

Of this I am quite sure, that if we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.

Why do I say that? Even though those remarks were made more than 70 years ago, I believe there are many in Congress who should focus on what Winston Churchill said because it is true. For far too long Republicans have obsessed over the Affordable Care Act—ObamaCare. The Affordable Care Act is the law of the land. It has been for more than 4 years.

From the very day this law was signed, Republicans have zealously worked to undermine it in so many different ways. Day in and day out they have clamored for repeal of this bill. House Republicans have voted more than 50 times trying desperately to cripple ObamaCare. They shut down the government trying to defund health care reform. And how has that worked? While they have obsessed over the past, the country has moved forward.

Now Republicans have to face the fact that millions of their own constituents, millions of Republicans are benefiting from health care reform in record numbers. But my Republican friends still insist on nothing short of repeal. So I ask my Republican colleagues, what would they like to repeal? What would repeal look like?

Because of the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans can no longer be denied health insurance because of preexisting conditions. What are some of the preexisting conditions that caused so much trouble in the past? Diabetes. How about this one: You are a woman. Many insurance companies considered women having a preexisting disability because they were women. Millions of young adults are now able to stay on their parents' policies until age 26. That is more than 3 million. Millions of seniors are saving huge amounts of money on prescription drugs because we are in the process of filling the doughnut hole. This year alone millions of Americans will receive maternity coverage. Repealing the Affordable Care Act would be repealing many of these and many more. I could spend a long time talking about what would be repealed.

My counterpart, the Senator from Kentucky, will probably address the Senate after I finish. In his home State of Kentucky, 360,000 people have signed up for coverage under the Affordable Care Act. Kentucky is not New York; it is not Texas; it is not California. It is a sparsely populated State, somewhat like Nevada. Yet 360,000 people have signed up for coverage. Of those, 75 percent were previously uninsured. That is approaching 300,000 people. Over a quarter million Kentuckians who did not have insurance now have health coverage under the Affordable Care Act. In other words, ObamaCare has reduced the uninsured population of Kentucky by 40 percent.

I wonder when my friend from Kentucky will explain to the 270,000 Ken-

tuckians how he plans to repeal the law without stripping the new health benefits. How exactly will he and his Republican colleagues guarantee that their newly insured constituents have no lapses in coverage? Remember, they want to do away with 270,000 people who didn't have insurance. They want to do away with 360,000 people in Kentucky who are signed up for insurance. So I await their answer.

In the meantime, Democrats will keep looking to the future, and the future of the Affordable Care Act is bright. Every day more and more Americans are getting health coverage under the law. On Monday we learned that 7,045,000 people had already signed up and about 1 million people on the State exchanges—370,000 in Kentucky, for example. We know there are more than 3 million young people on their parents' insurance because of that. We know there are millions of people who are now covered because of their ability to become part of Medicaid. So we are talking about a lot of people.

Health reform is working, and the law is here to stay. The more Americans see the law is working, the more they want it to stay. The time of fighting over the past is over. Remember what Winston Churchill said:

Of this I am quite sure, that if we open a quarrel between the past and the present, we shall find that we have lost the future.

I say this very seriously: I invite my Republican friends to look to the future. Put this obstruction behind them. Work with us to make the Affordable Care Act even better for their constituents and our constituents and Americans generally. Together, we can help millions more Americans get the health coverage they deserve.

RECOGNITION OF THE REPUBLICAN LEADER

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

FORT HOOD

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I wish to start this morning with a word about yesterday's tragic shooting at Fort Hood.

As the investigation continues, we will learn more facts, but what we already know is that Fort Hood has faced a great deal of adversity and challenges over the past few years and that the community there has rallied around our uniformed personnel. We also know that the on-base military police appear to have responded quickly, appropriately, and obviously at great personal risk to themselves. So, as always in a tragedy such as this, we admire the courage and commitment of those who rushed to help the victims. And of course we are all thinking and praying today for the victims, their families, and their fellow soldiers and civilians at Fort Hood.

