

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent we proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators allowed to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

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

CORINTHIAN COLLEGES

Mr. DURBIN. Last December I spoke about a news article that revealed another disturbing scam perpetuated by the for-profit college industry. The article reported that Corinthian Colleges, Incorporated, a publicly-traded corporation, that owns for-profit schools in the United States and Canada, has engaged in deceptive job placement practices in order to artificially boost job placement rates and avoid scrutiny by its creditors.

It turns out Corinthian schools were paying employers what they called an onboarding fee of \$2,000 per student so the companies would hire their graduates temporarily so that could be counted as an official permanent job placement.

Corinthian college subsidiary schools have been criticized in the past for having high dropout rates, high tuition, and some of the highest loan default rates in the Nation. Nearly 40 percent of Corinthian college students who should have begun to pay their Federal student loans in 2008 were defaulting on their student loans. This is the highest rate of any publicly-traded company in that sector. Yet, over the last 10 years Corinthian Colleges has been rewarded for its poor performance with \$10 billion in Federal student aid. On an annual basis American taxpayers fund more than 80 percent of Corinthian Colleges' total revenue. This includes the salary of Corinthian's CEO, Jack Massimino, who received compensation of \$3.1 million in 2012, thanks to the taxpayers. This was seven times the average compensation for presidents of public universities, which is about \$440,000.

Corinthian also spent \$400 million on marketing and admissions in 2013, about \$3,700 for each newly admitted student. How could they afford it? Because the taxpayers are subsidizing this for-profit college. Corinthian's marketing strategy has come under scrutiny recently because it targets low-income people. Why? If you are a low-income new student at Corinthian you automatically qualify for a Pell grant and a college student loan. They can't wait for you to come through the door, sign the papers, and then watch what happens next. Most of these students falter, fail, drop out, or if they were, I guess, lucky—and I use that word advisedly—they end up with a worthless diploma. These students attracted by the prospect of a better life and the dream of a college education end up far worse off, deeply in debt with nothing to show for it.

Eric Parms, an Everest college grad, completed a 9-month heating, ventilation, and air conditioning repair program. What he ended up with at the end of it was a \$17,000 student loan for a 9-month program on HVAC and no job. After he graduated he had to beg the career counselors at Everest to set up some interviews. Frankly, Eric wasn't worth that much to them after he graduated. They wanted him to sign up for the loans. He did it and they lost interest in him.

Finally, he was set up by career services to work in a contract position laying electric wires. However, after less than 2 months on the job he was laid off and cut off from any career service counseling at Everest College, part of the Corinthian operation.

The school had effectively placed Eric in a short-term internship program, and once it was over, there was no incentive for that company to hire him when they could vacate a space for another graduate who would get a \$2,000 Corinthian subsidy, so their numbers would look better to the public and to the Federal Government. Then Everest could shuttle in another graduate for a part-time position leading nowhere.

Eric lost out on the deal with a \$17,000 student loan for a worthless education at Everest College, part of the Corinthian family of schools. To get a Georgia HVAC contractor license he needed to have significant work experience and references. No one would hire him with a degree from Everest. Everest College, part of Corinthian, gave him a worthless degree.

After reading the December article and stories like Eric's, I sent four letters. One letter was to the CEO of Corinthian, asking him to explain these practices and to outline steps the company is going to take to put an end to it. His response to me was not surprising but disappointing. Corinthian's CEO Jack Massimino, the multimillion dollar CEO defended the school's policies and practices. He did admit that at one time three Everest campuses provided incentives to employees.

This is a scandal that has to come to an end. I tell folks repeatedly, if you want to know about for-profit schools and universities in America, remember three numbers: 10 percent of high school grads end up in for-profit colleges; 20 percent of all the Federal aid to education goes to these colleges; 46 percent of all the student loan defaults come out of these colleges. These are worthless, by and large. There are some exemptions, but most of them are worthless, and we as taxpayers are being taken to the cleaners by this industry.

