

protect those agencies and stop efforts to fundamentally undo important Wall Street reform.

It is time for my colleagues to stop proposing spending bills on a wide range of the subcommittees of the Appropriations Committee that have no chance of passing and that continue to push us closer to an inevitable government shutdown that would devastate our economy and I think cause real harm to our working families. I have heard those very same colleagues argue that by doing so, they are on the side of banks and they are on the side of increasing the forward growth of our economy and that is why they want to dismantle regulations. But what I hear from business leaders and bank leaders in my home State is that the biggest threat they face are more manufactured crises here in Congress that chip away at the confidence in the American economy that serves as a bedrock of our prosperity.

As the leading Democrat on the committee charged with overseeing the financial services funding bills here in the Senate, I think it is critical that we work together to improve Wall Street reforms where we can rather than reverse what progress we have made. Whether you are a Republican or a Democrat, a consumer or a banker, a CEO or a small business owner, a family member or a financial services worker, we can all agree that we do not want another financial crisis. Nobody wants another bailout to banks.

I strongly believe you can be pro-business, pro-financial services, and still believe in smart, strong, sensible regulation to keep everyone in our financial services system healthy and our overall system and economy safe. I believe a well-regulated financial system is critical to sustaining this sector into the future and ensuring that it is a trusted place for businesses and consumers to invest in from at home or abroad. A strong, secure, stable economy has long been the hallmark of America's global leadership, so I think we must work together to make sure it remains that way for decades to come.

Wall Street reform was the result of a lot of hard work and compromise just 5 years ago. I look forward to working with my colleagues to continue strengthening the financial rules of the road as we go further into the future together.

I yield the floor.

I 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. CORNYN. 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 SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 4:28 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 6:19 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PERDUE).

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I 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.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to the motion to reconsider vote No. 250, the vote by which cloture was not invoked on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion to proceed.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to reconsider the vote on the motion to invoke cloture on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the motion to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22, an act to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Mitch McConnell, Roger F. Wicker, Shelley Moore Capito, Rob Portman, John Cornyn, James M. Inhofe, Daniel Coats, John Boozman, Johnny Isakson, Pat Roberts, John Barrasso, Mike Rounds, Mike Crapo, Roy Blunt, Thom Tillis, Deb Fischer, Richard Burr.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the motion to proceed to H.R. 22, Hire More Heroes Act of 2015, shall be brought to a close, upon reconsideration?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) and the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI).

Further, if present and voting, the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) would have voted "yea."

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. GARDNER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 62, nays 36, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 251 Leg.]

YEAS—62

Alexander	Fischer	Moran
Ayotte	Flake	Nelson
Barrasso	Gardner	Perdue
Blunt	Graham	Portman
Boxer	Grassley	Risch
Burr	Hatch	Roberts
Capito	Heitkamp	Rounds
Cassidy	Heller	Sanders
Coats	Hoeven	Sasse
Cochran	Inhofe	Schatz
Collins	Isakson	Scott
Corker	Johnson	Sessions
Cornyn	King	Shaheen
Cotton	Kirk	Sullivan
Crapo	Klobuchar	Tester
Daines	Lankford	Thune
Donnelly	Leahy	Tillis
Durbin	Manchin	Vitter
Enzi	McCain	Whitehouse
Ernst	McCaskill	Wicker
Feinstein	McConnell	

NAYS—36

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reid
Booker	Kaine	Rubio
Brown	Lee	Schumer
Cantwell	Markey	Shelby
Cardin	Menendez	Stabenow
Carper	Merkley	Toomey
Casey	Mikulski	Udall
Coons	Murphy	Warner
Cruz	Murray	Warren
Franken	Paul	Wyden

NOT VOTING—2

Boozman Murkowski

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 62, the nays are 36.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, upon reconsideration, the motion is agreed to.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion to proceed.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 19, H.R. 22, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

MORNING BUSINESS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS SCHOOL OF NURSING

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, UNLV, School of Nursing.

The UNLV School of Nursing has been an important part of Nevada's

health care system since it admitted its first class in 1965. The program was established in part because of a nursing shortage in the State of Nevada in the early 1960s. The nursing shortage, coupled with the State's sudden population growth, threatened to create an untenable situation for all Nevadans. Recognizing this, various stakeholders, including the Nevada Public Health Association, Nevada Nurses Association, and Nevada State Board of Nursing, worked to create the nursing school to fill vacant nursing positions throughout the State and provide quality nursing education to Nevada residents. The first graduating class included 19 students; and to date, more than 4,300 students have graduated from the UNLV School of Nursing.

In fulfilling its mission of providing an exceptional education to nursing students and meeting Nevada's health care needs, the UNLV School of Nursing has established a tradition of progress, innovation, and leadership. For instance, when the school first began, it only offered an associate degree program. Today, the school offers eleven academic programs. Additionally, the school began offering an online master's degree program in 2004. This program ranks among the top ten best online graduate nursing programs in the Nation. I am confident that the UNLV School of Nursing will continue to play a critical role in Nevada's health care system as it begins its next chapter.

I commend the UNLV School of Nursing on their 50th anniversary and applaud their exceptional service to the State of Nevada.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

REAUTHORIZING THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a copy of my remarks at the American Enterprise Institute be printed in the RECORD.

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

REAUTHORIZING THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

Thank you, Andrew. It's great to be here. It's great to be at AEI, an organization for which I have lots of respect. I also have great respect for our institutions for higher education. As Dr. Kelly said, I was once president of the University of Tennessee. That's harder than it looks. I remember on my first day on campus a faculty member came up to me, I was very enthusiastic that day, and she said, "You have so much enthusiasm, you're reminding me of Clark Kerr." And I said, "Well, thank you very much," because Clark Kerr was a distinguished president of the University of California. And I said, "How is that?" She said, "You know, he arrived and left in the same way—fired with enthusiasm." It's a precarious existence, most college presidents will tell you.

