment to universal health care that we actually got here. All the while, we watched as every other industrialized nation in the world decided that the compassionate thing to do was to make sure people didn't die because they didn't have enough money to get into the health care system, and they committed themselves to universal health care while the United States sat on the sideline.

What happened is a couple years ago when, after 100 years of debate and consternation and gridlock, we finally made a decision as a nation to move forward with a health care reform bill that finally puts us on the road to guaranteeing that everybody in this country at least gets some basic access to health care, no matter how much money you have in your wallet or pocketbook. What happened is the system was literally crashing down around us. We finally woke up to the reality that we were paying twice as much for health care as any other country in the world and getting so much less—not only in that there were tens of millions of people who were sitting on the sidelines, but also in that the outcomes we were getting weren't good enough for the amount of money we were paying.

Finally the American public sent Members of the House of Representatives to make a change. They elected Senators determined to make a change. They elected a President who campaigned on making a change. So in 2010, we overcame the barriers that had been set up by the Founding Fathers to major social change. Both Congresses passed that health care law. Two years later, it was upheld by the Supreme Court as constitutional. Later that

year, in 2012, President Obama ran on his support of the law and his promise to implement it and was elected by a wide margin. I would note, every single Senator here who voted for it and stood for election got returned to the Senate.

But despite all of this—despite the fact that after 100 years of debate, the democratic process produced a health care reform bill that expands coverage to millions of Americans and lowers the cost of insurance for them, despite the fact that it withstood all of the challenges that can come to a major reform like that—including a constitutional challenge, including the question being put to the electorate again after the law was passed in 2010 and 2012—despite all that, Republicans have been coming to the floor of the Senate and the floor of the House saying we have got to shut down the government because the people don't want this health care law to be implemented.

And that is why they are doing this right now—because they know this is their last chance to try to get this law repealed. This law, which has already saved millions of seniors money, which right now as we speak is saving families thousands of dollars as they sign up for these exchanges, they know this is their last chance to get this bill repealed because it is about to go into effect, and all of their ridiculous arguments about how the sky is going to fall once this reform is implemented will be proven untrue. So Republicans come down here and say the American public wants this delayed.

First, let me make the point that my colleagues have been making all day: This is not the place to have that conversation. The people of this country do not support the government being shut down over Republicans' objection to the healthcare bill. There is no way this place can work if every single person adopts a "my way or the highway" approach, if it is a condition of running the government for just 6 weeks—which is essentially what we are arguing over here—that we have to get everybody's particular political points solved.

I get it the Republicans don't like the health care bill. But I come from Newtown, CT. I don't understand why we can't agree that before you buy a weapon, everybody should get a simple criminal background check. That is as important as anything in the world to me, coming from where I do. But I am not conditioning my support for the operation of the Federal Government upon Republicans agreeing to support me on background checks. And I bet I feel just as strongly about background checks, coming from a State which witnessed that kind of slaughter, as any Republican believes in the repeal of the health care law. But that is not how I am going to operate, nor is it how any other Democrat is operating.

When I listen to people say, well, neither side is willing to negotiate, we don't have anything to negotiate over,

because all we want is for the government to be operational. We are not attaching any conditions—no conditions, zero conditions—to the government coming back and operating. The only party attaching conditions to the operation of the Federal Government is Republicans. This isn't a negotiation. We just want the government to be back open for business, with no extras.

But I am OK to have a debate on what the people think about the health care law. I don't think it should be: Well, we have the government shut down. I don't think there should be a gun to our head involving the paychecks of thousands of both government and civilian employees as well as the safety of our Nation and of our food and of our water and of our air. But let's have that debate. Polls are going to tell you people are still kind of divided as to whether they like the particulars of the law that we passed to reform our health care system, but they do not want it repealed. In fact, one of the most recent polls I looked at, which has been consistent with most everything I have seen, said that only 33 percent of Americans, just 1 out of 3, want the law repealed or delayed or defunded. By a 2-to-1 margin, people want the health care law implemented because they get that the current system is totally broken and they want a chance to try to fix it.

Second, by absolutely astounding, overwhelming margins the American people oppose the tea party's attempt to shut down the government unless the health care bill is repealed. Those numbers are even bigger. It is not 2-to-1, it is more like 3-to-1 or 4-to-1. The most recent Quinnipiac University poll said the American public opposes Republican efforts to shut down the Government over the defunding of the health care law by a 72-to-22 margin. And of course the next hostage that Republicans are going to take is the full faith and credit of the American government because they are not going to raise the debt ceiling unless they get a whole other set of conditions agreed to, and guess what. The American public does not want that either. By a slightly smaller margin of 64-to-27 percent the American public says pay your bills. Don't put a bunch of conditions, a bunch of political riders on just paying your bills.

