



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 113th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 159

WASHINGTON, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2013

No. 162

Senate

The Senate met at 9:30 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, who transforms common days into transfiguring and redemptive moments, hallowed be Your Name.

Lord, make our lawmakers great enough for these momentous times as they seek to live worthy of Your great Name. May Your precepts keep them from life's pitfalls, guiding them through the darkness to a safe haven. Cleanse the fountains of their hearts from all that defiles them so that they may be fit vessels to be used for Your glory. Let Your peace be within them as Your spirit inspires them to glorify You in their thoughts, words, and actions.

We pray in Your wonderful Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter.

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, November 14, 2013.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby

appoint the Honorable ANGUS S. KING, Jr., a Senator from the State of Maine, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. KING thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

FINISHING SENATE BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, this great body, the Senate, has a unique ability to work very quickly when cooperation is present. That is one of the many special things about this institution. Unfortunately, cooperation in the recent months has been very lacking.

Case in point: One Senator has delayed action for more than a month on a bill to ensure the safety of custom medications mixed by pharmacies for patients with unique health needs.

The reason that 97 Senators voted to move this legislation is because 64 people died and 800 people were made very, very sick, with some of them very sick. They had strokes and other medical issues because of the irresponsibility and negligence of this company in Massachusetts.

A lawsuit was filed recently in Nevada where two young boys were allegedly impacted significantly as a result of this medication. It was really bad medication.

Unless the entire U.S. Senate bends to that one Senator's wish, the one who voted no—and the vote was 97 to 1—he will force this body to jump through hoops and work through the next several days wasting time to finish the crucial drug safety bill, but we are going to finish that bill. This bill is important for our country, and I cannot let one Senator dictate what goes on in the Senate.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, following leader remarks, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 2 hours, with Republicans controlling the first half and the majority controlling the final half.

Following morning business, we will vote on adoption of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3204, the pharmaceutical drug compounding bill. This is expected to be a voice vote—at least I hope that is, in fact, the case. If that is the case, then we will decide what will happen subsequent to that.

The Senate will recess from 1 p.m. to 2:15 p.m. to allow for an important meeting we are having. I understand that both the majority and minority are holding important meetings today.

There is no agreement that I am aware of to complete action on the compounding bill today, but hopefully we can do that.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will be in a period of morning business for 2 hours, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the leaders or their designees, with the Republicans controlling the first half.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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OBAMACARE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, by now I am sure every Member in this Chamber has received literally countless letters, emails, and phone calls from the millions of Americans who have been hurt by ObamaCare.

I recently saw a press release from the senior Senator from California saying that she has heard from more than 30,000 constituents who are facing skyrocketing costs or canceled plans.

Each story is unique. Each story is important. That is why this morning Senate Republicans will share some of those stories to put a human face to those who have suffered as a result of the Democrats' decision to force this law on our country.

I will start off with James Dodson, who is a constituent of mine from Owensboro. James has type 2 diabetes. He recently got a letter informing him that his high-risk pool coverage would expire next month. He says a replacement plan on the ObamaCare exchange will cause his premiums to spike from \$676 to more than \$1,000 a month.

Here is the question he asked me: "Where [are] the savings the Democrats . . . promised 3 years ago?"

James' story is another reminder of why it is time for Democrats to work with us to repeal this law and start over with bipartisan reform. My constituent James is counting on them, and so are millions of others across the country who are suffering under this law.

I understand my friend from Texas has something he would like to share.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, earlier this month I launched a Web site where my constituents in Texas could describe their experiences with ObamaCare. As of this morning that site has received more than 500 submissions and the stories are simply maddening.

For example, Barry Linden from Brenham, TX, is currently waiting for an organ transplant, but because of ObamaCare his health insurance policy is being canceled, which could jeopardize his ability to access that transplant.

As Mr. Linden writes, losing his health care plan "is a potential life-ending tragedy for me and my family. The forced dropping of my plan creates a variety of complications involving my transplant team [and] my medications."

The "most troubling" thing, he adds, "is that insurance will have to re-certify my transplant." In other words, he will have to start all over.

Meanwhile, I also heard from another constituent in Lubbock, TX, whose 13-year-old daughter has type 1 diabetes. She has had it since age 4. Her family had a health insurance policy when she was first diagnosed and they have been happy with that policy. However, because of ObamaCare, they were recently notified that their daughter's

health insurance is being canceled in December.