When we don't have enough money to do the important things in America such as medical research and assistance for education at good, worthwhile schools, we ought to say shame on ourselves for not taking a look at this for-profit college industry which is fleecing the American taxpayers.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. First let me thank Senator DURBIN for his commitment on this issue. We know education is a great equalizer in America. We know there are major concerns on access to higher education because of costs, and that we have to do a better job to make college education affordable. We also have to have accountability in higher education, to make sure those institutions are providing quality products to their students and are doing it in a cost-effective way, particularly when taxpayers are providing a lot of the aid.

Mr. DURBIN. If I could ask the Senator from Maryland to yield for a moment.

Mr. CARDIN. I would be glad to.

Mr. DURBIN. I just had a meeting with people from the Pentagon and we talked about military education, members of the military who are seeking education while in the military through the GI bill and such. We talked about some of the worst examples of for-profit schools. The best example I could come up with of a worthy education through the military is the University of Maryland. They have been doing it for decades. I steer all my friends in the military and their families to the flagship university in the Senator's State of Maryland. Maryland does a good job.

Mr. CARDIN. I am glad I yielded to my colleague. We are very proud of the University of Maryland and the programs for the Department of Defense. We believe it is a cost-effective way and a quality education, exactly what the Senator from Illinois is talking about; and that is we have to get value for our dollars and we have to get accountability. I appreciate the Senator bringing that to our attention.

FILING CLOTURE

Mr. GRASSLEY. Madam President, the majority leader, the Senator from Nevada, came to the floor last night to take exception to my criticisms of how the Senate operates these days.

I have criticized the actions of the current majority leadership, of which he is the head.

However, I would like to point out that I have tried to avoid singling him out personally because it is not my intention to engage in personal attacks or name calling.

Still, the fact that he takes my criticisms of the Senate's dysfunction so personally should tell us something.

Yesterday, I criticized the abuse of same-day cloture motions.

In response, Senator REID said, "He claims that I file too many cloture motions."

Well, it often is the majority leader who files the cloture motions, but sometimes it is other members of the majority leadership, and on rare occasions, other Senators.

The fact is, this majority leader has instigated more of the cloture motions than any leader in recent times.

Senator Frist filed about 72 percent of all cloture motions when he was Majority Leader, Senator Daschle filed about 32 percent during his leadership, Senator Lott about 69 percent, and Senator Dole about 50 percent.

Senator REID has personally filed 94 percent of all the cloture motions since he became majority leader.

And, that is 94 percent of a much bigger number since cloture filings have more than doubled under this majority leadership.

So if the Senator from Nevada takes my criticism of cloture abuse personally, perhaps there is a reason he does.

He also blames Republicans for the fact that he has abused the cloture process, just as I predicted in my speech, which struck such a nerve.

However, I want to be absolutely clear that my criticisms were focused on same-day cloture filings related to legislative business.

In other words, I was specifically criticizing the practice of moving to end consideration of a legislative matter that is subject to amendment before there has been an opportunity for any debate or amendments.

The majority leader went off on a tangent complaining about how many nominees are waiting for confirmation. I don't need to remind anybody that the ability of the minority party to block nominees was eliminated using the nuclear option. Besides, the focus of my speech was on the legislative process.

We can argue about how much debate is too much and how many amendments are too many. But no one can claim that same-day cloture motions were in response to Republican obstruction when there hasn't been any deliberation whatsoever before they are filed.

The majority leader can criticize me and stoop to petty name-calling, but the data I cited was from the non-partisan Congressional Research Service.

This data on same-day cloture speaks for itself. His excuse, "The Republicans made me do it" won't fly. In fact, Senator REID has been caught before trying to blame Republicans for his cloture motions.

The Washington Post Fact Checker gave him two Pinocchios for his claim that Republicans were to blame for a record number of cloture motions.

He tried to claim that every cloture motion represented a Republican filibuster. However, the source he cited was a report by the Congressional Research Service containing a long section under the heading "Cloture Motions Do Not Correspond With Filibusters."

That heading pretty much says it all, but it contains about a page and a half of explanation as to why it is erroneous to claim that all cloture motions are in response to filibusters.

Certainly, cloture motions which are filed before there has been one word of

debate cannot possibly be in response to a filibuster. Those are the cloture motions my criticism was directed at yesterday.

