

have access to quality, affordable childcare.

I thank HELP Committee Chairman HARKIN and Senators BURR, MIKULSKI, and ALEXANDER for their diligent bipartisan work to reauthorize this measure.

The program serves more than 1.6 million children, including more than 7,300 in Nevada, making access to affordable, high-quality care possible. But the program serves only a fraction of the need. We should be doing more to guarantee every parent who wants to work can afford adequate supervision for their children and for every child, regardless of income, so that kids have a safe place to learn.

This bipartisan measure is an investment in America's mothers, 65 percent of whom work outside the home. Yet women earn less and are less likely to go back to work after having children—than men—in part because of the shortage of safe, affordable daycare.

This program is helping millions of parents, and especially mothers, get back to work to help support their families. In the two decades since this important program was last authorized, we have learned a great deal about the importance of early childhood education and high-quality childcare.

This bipartisan measure builds on that knowledge, updates health and safety standards for childcare centers, and requires providers to undergo comprehensive background checks.

This reauthorization is only the first step. I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle on the larger effort to broaden access to quality early childhood education.

We are going to take up this bill later today. As I have said before, and I will say again so everyone understands, this is a bipartisan bill. I hope the managers of this bill will do everything they can to move this expeditiously through this body. But we are going to finish—not finish it this week, but I prefer finishing it, and I hope we can do that.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

Mr. REID. Would the Chair announce the business of the day.

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 until 10:30 a.m., with Senators permitted to speak therein in for up to 10 minutes each, with the time equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees, with the majority controlling the first half.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RASKIN NOMINATION

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, shortly we will be voting on some nominees, and I want to thank all the nominees and their families for their willingness to serve the public. This is a real sacrifice. People are giving up other opportunities in order to serve their country. It is not just the individual who accepts these positions of public service, it is a family matter, and so I applaud them all for their service to our country.

I would like to speak in particular about the last vote we will have in this series, and that is the confirmation of Sarah Bloom Raskin as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. Sarah is a person who has given much to public service throughout her career. I know her personally. She is a Marylander, and we are very proud of the fact she is a Marylander.

If Sarah is confirmed, she will be the highest ranking woman in the history of the Treasury, and I am very proud of that accomplishment. She has been very active in Maryland and at the national level. For the past several years Sarah has served on the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. Her deep financial and regulatory knowledge and sound judgment made her an essential asset during her tenure there. As the Presiding Officer knows, this has been a very turbulent time in regard to the economy of our Nation, and during this great economic unease her dedication to strong consumer protections has been especially valuable.

Even before joining the Board of Governors, Sarah was no stranger to successfully navigating choppy economic waters. In 2007 she was appointed Commissioner of Financial Regulation for the State of Maryland, so I have had the chance to observe her and her dedication and her effectiveness at the State level and also at the national level.

At the State level she has significantly improved consumer protections and supported banks through the many challenges of the financial crisis. That is where I got to see her work firsthand and her thoughtfulness and how dedicated she was, and her ability to bring people of different persuasions together, different stakeholders in our financial community, and to chart a course where we could have a positive result not only for the financial institutions but for consumers and for our economy.

Sarah is also part of a family of government service. Her husband Jamie is a member of the Maryland State Senate and has an excellent record of public service in his own right. So this is a family that has given much to public

service. We need people in the administration like Sarah Bloom Raskin. Her background, her education, and her job training all serve to make her particularly well suited to be the deputy secretary.

I, for one, am thankful to Sarah and her family that she is willing to serve in an extremely challenging position. This is not going to be an easy position, obviously, as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury. It gives me great confidence to know Sarah will be handling the many responsibilities demanded of the deputy secretary, and it gives me great pride that a fellow Marylander may continue to be among the financial leaders who guide our economy toward our future growth and stability.

I urge my colleagues to support her confirmation. We are indeed fortunate to have a person of her skills willing to serve as Deputy Secretary of the Treasury.

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

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant 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 ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

Mr. MURPHY. Mr. President, I got the chance to meet David Weis, a 22-year-old student at Georgetown University, about a week ago. David's story, unfortunately, although it may sound exceptional, is not. He was just about to celebrate his 19th birthday, when 2 days before it, in 2010, he was diagnosed with thyroid and lymphatic cancer—a devastating diagnosis that came just as he was preparing to start college.

As most of his classmates were enjoying the first days of their freshman year at Georgetown University, David was dealing with a rigorous course of treatment for his disease that left him tired, left him confused, and left him anxious about his future. David had an ace up his sleeve, and that was the fact he had insurance. But he only has it as long as he is covered as a student.

David came to the U.S. Capitol last week to testify in favor and in support of the Affordable Care Act, because he knows that with the passage of this bill his diagnosis will not be a death sentence; that he will be able to get the coverage he needs; and that he will be able to pursue his dreams when he graduates rather than have his life decisions dictated by his illness—having to choose a job simply because it provides health care or having to be locked into a career simply because he can't afford going without insurance to cover his cancer.

David's story can be repeated hundreds of thousands of times all across

this country by young people in their teens and their twenties and in their thirties who thought they were invincible but who got knocked off their feet by a devastating disease such as cancer and who desperately need health care insurance at the time of that illness in order to get back onto their feet.

Some of the best news that has come out over the past several months, as the enrollment has started to ramp up on the Affordable Care Act, has been the number of young people who have signed up. We have seen that 31 percent of all of the people who have signed up for insurance exchanges all across this country are 34 years or under. This is a real signal that young people are recognizing that, although they may feel as if they are going to live forever, they desperately need insurance, just as everyone else does. So that is why I was so glad to see President Obama yesterday go on the show “Between Two Ferns,” with Zach Galifianakis, to talk about the importance of young people signing up.