JOB CREATION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, all week Republicans have been coming to the floor to talk about our proposals to ignite job creation and get the economy back on track. We have been talking about ideas that can help middle-class Americans who have been struggling just to make it in the Obama economy. But our Democratic colleagues don't seem to care all that much. They seem too preoccupied with an election still 7 months away. Instead of working with us on ideas for job creation, they have been talking about pretty much anything else.

Time and again yesterday Republicans asked our Democratic colleagues for consideration of our amendments by the Senate. And time and time again those efforts were rebuffed.

Republicans have a lot of good ideas. All we are asking is for those ideas to get fair consideration. Let's get our amendments pending, have a debate, and actually take a vote.

Some Senate Democrats seem to see things entirely differently. They don't even want the elected representatives of the people to have a say—a say on what Americans say is the most important issue facing our country. This is especially galling because our friends across the aisle always seem to find time for poll-tested show votes aimed at firing up the left. They may not be overly concerned about passing jobs legislation for the American people, but we can bet they will be forcing everyone to endure plenty of political show votes as we get closer to November. The so-called agenda that rolled out last week basically guarantees it. They have already admitted they don't intend to pass the things it contains. That is not the point, they say. The true end is to help Democrats retain their Senate majority. They have essentially already admitted that, which is somewhat dishonorable. No wonder Americans are so disillusioned with Washington.

Look, the American people want us to focus on their concerns, not political show votes talked about by a few political strategists over at the Democrats' campaign committee. As I indicated, jobs are right up there at the top of that list. We will see today whether Senate Democrats are actually serious about giving our constituents what they want. It appears our colleagues might allow consideration of one amendment—just one. We are not even sure about that yet.

At least the amendment we would be considering is a good one, and I appreciate the work of Senator THUNE and others in putting that together. This would reduce the tax burden on small businesses. It would provide relief to the Kentucky coal communities that have been under continual assault by this administration. It would approve the Keystone Pipeline, which would create thousands of jobs right away. It would repeal the medical device tax, which even many Democrats acknowledge is killing jobs. It would eliminate

ObamaCare's 30-hour workweek rule which is cutting paychecks to the middle class. In other words, this is an amendment that seeks to take the causes of joblessness head on rather than simply treating the symptoms of a down economy. It is an amendment that aims to help Americans find jobs with a steady paycheck and the promise of a better life.

There are other amendments not contained within this package the Senate should be voting on too. For instance, the national right-to-work amendment Senator PAUL and I have just introduced—transformational legislation that would empower American workers and put our country on a path to greater prosperity.

But the larger point is this: The Senate needs to be allowed to function again. While Members file amendments on behalf of their constituents, those amendments should get due consideration. That is particularly true when those amendments have bipartisan support and aim to address our still-ailing economy and the families struggling in it. My hope is our Democratic colleagues will allow this to happen.

These are serious times and we cannot afford to waste months on purely partisan proposals that have no hope of passing. We need to work together to advance serious proposals that expand jobs and opportunity.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MATTHEW S. SLUSS-TILLER

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I want to pay tribute to a Kentucky Special Operations Forces soldier who was lost in service to his country, the life of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller of Catlettsburg, KY, which prematurely ended on February 3, 2010, in Pakistan, where he was serving in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He was killed when the enemy attacked his unit with an improvised explosive device. He was 35 years old.

For his service in uniform, Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller received many awards, medals, and decorations, including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, two Meritorious Service Medals, five Army Commendation Medals, the Joint Service Achievement Medal, five Army Achievement Medals, five Army Good Conduct Medals, the National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, the Kosovo Campaign Medal with Bronze Star, two Afghanistan Campaign Medals with Bronze Service Stars, the Iraq Campaign Medal with Bronze Service Star, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Humanitarian Service Medal, three noncommissioned officers professional development ribbons, the Army service ribbon, two overseas service ribbons, the NATO Medal, the combat action badge, and the senior parachutist badge; obviously a much decorated soldier.

