

As is so often the case when a disaster such as this strikes, the first responders, friends, and family members wasted no time rushing to the aid of people whose homes and businesses were damaged. I have no doubt the people in Fairdale, Rochelle, and all of the other areas that were struck will clean up and rebuild. They will mourn the loss of life, they will heal the wounds of those who were injured, and they will start tomorrow to make another day.

For the families of the women who lost their lives and for everybody who lost homes and property, our thoughts are with you.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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 President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 11:30 a.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 10:36 a.m., recessed until 11:31 a.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. FLAKE).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming is recognized.

OBAMACARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, tomorrow is April 15. April 15 is a date that causes a great deal of stress and anxiety for hard-working American taxpayers. For millions of American families, this year is going to be worse than ever before. The Obama health care law, ObamaCare, is making tax day harder for Americans.

American taxpayers who were forced into the ObamaCare system—well, they are having to fill out even more forms this year than in the past, so many forms that the Internal Revenue Service can then enforce all of the President's health care mandates. It is a complicated and burdensome process.

President Obama promised that buying health insurance through ObamaCare was going to be as easy as buying a television on Amazon. Well, why didn't the President ever say it was going to be so difficult to satisfy the IRS? Why didn't the President say that hard-working American taxpayers would have to fill out pages and pages of forms just to find out if they had actually paid the right amount for their health insurance? Why didn't the President say that people who changed jobs during the year might have to pay hundreds or thousands of dollars to the IRS?

That doesn't happen when you buy a television on Amazon. Amazon tells

you the price, and that is what you pay. Amazon doesn't make you fill out the forms on April 15; Amazon doesn't demand more money from you after the amount you paid. But that is what is happening to millions of Americans across the country. Taxes were already too complicated. Now, because of ObamaCare, it is much worse.

For this year's tax filing season, the IRS released seven new forms that people might have to fill out to comply with the new health care law. The instructions alone for these forms are 46 pages long.

A married couple with 2 children might have to enter numbers and other information into 133 individual boxes on just 1 of the new ObamaCare tax forms. A family could spend more time filling out one of these forms than they used to spend filling out their entire tax returns in the past.

So for people who go through all of this effort, the results actually still can be terrifying.

CNN ran a report earlier this year about the problem. The headline was: "I have to pay back my ObamaCare subsidy." They told the story of Janice Riddle from Los Angeles. She got an ObamaCare subsidy last year. Then when she got a new job, she forgot to tell the IRS about the new job. They sort of knew because she was getting paid from the new job and she was paying taxes, but she didn't actually alert the IRS about it from the standpoint of ObamaCare. So when she was doing taxes this year, she learned she has to pay back the entire amount of the subsidy, more than \$5,000.

She told CNN:

I'm in shock . . . but I have no choice. Do I want to argue with the IRS or the Obama administration?

Well, Janice is not alone. The Obama administration says as many as 7.5 million families in America will have to reconcile their ObamaCare subsidies on their taxes for 2014 when they have the filing deadline tomorrow.

According to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation, last month only 4 percent of all the families who qualified for a subsidy got the right amount. So the Kaiser Family Foundation did a study last month, and what they have come out with is only 4 percent of all the families across the country who qualified for a subsidy got the right amount. The study found that half of all U.S. households that were eligible for a subsidy would have to pay back some of it with their taxes this year. The average amount they are going to have to pay back is \$794.

One of those people who just found out he owes the government so much money is Rob Tuck from Dublin, CA. According to an article last week by the Associated Press, he said he had expected to actually get a refund for his taxes—a refund of \$400 for his taxes from his work last year. It turns out his refund has been almost wiped out—wiped out—to repay some of the subsidy he got to buy an expensive

ObamaCare policy. He changed jobs during the year. He got a little extra income. In America, that should be a good thing, you get extra income. Well, not for him. It came with a large pricetag from the government. He said he enrolled in the plan to avoid the tax penalties of being uninsured, and he says that now he feels penalized by the Obama administration anyway.

Another person who is feeling penalized by the President's health care law is Bill Preus of St. Petersburg, FL. He was quoted in the same Associated Press article last week. This man was only on ObamaCare for 3 months. After that time, he went onto Medicare. Well, there was poor coordination between the ObamaCare Web site, healthcare.gov, and his insurance company. Because of that, he may have to pay the IRS close to \$4,000.

Now, the man used to own an insurance agency, and, according to the article, he said he is used to complexity, but he said he never has seen anything like this. He told the Associated Press: "It's a total mess."

His tax preparer and the IRS both told him—his tax preparer and the IRS—that the best thing to do was to file an incomplete return so it would trigger an audit and then they could sort things out.

Is that the President's idea of his health care plan being as easy to use as buying a TV on Amazon? This man has to go through an IRS audit. That is what they are hoping for, to get audited by the IRS. Apparently, that is the easiest way for Washington to figure out its own rules. It is outrageous.

When the President, in the past, has been asked about the health care law, he said it is actually working better than he expected. What did he expect when people are telling stories such as these?

The President's health care law is more than 2,000 pages long. It paid for thousands of IRS agents—people to investigate American taxpayers to make sure they comply with all the law's destructive and expensive mandates. But all of that complexity has become a disaster. This law has been bad for patients, it has been bad for providers, and as we reach the IRS filing deadline tomorrow, it is clear this law is terrible for taxpayers.

