

bill is cosponsored by 25 Republicans and 19 Democrats. This legislation also enjoys the support of more than 50 national sportsmen and conservation groups all over this country.

As Benjamin Disraeli, the famous statesman from Great Britain, said, "The secret of success is to be ready when your opportunity comes." This bill is ready and the opportunity is now. After years of hard work by Senator HAGAN and others, now is the time to consider and pass this legislation. But, as always, our success in moving this legislation will depend on the cooperation of all Senators in putting aside political games and petty disputes over amendments in order to pass a bill that will benefit millions of Americans.

This is a bill that is as much a Republican bill as it is a Democrat bill. So why should this bill be killed for procedural reasons? This is a bill they have worked on for many years.

I am hopeful that through bipartisan support we can get this bill over the finish line, as we were able to do with the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act earlier this year, and the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act a few weeks ago.

I urge my colleagues to respect the hard work of those Senators who have put this measure before us and allow this matter to pass—and quickly.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader is recognized.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, just some information for my friend from Vermont. We had anticipated after my remarks of going to the comments of Senator ALEXANDER and Senator CORKER in connection with the life of Senator Howard Baker. So I ask unanimous consent at this point that the Senators from Tennessee follow my remarks on Senator Baker.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, reserving the right to object, and I shall not, of course, because as I told the press in Vermont last week, I had the privilege of serving with more than 10 leaders in both parties since I have been here, and it is impossible to find a finer leader than Howard Baker. I considered him to be a Senator's Senator and one of the finest people I have ever served with. So of course I will wait.

I would ask to amend the unanimous consent request so that following the remarks of the Republican leader and the two Senators from Tennessee I then be recognized for my remarks.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the leader modify his request?

Mr. McCONNELL. Yes.

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

HEALTH CARE

Mr. McCONNELL. First, a few observations about ObamaCare. It may not have existed in the English language a few years ago, but in short order it has become a battle word for broken promises and almost cartoonish inefficiency. It is no wonder why: You can keep your plan. You can keep your doctor. Premiums will go down. The law will create millions of jobs.

We knew the promises wouldn't hold up. Many of us said so. One even earned the dubious distinction of being declared the "lie of the year." And that is why it is so hard to trust much of what the Obama administration claims about ObamaCare these days, such as back in December when administration officials issued another promise—that they would make sure any taxpayer-funded ObamaCare subsidies would go only to enrollees who actually qualify for them under the law.

We wanted this assurance not only because so many other promises had been broken; we wanted it because eligibility verification is so important. Middle-class taxpayers are feeling enough pain from this law already. They shouldn't have to subsidize inaccurate or even fraudulent ObamaCare claims on top of all the rest. So I helped pass a law that requires a non-partisan watchdog to keep an eye on the procedures the administration claimed would protect taxpayers to see how they will work and then report back to us in Congress.

Last week that watchdog, the inspector general, issued the first two reports on the issue, and it turns out we were pretty correct to be worried. The inspector general concluded that the administration was often ineffective at verifying such basic details about ObamaCare enrollees as their citizen status, their income, their Social Security number, and whether they were even eligible to purchase ObamaCare in the first place. The administration, the IG reported, didn't even follow its own eligibility verification procedures in many cases.

And that wasn't all. The IG also discovered nearly 3 million inconsistencies in the information ObamaCare enrollees provided in their applications, nearly 90 percent of which couldn't even be resolved because the necessary software—the necessary software—wasn't even operational.

It is completely ridiculous.

And the administration is still struggling to get a handle on the problem. Computer systems that should have been ready to go last October have not been built yet. It is the kind of scenario we would expect to see in a Leslie Nielsen movie, not in real life.

Worse still, administration officials are now indicating they are going to keep chugging ahead with their deeply flawed verification practices, even after everything the government's own watchdog uncovered. Many individuals enrolled with the current flawed enrollment process will automatically be en-

rolled for the same taxpayer subsidies next year.

They are defiant—defiant—in the face of all of this. This is precisely the kind of flippant attitude that is so infuriating to many of our constituents.

Many of us predicted these kinds of problems would be the likely outcome of giving government such expansive power over a huge segment of our economy. Of course we are going to have massive inefficiency and probable fraud and migraines for middle-class families who already have enough to deal with. Of course we are going to see all this. It seems inevitable.

That is why Republicans say we need to start over with actual health care reform—reform that can actually lower costs and increase the quality of care without resorting to this tired sort of government-centric approach.

ObamaCare is built upon the intellectually lazy idea that we can simply legislate a desirable outcome into existence, that we can tell a hulking Federal bureaucracy to simply bureaucratize affordable health care into being. Unfortunately, life does not work that way. Reality always intervenes, as we have been seeing with the pain of ObamaCare these past few years—pain that will only continue until Washington Democrats join us to enact a serious bipartisan solution that actually addresses many of our health care challenges and dispenses with the failed policies of this administration. Yet that is exactly the opposite of what we have seen from our friends on the other side so far.