When Americans fill the gas tank, they put their credit card in and pay the bill. They don't fill the tank and drive away, which is essentially what we would be doing if we agreed to a budget and then refused to pay the bills we incurred.

Third, beyond the polling on the specific repeal or delay, beyond the polling on the shutdown tactics that Republicans are using, do you want to know what people think of this health care law? Then just look at what happened over the last 48 hours after these exchanges opened. The volume at healthcare.gov continues to be astronomical. Even today on I think the

third day of implementation, 6.1 million unique visits in the first 24 hours; 190,000 calls into the HHS call center; 104,000 Web chats were requested.

I think the estimate is that about 15 million people are going to sign up for either the expanded Medicaid portion of the law or private insurance through the exchanges in the first year or so; 15 million are going to sign up over the entirety of the first year. On the first day, 6.1 million people went to check out whether they are going to get a better product. It is going to take a little while for all those people to sign up, but if 6 million people are just showing up on the Web site on day 1, admittedly shutting the thing down for a little while and making the Web site slow down significantly, that tells you people out there are desperate for cheaper insurance. And they are going to get it.

I saw someone who was quoted in the paper who looked at the rate they were going to get in the exchange versus what they were paying and they called it a "pocketbook changer." This changes people's lives. Not only will they get insurance for the first time but to the extent that today people are paying 20, 30, 40 percent more than they may have to pay on the exchange, that helps them and helps our economy because that money goes right back out into Main Street.

Mr. President, 6.1 million people went on the site in the first 24 hours because all of these sick people or parents with sick kids who have been waiting their entire lives to be able to get health care finally get it, because on the exchanges insurance companies cannot tell you "no" just because you are sick. I hate to tell my friends on the other side of the aisle but there is an enormous amount of really sick people out there who have been getting sicker because they cannot afford to go to a doctor. Why are there 6 million people showing up on the Web site on day 1? It is because there are a lot of people in trouble, in dire straits, who want insurance.

The reason there is a flood of interest in these exchanges is because people want cheaper and better health care and they are sick and tired of waiting around for it. But what they are even more sick and more tired of is this place playing games with life and death, because that is what this is to people out there. If they get access to health care, then they have a chance at a quality life. If they do not, they are going to get sick and a lot of people are not going to make it.

We should fund the Government, get it back up and operating. Speaker BOEHNER has the votes to pass a clean continuing resolution in the House tonight, today. He should call it up for a vote. He can pass it. We can pass it. The government can get back up and operating and then we can have a debate about whether people in this country want the health care law implemented. It may be that people from a certain Senator's State or a certain

congressional district may have different feelings. But the people of this country, both in the polling and in their response to the first 3 days of its implementation, have made it perfectly clear: They don't want this place to play games with the operation of the Federal Government. They do not support the tea party shutting down the Federal Government over their political beliefs and they want access—for the first time in many of their lives—to affordable health care.

I yield the floor.

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

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

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, parliamentary inquiry: Are we under a 10-minute time limit? Is that correct?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

TRIBUTE TO ERIK FATEMI

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, Erik Fatemi, the clerk of my appropriations subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, is leaving the Senate this week after 12 years of sterling service. On behalf of Senators from both sides of the aisle who have had the good fortune to work with Erik over the years, I would like to take a few minutes to express our gratitude.

Knute Rockne was probably the all-time great coach at Notre Dame, and he knew that the Almighty had a special feeling for that team. But Rockne was fond of saying: "I've found that prayers work best when you have big players."

Successful committee chairs in the Senate have the same approach. We know that it is not enough to be on the side of the angels; we have got to have big players. Here in the Senate, that means big intellect, big heart, big work ethic. And those are qualities that Erik Fatemi possesses in superabundance.

Erik joined my Appropriations staff in early 2001, a few months before Senator Jim Jeffords switched from Republican to Independent, giving Democrats back the majority in the Senate. So Erik has been in the minority with me, then the majority, then back to the minority, and now in the majority again.

Over the years, Erik has acquired a profound knowledge of the appropriations and legislative processes that is widely respected not just by Members and staff in this Chamber, but also in the administration. And with Erik, it's not only a matter of know-how, it is also a matter of know-who. Over the years, Erik developed important relationships of trust and respect, especially