Stories such as this are simply infuriating and unnecessary, but they should strengthen our resolve to dismantle ObamaCare entirely and replace it with patient-centered alternatives.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from South Dakota.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, the news out of South Dakota is like it is everywhere else—it is all bad. It is cancellation notices and sticker shock that families, individuals, and small businesses are experiencing.

This is a letter from a couple I received from my State. It says:

We got the letter. We just received a cancellation letter from our health care provider . . . I am a self employed plumber . . . We have had the same kind of health insurance for years . . . It works for us, we are happy with it.

When our current plan expires in 2014 it will no longer be available. We will have to get a new plan. We will be forced to lower our deductible, carry insurance for pregnancy, pediatric eye and dental care, etc. My wife is 50 years old, I'm almost there. WE DON'T NEED COVERAGE FOR PREGNANCY OR PEDIATRIC CARE!

We were told that our new policy will most likely cost us over 100% more than what we pay now. WE WILL NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD IT. We will be without insurance and I guess we'll have to pay the Obama tax and take our chances.

Obama said we could keep our plan . . . PERIOD!

This is another example from my State of cancellations and sticker shock, and that is the experience Americans are having today with ObamaCare.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, The Tennessean reported on Tuesday morning in its headline that the State's largest underwriter is notifying 66,000 clients that their policies don't meet ACA coverage requirements. In other words, they are losing those policies.

I have a letter from a woman, Emilie, who lives in Middle Tennessee who was 1 of 16,000 Tennesseans who are part of another plan called CoverTN. She is losing her policy.

She says:

I am a 39 year old single woman with a chronic illness, Lupus. I worked my way through college.

As a person with a chronic illness that was deemed "uninsurable," the only way I was able to obtain health insurance was through an employer based program called CoverTN . . . Although some call it a minimal coverage plan, it has been stellar AND affordable . . . I was excited to hear about the Affordable Health Care Act. I was glad to hear that "uninsurables" could no longer be denied coverage . . . unfortunately [that] is NOT TRUE.

I cannot keep my current plan because it does not meet the standards of coverage. This alone is a travesty. CoverTN has been a lifeline.

With the discontinuation of CoverTN, I am being forced to purchase a plan . . . that will

increase [my costs] by a staggering 410%. My out of pocket expense will increase by more than \$6,000.00 a year. Please help me understand how this is "affordable."

I beg of you to continue the fight for those, like me, who would only ask to be allowed to continue to have what we already enjoy. A fair health insurance plan at a fair price.

That is from Emilie, who is a 39-year-old woman from Tennessee.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, if you like your health plan, you can keep it. It is a nice sound bite, isn't it? It is also not true. My constituents have learned that the very hard way.

A constituent from Perry, IA, wrote:

My husband and I are farmers. For nine years now we have bought our own policy. We recently received our letter that our plan was going away and effective Jan 1, 2014 it will be updated to comply with the mandates of ObamaCare.

We did not get to keep our current policy. We did not get to keep our lower rates. I now have to pay for coverage that I do not want or will never use.

We are the small business owner that is trying to live the American dream. I do not believe in large government that wants to run my life.

This failed promise is hitting home but, more importantly, when the President promises something and doesn't keep that promise, it goes way beyond a promise to hurt an individual. It goes to the lack of credibility of all government. What we need to be doing in this country is building up credibility of government to strengthen our institutions of government.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Idaho.

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, I join my colleagues on the floor today because, like many of them, my constituents are upset. Idahoans are finding out that America's promise to the American people that "if you liked your health care plan you could keep it" simply was not true.

Over 100,000 Idahoans will find out that they cannot keep their current plans. Idahoans such as Jennifer from Salmon, ID, are finding this out the hard way. Jennifer is a working self-employed mother of three whose current health care costs her family \$375 a month. Now Jennifer is being told that her current plan is no longer available under the President's health care law and that the next available plan to her family will cost \$900 per month with a \$10,000 deductible. That plan will require Jennifer to spend \$20,000 a year between premiums and deductibles before she has benefit coverage.

This is Kelly, another hard-working mother who was promised affordable and successful health care coverage under ObamaCare.

Optimistic to enroll, Kelly and her husband looked to sign up, only to find the plans available to their family were unaffordable and thus inaccessible.

The health care law was sold on the premise that it would help families