This is also the problem addressed by the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution which I introduced yesterday with 25 of my colleagues.

The majority leader did not even attempt to defend the practice of same-day cloture, and understandably so. There is no justification for it.

The majority leader's refusal to acknowledge such a blatant problem, much less put a stop to it, just confirms the need for the Stop Cloture Abuse Resolution.

I should add that the deliberative process can work if it is allowed to, and the bill we have been debating yesterday and today is evidence of that.

It isn't just Republicans who would prefer to go back to the way we did things when the Senate functioned as a deliberative body as it was designed to.

The manager of S. 1086, Senator MIKULSKI, said earlier today, "This is one of the first times in a couple of years where we have had an open amendment process, and in some ways we're getting adjusted to how that actually works. This is terrific."

So even prominent Members of the majority party acknowledge an open amendment process is the way things should work. I have offered a constructive idea along with 25 colleagues to make that the norm again.

Instead of criticizing me, the majority leader should join me and become part of the solution instead of part of the problem.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, the issue of climate change is a pressing issue and so I wish to commend the work of my colleagues, and to reiterate my concerns.

Climate change is real. Unfortunately, while so many of my colleagues across the aisle talk about the need to address our debt to avoid burdening future generations, too many of these same Senators refuse to take action to address the climate debt we are passing on. Most frustrating of all, we know what can be done to fix this problem.

We know the solutions to reduce pollution and emissions that cause climate change create good-paying jobs. Jobs that put money back in families' pockets through low-cost energy sources and increased efficiencies in homes. These solutions make our Nation more energy independent, and our businesses more globally competitive. They give us cleaner air and water, and protect the health of our children and grandchildren.

I know that we can take these steps because I have seen it in my home State of Washington. In Washington, our biodiesel producers are replacing imported oil with clean, renewable, home-grown fuels. Companies like McKinstry, who have made a home in

the Northwest, are leaders in helping cities, hospitals, and others create energy efficient, sustainable buildings.

In the past, the United States has led the world in innovative ways to create energy, but recently we have ceded our clean energy leadership to countries like China and Germany because too many have stood in the way of making necessary investments. When we passed the Bipartisan Budget Act this past December, we proved that Democrats and Republicans can put ideology aside and work together to make progress on our Nation's challenges.

Climate change is no less a challenge than any of the other issues we face, and we have a moral obligation to address it. As I have said, addressing this challenge will create good-paying jobs here at home in fields like pollution management, energy efficiency, and renewable energy goods. And best of all, we can pass a healthier planet on to our children.

I'm hopeful that Republicans and Democrats can find common ground and come together to move us forward.

TRIBUTE TO JOAN BARRON

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, at a small desk on the third floor of the Wyoming State Capitol sits Joan Barron. For 48 years, Joan has served as a reporter for the Casper Star Tribune, sharing Wyoming's government with Wyoming's people. On March 21, 2014, Joan is retiring.

Joan started her career in Rock Springs, WY. She was a nurse, but answered an ad to freelance for the Casper Star Tribune in 1966. The editors were impressed with Joan's work, and asked her to move to Cheyenne. Armed with a notebook and a typewriter, she became the capitol bureau reporter in 1969—a position she has held to this day.

Historians will undoubtedly use Joan's work to understand the State of Wyoming. She covered seven governors, 50 legislative sessions, three boom and bust cycles. She knows the issues, she knows the players, she does her homework. Throughout her career, Joan has been a trusted source, delivering the news of the day to the people of Wyoming. When an article has the byline, Joan Barron, Star-Tribune capitol bureau, a reader can be assured of fact-based, comprehensive reporting.

While Joan says she never wanted to be the story, she has had a tremendous impact on how those in Wyoming government conduct business. She was integral to the creation of the Wyoming Open Meetings Law in 1973. Due in part to Joan's observations, questions and perseverance, the Wyoming legislature passed ethics legislation. She held people accountable—and our State is better for it.

Just last week, Joan quietly announced her retirement—not wanting any fanfare. That is typical of her. She is always the observer, never the center of attention.