Pictured behind me is Sergeant First Class Sluss-Tiller with his daughter Hannah, who was only 3 years old when he died. Matthew's wife Melissa proudly sent this picture to my office so it can be honored on the Senate floor. It was taken the summer before Matthew was killed, and it was his last picture with his daughter.

Melissa remembers the bond between Matthew and Hannah fondly. "He used to sing to me and Hannah," she says.

He would dance with her standing on his feet, singing loudly. Thinking of it makes me smile. He loved being a husband and a father, and he was great at both.

Born and raised in eastern Kentucky, Matthew graduated from Lawrence County High School in 1993. Brenda Thornbury, his former art teacher, remained friends with Matthew after he graduated and recalls he knew from a young age what he wanted to do. "Matthew was a wonderful person," she says.

He was always eager to do whatever he needed to do to serve his country . . . he knew he would serve his country. He loved the Lord, and he loved his family.

Matthew's father Edward Tiller agrees. "From the time I bought him his first GI Joe, he wanted to be an Army man," he said.

In short, it seems clear that for Matthew, the Army was not just a job, it was a way of life. He was dedicated to justice and service in the name of our country.

In 1991, Matthew enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserves as a heavy construction mechanic and served at the 261st Ordnance Company located at Cross Lanes, WV. In 1993, he left the family farm and enlisted in the Active-Duty Army as a signal specialist. He served at Fort Bragg, NC, as well as in Germany and in Kuwait.

SFC Jamie Mullinax, a friend of Matthew's who trained with him at Fort Bragg, knew well the look of happiness we can see in Matthew's face behind me. He says:

If you knew Matt, you knew that smile. He always strived to do the best at what he did. I know he believed in what he was doing and loved wearing the military uniform and believed in what it stood for.

As the list of awards, medals, and decorations I read earlier makes clear, Matthew excelled at being a soldier. In his many years of training, he successfully completed the U.S. Army Airborne course, the Jumpmaster course, the Master Jumpmaster course, the Air Movement Operations course, the Military Transition Team course, the Civil Affairs Qualification course, and the Advanced and Basic Noncommissioned Officer's courses.

Prior to his time of deployment, Matthew deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Joint Guardian in Kosovo. In his final deployment Matthew was assigned to the 96th Civil Affairs Battalion, 95th Civil Affairs Brigade, based out of Fort Bragg.

In his free time Matthew loved golf, hunting, hiking, camping, and riding

motorcycles, and he was a passionate fan of UK basketball.

The many people who came to pay their respects at Matthew's funeral in eastern Kentucky witnessed the recognition of Matthew's sacrifice when they saw a three-star general come to their small town to lead the honor guard.

LTG John Mulholland delivered these remarks at the service:

Matthew was part of America's Army Special Operations Forces and as such was one of the finest soldiers in the world.

He went on:

That's no exaggeration, that he was embarked on a very important if not critical mission that is directly tied to the security of this country.

Of course, as impressive as his service record was, I think the picture behind me makes clear that the most important job to Matthew was husband and father. I know his family misses him terribly.

Melissa says the following about her husband:

I believe that our souls are beacons glowing immensely with light so powerful and beautiful that only in heaven can we become a true vision of ourselves. I know my Matthew is standing tall in heaven, his light so stunning a reflection of who he was. God needed him, and I cannot question that.

We are thinking of Matthew's loved ones today, including his wife Melissa, his daughter Hannah, his parents Edward Tiller and Jane Blankenship, his stepparents Von Tiller and Forest Blankenship, his siblings Selena Dawn Pack Blankenship, Michael Blankenship, and Annette Sorg, and many other beloved family members and friends.

Our country has lost a faithful and devoted hero with the passing of SFC Matthew S. Sluss-Tiller. I know my colleagues join me in expressing great condolences to his family for their loss, and great gratitude to them for lending our country such an honorable and noble patriot.

I hope Hannah and all of Matthew's loved ones know that America will always—always—be grateful for his sacrifice.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

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

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT OF 2014

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 3979, which the clerk will report.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3979) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to ensure that emergency services volunteers are not taken into account as employees under the shared responsibility requirements contained in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.