This isn't what Democrats promised, and it is not what the American people wanted. People didn't want more red-tape, more stress. They just wanted the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs. That is what Republicans in the Senate are working to give them. We can do it without more IRS audits. We can do it without a 2,000-page law. We can do it without making tax day harder for Americans. We can do it without all the negative side effects of ObamaCare.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN, SGR AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, on April 2, President Obama unveiled a nuclear agreement with Iran. The purpose of the administration's negotiations with Iran was simple: Prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. But the agreement the Obama administration seems to have arrived at cast doubts on whether the administration will be able to achieve that goal. The framework does not shut down a single nuclear facility in Iran. It does not destroy a single centrifuge in Iran. It doesn't stop research and development on Iran's centrifuges. And it allows Iran to keep a substantial part of its existing stockpile of enriched uranium.

It is not surprising that Members of both parties are concerned about this agreement. Democrats and Republicans are worried because it appears the administration is not trying to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon but simply trying to manage when Iran will develop one. Again and again during the process Secretary Kerry and the President seemed to forget that the goal of the negotiation was not a deal for its own sake but a deal that would actually stop Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

American priorities were sacrificed for the sake of getting an agreement. In the process, the administration may have ensured that the deal they finally arrived at is too weak to achieve its goal.

The stakes on this one are very high. The deal we are talking about here is not a trade agreement. It is not a land dispute. It is not a negotiation over water rights. It is a question of whether a tyrannical oppressive regime that has backed terrorists and announced its intention of taking the country of Israel off the map should get access to the most apocalyptic weapons known to man.

The deal we arrive at in the coming months will shape the Middle East for decades to come, and the cost of failure will be nothing less than a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. Imagine for a second what it would be like to have a nuclear-armed Middle East.

Right now we are already witnessing a quasi-proxy war in Yemen with Iran supporting the Houthis and a Saudi Arabia-led coalition bombing the Houthis and supporting the ousted government. Imagine that same scenario if both major powers had nuclear weapons at their disposal. Make no mistake, that is the type of situation we could be facing if we fail to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, not to mention the threat that our ally Israel would be facing.

Today the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is set to mark up a bipartisan Iran bill for consideration by the full Senate. The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 would give Congress 60 days to approve or disapprove any final agreement. This legislation would ensure the American people, through their representatives in Congress, have a voice in any final agreement with Iran.

Given the fact the ramifications of this agreement will last well beyond the Obama administration, it is essential the American people have a voice in this process, which makes congressional review indispensable. This bill would also ensure Iran is held accountable for upholding its end of the agreement by requiring the President to evaluate Iran's compliance every 90 days.

This legislation has broad bipartisan support, and I believe it will quickly pass the Senate. I am hopeful the President will listen to the concerns the American people have expressed and ensure they are addressed before any final agreement is reached.

Every Member of Congress would like to see the President successfully conclude a deal with Iran that would prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon, but the President needs to remember that a deal is only acceptable if it achieves that goal. If we can't secure a deal that will prevent a nuclear-armed Iran, then we should step back from the negotiating table and reimpose the sanctions that were so successful in driving Iran to the table in the first place. Anything less than a verifiable, accountable, and enforceable deal with Iran is a failure.

One bright spot in this Iran debate has been the bipartisan cooperation I just mentioned that has characterized the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. This is a trend we are seeing a lot more of in the Republican-led Senate. There was the bipartisan Keystone bill, the bipartisan legislation to prevent suicide among veterans, the bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Terrorism Risk Insurance Program, the bipartisan legislation to increase penalties for perpetrators and provide restitution for victims of child pornography, and now there is the bipartisan Iran bill.

This week we have another bipartisan agreement. Today, Congress will vote to repeal the flawed sustainable growth rate formula that has been used to calculate doctors' Medicare reimbursements since its enactment in 1997. This formula was supposed to control spending, but it never worked effectively. Since 2003, Congress has had to patch the formula regularly to ensure that physicians are paid a reasonable amount for their services.

In all, there have been 17 patches or short-term fixes—Band-Aids, if you will—enacted over the last 12 years. The bipartisan solution that is being considered on the Senate Floor today repeals this flawed formula perma-

nently and replaces it with a payment system that focuses on quality, not quantity. It also puts in place the first significant reforms in Medicare in a long time.

Without reforms, the Medicare trust fund will be insolvent as soon as 2030, leaving seniors without access to the care they have been promised. The bipartisan agreement we are passing today starts the process of strengthening Medicare and putting it on a more sustainable path going forward so that the current generation of seniors as well as future generations can enjoy the benefits they have been promised.

With the return of bipartisanship and regular order we have had here over the first few months of the Republican-led Senate, I am disappointed the Democrats are continuing to obstruct a bill that should be the most obviously bipartisan bill we have taken up all year. The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act would provide law enforcement with additional resources to combat the scourge of human trafficking and increase the resources available to trafficking victims.

This bill was cosponsored by 12 Democrats, in addition to 21 Republicans, and it appeared to have strong bipartisan support for passage. In fact, it was reported out of the Judiciary Committee unanimously.

Unfortunately, Members of the Democratic Party's most extreme wing decided to fixate on a funding restriction in the bill that has been a routine part of appropriations bills and spending bills around here for decades. The Hyde amendment reflects the sentiments of a majority of Americans. That is the funding restriction that I referred to. The sentiment of a majority of Americans is that the Federal Government shouldn't be using taxpayer dollars to pay for abortions. It has been the consensus view around here literally since 1976.

It is unfortunate the leftwing of the Democratic Party has taken the extreme step of holding up relief for victims of human trafficking over language that simply maintains a status quo—the status quo that has been in place around here since 1976.

Every year thousands of innocent victims—most frequently women and children—are trafficked within the borders of the United States. Many of these victims are children who are bought and sold to feed the twisted desires of sexual predators. Others are forced into lives of slave labor, compelled to work in the shadows without the protection of the law. Rescuing these innocent victims and ensuring their captors are punished must be a priority.

The Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act has been endorsed by 200 advocacy groups, including the NAACP, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, Rights4Girls, the National Association to Protect Children, the Fraternal