Instead of working with us to solve massive problems, such as the ones the inspector general identified, Democrats in Washington are simply hiding from the issue altogether. They are trying to change the subject. Even hinting at it prompts the Democratic majority to shut down the legislative process altogether and cancel committee markups. They block votes and amendments. They will not allow the Senate to consider numerous bipartisan House-passed bills that would address some of ObamaCare's most glaring problems.

Even when a bipartisan group proposes a plan to address a flaw in the law that is reducing incomes for working families, they reject it. Instead, they schedule show votes designed to inflame one group or another.

As for the President, he is traveling around the country this week to give campaign speeches—not working with Congress to help middle-class families struggling under the weight of his policies. So the Democratic plan seems to be to double down on the mess they created and to hope Americans can be distracted enough to forget about it come November.

If that is the plan, it is not going to work. Middle-class Americans know who has been standing by their side throughout this entire ObamaCare fiasco. They know who has been standing against them, serving as a shield for the President and the hard left.

It is not too late for Democrats in Washington to work with Republicans to address the massive problem they created. If they truly care about the millions they have already hurt in this country with this law, it is time to do just that.

REMEMBERING HOWARD BAKER

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, the Senators from Tennessee and I had an opportunity 1 week ago today to attend the funeral of Senator Howard Baker, who led the Senate Republicans for 8 years and was a truly wonderful American.

Actually, it was just an honor to attend his funeral down in Huntsville, TN, a town of 1,248 souls that Senator Baker often referred to as the “center of the known universe.” It was a wonderful tribute, and it carried a lot of lessons about the work we do.

Senator CORKER was there too, and I am sure he felt the same way. Just before the funeral, he noted that Senator Baker was the kind of person who seemed to evoke “wisdom in everything he did.” I was glad to hear the two men got to spend some time together a few months before Senator Baker passed away.

Anyway, a real highlight of the funeral for me was a magnificent—absolutely magnificent—eulogy by Senator ALEXANDER. It captured not only the closeness of their friendship but also the qualities that made Senator Baker such an important figure. This morning I would like to take just a moment to thank Senator ALEXANDER for those thoughtful words and at this point insert his eulogy into the RECORD. I ask unanimous consent that be done.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[Eulogy of Senator Howard Baker, Jr., July 1, 2014]

“HOWARD BAKER, JR.: TENNESSEE’S FAVORITE SON AND ONE OF OUR COUNTRY’S FINEST LEADERS”

(By Lamar Alexander)

On behalf of the Baker family and all of us Tennesseans, let me welcome Vice President Biden, Senator Reid, Senator McConnell, and Senator Danforth, who married Howard and Nancy.

It was August, 1960. Republican Day at the Illinois State Fair. Senator Everett McKinley Dirksen was warming up the crowd of 30,000, explaining why Vice President Richard Nixon should be president of the United States instead of Senator John F. Kennedy.

Seated on the platform behind him were Dirksen’s daughter Joy, and her husband Howard Henry Baker, Jr., a 34-year-old lawyer from Huntsville, Tennessee, who looked about 24.

“Jack Kennedy is a nice young man,” Dirksen was saying. “But all they can say he has ever done was serve on a PT boat in World War II.”

Turning toward his son-in-law with a flourish, Dirksen said, “Why, my own son-in-law, Howard Baker, Jr., was on a PT boat in World War II, and I’ve never heard anyone suggest that he was qualified to serve in any public office.”

Four years later, instead of running for the safe congressional seat that his father and stepmother had held, Howard Baker, Jr., ran to become the first Tennessee Republican popularly elected to the United States Senate. He probably would have won if presidential candidate Barry Goldwater hadn’t stopped at the Knoxville airport a few days before the election and promised to sell the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Howard ran again in 1966. I remember standing at that same airport being embarrassed by his prediction to the media that he would win by 100,000 votes, and then, a few days later, he did just that.

Behind Howard Baker’s pleasant demeanor was a restless ambition that would propel him to the heights of American politics and government for forty years.

He learned quickly. His maiden address in the Senate lasted about an hour. Afterwards, he asked Senator Dirksen, the Senate Republican Leader, “How did I do?”

“Howard,” Dirksen replied, “perhaps you should occasionally enjoy the luxury of an unexpressed thought.”

In 1968, Howard and Congressman George Bush were runners-up to Governor Spiro Agnew when Nixon picked a vice president. In 1969, when Dirksen died, after only three years in the Senate, he ran for Republican Leader, only to be defeated by Senator Hugh Scott.