We all know about the “Two Ferns” effect. Previously unknown stars such as Will Ferrell and Bradley Cooper went on “Two Ferns” and were catapulted to stardom. I am glad to see the “Two Ferns” effect has had the same impact on health care enrollment. Since President Obama went on “Two Ferns,” 19,000 people were referred to the Web site of enrollment from the “Funny or Die” Web site. By 6 p.m. that day the video had sent 32,000 people to healthcare.gov. HHS officials said traffic on healthcare.gov had risen by 40 percent on Tuesday to over 890,000 visits in 1 day.

It is a signal that when young people, through whatever means is available to them, find out about the benefits of the Affordable Care Act, they are interested and they are signing up. I hope President Obama uses more innovative tools and methods to try to get the word out to young adults in their late teens, twenties, and thirties about the importance of signing up for the Affordable Care Act because it is important. Some 70,000 adolescents and young adults are diagnosed with cancer every single year in this country. There are 151,000 people below the age of 20 living with diabetes right now. So despite the fact that we may think we are going to live forever or think we may not need coverage, young people need it as well. It is affordable.

The President said yesterday on this show: You effectively can get coverage for the cost of a cell phone bill. And it is true. Having a cell phone is pretty important, but being able to get treatment when you get a serious disease is pretty important as well.

In Connecticut the numbers are pretty reasonable. A 22-year-old in Hartford making a \$25,000 salary—which is the salary I made in my first job in Hartford—can get a bronze policy for as low as \$66 a month through Anthem. A 25-year-old living in Bridgeport making a little more, \$30,000, can get a

bronze policy for as low as \$108 a month. About two-thirds of all young adults across the country who are currently uninsured are eligible for these subsidies.

For all of these young people who were previously going to the marketplace and often having to pay full price, often buying insurance on their own with no ability to negotiate a group discount, this health care law is transformational. Fifty or sixty dollars a month is the price for bronze plans. And this doesn’t even count the catastrophic option open to most young people as well.

The good news continues to roll in when it comes to the numbers of people signing up. Yesterday the administration announced that 4.2 million people have enrolled in marketplaces through March 1; 943,000 people enrolled in the short month of February; and 31 percent of all those people are 34 or younger. And, of course, we haven’t even gotten to crunch time yet.

I wish this weren’t the case, but I know something about how young people think. Too many leave big decisions until the last minute, whether it be studying for a test, writing a term paper, or signing up for health care.

As we have seen in the past on a lot of these enrollment deadlines, like the enrollment deadline for Medicare Part D, the surge comes in the final few weeks of enrollment. So we expect to see the numbers pick up in a significant way through March.

Knowing how people in their twenties and thirties think, I expect we will see a major surge in enrollment from young people as well. But they shouldn’t wait until the last minute. It does take more than a few hours to look at the choices and decide which is best. In Connecticut we have three insurance plans offering coverage, but each one of them has three or four different plans. So I hope young adults in their twenties and thirties take more than a few hours or a day to sign up because we want to make sure they get the plan available for them. It is easy to do with a phone call to an enrollment center, a visit in Connecticut to the in-person centers in New Britain and New Haven, and very simple to do on healthcare.gov.

In Connecticut our exchange is going like gangbusters. We had a goal of signing up 80,000 to 100,000 people, and a full 30 days before the deadline we have signed up 152,000 people. Of those individuals in Connecticut, about 25 percent are 25 years or younger. We are on track to double our original estimates in Connecticut.

Connecticut is a State that had a pretty high rate of insured to begin with, so our delta to get to full insurance was relatively small compared to other States. But guess what Connecticut is doing. Connecticut is actually working to implement the law rather than working to undermine the law. We put a lot of time and thought into getting a working Web site, into

doing the kind of outreach other States are not doing to get people to sign up. When we have done that, young people and old people across the board have flocked to sign up.

I was glad to see the President do his outreach yesterday to young people all across the country. I was glad to see the spike in interest on healthcare.gov. I am glad to see that 4.2 million people have signed up for health care, as more people all across the country—young people especially—are realizing the Affordable Care Act works.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

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

ENERGY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, too often in Washington our friends on the left seem to operate under a very dangerous assumption: that good intentions are more important than a good outcome. I say it is dangerous because we see all the time how liberal Washington politics that aim to alleviate problems such as poverty or wage stagnation or other social or economic problems just seem to make things worse. Yet, despite the evidence, the policies never seem to change. More money just gets thrown at the same failed programs year after year with barely any thought as to whether they actually work.

ObamaCare is a case in point. Here is a big-government bill that Washington Democrats thought they could just pass and—poof—health care would magically be made more affordable for everybody. Yet for millions of Americans just the opposite happened. Contrary to the assurances, ObamaCare has upended lives and businesses all across our country. It has forced painful choices for people who could barely get by as it was. It is a mess.

So one would assume Washington Democrats would step back and take a long hard look at the accumulating evidence and start thinking about ways to keep this thing from pummeling even more Americans. But we would be wrong. They just keep doubling down.

When the Web site crashed, they called it a glitch. When people started losing their doctors and their plans, they told them: You can live with it. When Americans started sharing their ObamaCare horror stories, they basically called them all liars. That would tell us something we need to know about how much Washington liberals care about middle-class Americans. They are captive to the most extreme ideologies of the left, and they don’t even try to hide it anymore. Forget reason or economics or sound argument; it is all about ideology with these guys.

We saw it all on vivid display a couple nights ago with the Democrats’ all-