I wrote an op-ed for the Wall Street Journal last week in which I urged fellow politicians and some pundits to stop telling stu-

dents they cannot afford a college education. I noted that two years of community college are free or nearly free for low-income students, given that tuition and fees across the country average \$3,300 and that the average Pell grant is about the same. Public 4-year colleges average about \$9,000 in tuition and fees. I wrote that at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, which is closer to \$12,000, nearly every in-state freshman has a state Hope Scholarship, a third have Pell grants, and many have access to state aid. About 75 percent of all college students attend those public institutions.

Even many of the private elite colleges have programs to help families figure out what they can afford to borrow and then those institutions such as Georgetown University make up the difference. Many students borrow money for college, but the average 4-year graduate's debt is about \$27,000—or roughly the same as the average new car loan. And for that investment, you get a college degree that the College Board still says will earn you \$1 million dollars more over your lifetime than if you hadn't earned that degree. The problem, I explained in my op-ed, is that we need to grow the percentage of Americans with college degrees over the next 5 years—otherwise we're on track to fall short by 5 million workers with degrees. So politicians, in my view, should stop discouraging students from attending college—especially the low-income students who are likely to benefit most from federal aid, and may also be the most easily discouraged.

Well, on Tuesday, the Wall Street Journal ran letters to the editor in response to my op-ed. Here's a sampling from one: "Lamar Alexander has been a politician so long that he no longer understands that money comes from working people who understand what is expensive, and four years of college plus living expenses is expensive." From another, "The traditional system is unsustainable." From another "Politicians should stop talking about a college 'premium' because the costs, even with all the subsidies, exceed the benefits for many." And another: "It is counterintuitive to many politicians, but the more affordable they try to make higher education, the less affordable it will become."

In other words—I hit a nerve.

But buried at the bottom of these letters published by the Wall Street Journal was this brief line from a woman in San Diego: "Years ago" she said, "there was a bumper sticker: 'Think education is expensive? Try life without it!'" Still holds true and always will.

I've always said that it is never easy to pay for college. It's just easier than most people think. And as we approach the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in the Senate education Committee, I don't pretend that our system is not in need of reforms. But let's begin with the shared recognition that life without education is more expensive—and that the cost to our country will be great if we don't increase the number of Americans with post-secondary education and degrees.

So let's look at measures we can take as a federal government to encourage colleges to control their costs, operate more efficiently, help students graduate more quickly with less debt—and let's be sure that all these measures do nothing to challenge the autonomy and independence that is at the heart of our education system—the autonomy and independence that have driven our colleges and universities to create the best system of higher education in the world.

So I'd like to focus today on four goals for the reauthorization that we're working on: first: ending the overregulation of colleges

and universities; second: ending the federal collection and dissemination of useless data; third: improving our accreditation system; and fourth: ensuring that institutions begin sharing in the risk of lending to students.

So let's take the first one—ending the overregulation of colleges. Now I'm here today as a Republican speaking to a generally conservative audience about reducing regulations—not a new idea for most of us. But there's an important distinction in this—we already have bipartisan support in the committee for reducing these regulations. Senator Mikulski, Senator Bennet, Senator Burr and I commissioned a report two years ago on higher education regulation by a task force of educators, and we asked for specific recommendations on how to reduce these regulations. We said, "We don't want another sermon. Tell us exactly what we could do to reduce the regulatory burden." And we got back 59 recommendations, with 10 listed as priorities. A dozen of them are things that the U.S. Secretary of Education himself could do and the rest would require some sort of congressional action. We are currently working on legislation that adopts and implements many of the report's recommendations.

The report told us that the higher education system is entangled in, the report's words, a "jungle of red tape" and that every workday, each one of our 6,000 higher education institutions gets a letter or a guidance or a new rule from the U.S. Department of Education, on average. Every workday, every one of our institutions, 6,000 of them, get a letter or a guidance or a new rule from the US Department of Education that presumably changes their procedures.

Here are three examples of how that plays out in our colleges:

First, Vanderbilt University—because the chancellor of Vanderbilt was one of the co-chairs of our group making these recommendations and the other was the chancellor of the University of Maryland. So Vanderbilt hired the Boston Consulting Group to tell the university just how much it cost Vanderbilt to comply with Federal rules and regulations in one year, 2014, and the startling answer was \$150 million—\$11,000 per student. \$11,000 is more than the average tuition in fees at public universities in the United States.

Second, here's the FAFSA form that 20 million Americans fill out every year. Some of you have seen it. This is the form 20 million Americans fill out every year in order to get a grant or loan to attend college. Now most people fill it out online, some financial aid officers disparage my doing this because they say it's not that hard to fill out. Maybe not for them, I mean they've been working on it for years. But I've talked to students who have literally burst into tears over the complexity of this thing. The president of a community college in Memphis told me he thinks he loses 1,500 students a semester because this is simply such an intimidating list of questions. We have testimony in our education committee that said those 108 questions could be reduced to two. One would be: what's the size of your family, and two would be: what's the size of your family income. That would answer 95 percent of the questions that the U.S. Department of Education needs to award federal student aid.

Third, the government hands out \$24 billion in research dollars to colleges and universities through the National Institutes of Health. The National Academy of Sciences has a study group that's twice done a survey and both times found that 42 percent of a principal investigator's time with federally funded research is spent on administrative tasks. If we could reduce that 42 percent to 40 percent or 35 percent or 30 percent or 25