In 1971, President Nixon asked him to be on the Supreme Court. Howard declined, then called back and said he would accept if the president insisted, but Nixon had already appointed Bill Rehnquist.

In 1973 came the Watergate hearings. Eight-five percent of Americans saw those hearings, broadcast most days by all of the only four television networks that then existed. And the most famous words were Howard Baker’s: “What did the president know and when did he know it?”

Howard suspected that Senator Scott had made him Ranking Republican on the Watergate Committee to “get rid of me as a competitor.” He had run against Scott a second time for Leader, and lost. But instead, the exposure made Baker a national hero and, once again, runner-up in the vice-presidential sweepstakes in 1976 when Gerald Ford picked Bob Dole instead of Howard.

Senator Scott retired, and a few months later, in January, 1977, Howard was elected Republican Leader by one vote. He served for eight years. When, in 1980, the Republican sweep made him majority leader, he visited the wily Democratic Leader Robert Byrd. First, Howard surprised Byrd by suggesting that Byrd keep his ornate office.

Having softened up Byrd, Baker then said, “Senator Byrd, I’ll never learn the rules as well as you know them, so I’ll make a deal with you: I won’t surprise you if you won’t surprise me.”

Byrd replied, “Let me think about it.” The next day he agreed. And they ran the Senate together for four more years.

Baker then commandeered an additional set of offices next to the Republican Leader’s less-spacious quarters that are today called the “Howard Baker Rooms.” He always said that the view from the Howard Baker rooms was the second best view in Washington. The best, of course, is from the White House, which he also occupied—but not in the way he had planned.

In late 1986, while the Bakers were vacationing in Miami, the phone rang. Joy answered. It was President Reagan.

“Where’s Howard?” asked Reagan.

“At the zoo with the grandchildren,” Joy said.

“Wait till he hears about the zoo I have planned for him,” the president said.

Howard became White House chief of staff, helping to cleanse the Reagan presidency of its Iran-Contra troubles.

President Reagan and Howard Baker began each day telling each other a little story. “It got to be a lot of stories,” Howard said. I always felt a little better about our country knowing we had two men at the top with such temperament.

Joy died in 1993. In 1996, Howard married Nancy. Those of us at the wedding were happy because we had never seen two people so happy.

In 1996, the two Senators Baker moved to Tokyo where Howard became U.S. Ambassador to Japan. When he returned, he headed the law firm that is a descendant of a law firm his grandfather founded in Huntsville.

What skills allowed Howard Baker to accomplish so much?

He was an eloquent listener. He said in 2011, “There is a difference between hearing and understanding what people say. You don’t have to agree, but you have to hear what they’ve got to say. And if you do, the chances are much better you’ll be able to translate that into a useful position and even useful leadership.”

He was called “The Great Conciliator” for his habit of gathering disputing senators into one room, listening for a while, and then his summary of the discussion would become the senators’ agreement.

He demonstrated courage. He supported civil rights when most southerners didn’t. He and Senator Byrd found 68 votes to ratify the Panama Canal Treaty. Several Republican senators signed a letter asking Baker to resign as Leader because of that.

Roy Blount, Jr., says you start getting into trouble when you stop sounding like where you grew up. Howard Baker never stopped sounding like where he grew up. He always went home to Huntsville, which he called the “center of the known universe.”

He had an eye for talent. In 1969, he told me, “You ought to meet that smart young legislative assistant who works for Senator Marlow Cook.” That assistant was Mitch McConnell. Howard mentored another Tennessee majority leader, Bill Frist; Senators Thompson and Corker; and Governors Sundquist and Haslam; Ambassadors Ashe and Montgomery; Congressman Duncan—as well as many others in this congregation.

With Bill Brock and Winfield Dunn, he kept the door open to Republican primaries, attracting hundreds of thousands of “discerning Democrats” and independents and creating the majority status the Tennessee Republican Party enjoys today.

Howard Baker knew how to make the Senate work. He understood that the Senate’s unique role is as a place for extended debate and amendment on important issues until there is a consensus. That is how he fixed Social Security with Tip O’Neill and Ronald Reagan, how he passed the Reagan tax cuts and the Clean Air and Water laws.

One thing he did not do well was fundraising. He left that to Ted Welch and Jim Haslam and Bill Swain. According to Jim, “Howard would not raise any money at all, until he started raising money for the Baker Center and then he made every call with me.

In the new version of Lamar Alexander’s Little Plaid Book, there is this rule: “When invited to speak at a funeral, remember to mention the deceased at least as often as yourself.”

I have done my best to follow that rule today, but I hope you understand how difficult that is for me, as it would be for many of you.

So let me just get it out all at once: For the last half century, Howard Baker has had more influence on my life than anyone outside my own family. He inspired me to help him build a two-party system. I babysat for Darek and Cissy. I met Honey at