

testing in this bill. I hate testing as much as anybody else. Believe me, the Bennet girls who are students in the Denver public schools hate testing more than anybody else. But it is critically important that until we can figure out another measure, the only way we can measure growth of kids is through that annual test. I commend Chairman ALEXANDER for keeping that option alive in his opening bill, and we kept it in the end.

It still requires that we break down data so we can see how kids of color are doing compared to their peers and how low-income kids are doing compared to wealthier kids. It requires that States address the bottom 5 percent of schools and requires States to deal with the stubborn cases of high-performing schools where there are kids in subgroups—kids of color and in particular special needs kids—who aren't succeeding and aren't performing.

It also relents in important respects and says that decisions about how to change schools don't belong in the Federal Government, don't belong with the Department of Education, but they belong at home. I agree with that completely.

I want to close, and I say to the Presiding Officer, forgive me for asking for a few more additional moments. I want to thank all the Coloradans who helped us write this bill. I thank the Colorado Association of School Executives, the Colorado Association of School Boards, the Colorado Department of Education, the Colorado Board of Cooperative Educational Services, the Colorado Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers in Colorado, the dozens of teachers who took time to speak with us, numerous school districts and superintendents who provided us feedback and ideas, civil rights groups across the State, including the NAACP, the Urban League, and Padres & Jóvenes Unidos, the Colorado Impact Aid advocates, Colorado's Children Campaign, Colorado Succeeds, the Charter School League, Rural Schools Alliance, Colorado PTA, Clayton Early Learning, the Merage Foundation, the Colorado Education Initiative, and many more.

This is a great day in the Senate. It is proof that we can overcome our differences and come together and actually solve problems. But it is only the start of what we have to do. It is the next generation of Americans that is going to have the opportunity we have. In this global economy, this shrinking economy, in some ways this savage economy, it is going to be harder and harder to get by without an education. It is going to be harder to get by with something north of a high school diploma, harder to get by with something less than a college education. It is hard to get by if you don't have access to midcareer education so you can change your profession. But we have taken a step forward in this bill.

I look forward to the day when I can come to the floor based on the results

that we see to demonstrate that the ZIP Code you are born into doesn't determine the education you get; when we are actually funding what we say we are funding in order to close the achievement gap; when we see that kids 0 to 5 actually have access to those 30 million words that their more affluent peers have; when we can say that every kid in America is going to a school that any Senator in this place would be proud to send their kids; when we can say to anybody in America who has worked hard through their K-12 education and been admitted to the best college they could get into that "You can go there and not bankrupt yourself or your family." Then we can come to the floor and say we are not treating children like they are someone else's children; we are treating America's children like they are America's children. And I think we can get there working together.

I will close by again saying thank you to my colleagues on the HELP Committee. Thank you to Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY and their counterparts in the House of Representatives. Thank you for all of your good work.

With that, Mr. President, I yield the floor.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LEE).**  
The Senator from Nevada.

**MR. HELLER.** Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with my colleague, the Senator from New Mexico.

**THE PRESIDING OFFICER.** Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### MIDDLE CLASS HEALTH BENEFITS TAX REPEAL ACT

**MR. HELLER.** Mr. President, together we rise to share our concerns about the devastating impact of the Cadillac tax enacted as part of ObamaCare. As the Presiding Officer knows, I know, and those around the country know, the Cadillac tax is a 40-percent excise tax set to take effect in 2018 on employer-sponsored health insurance plans.

My colleagues from across the country have heard the same concerns that I have. As both my friend from New Mexico and I have heard, this 40-percent tax will increase costs, significantly reduce benefits, or result in employers getting rid of their employer-sponsored health care coverage all together.

This is precisely why Senator HEINRICH and I have offered the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act of 2015, the only bipartisan piece of legislation that would fully repeal this onerous tax. Our bill has 22 bipartisan co-sponsors. We all agree that this tax should be fully repealed because we know it will have a negative effect on hard-working, tax-paying Americans. This was clearly demonstrated last week when the Senate overwhelmingly supported and adopted our amendment to fully repeal the Cadillac tax by a vote of 90 to 10.

Organized labor, the chamber of commerce, local and State governments, small businesses, seniors, and, together, 90 percent of the Senate—we put forth a solution to fix a problem affecting many Americans and their families. It is very rare these days to see this much agreement in Washington. Members on both sides of the aisle—Senator HEINRICH and I—came together, listened to what our constituents had to say, and sent a mandate to the President to repeal this tax. Today we will discuss why fully repealing the 40-percent excise tax is so important for middle-class families. Whether it is through our legislation, which is S. 2045, the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act of 2015, or through other must-pass legislation, we hope to address this by the end of the year. Senator HEINRICH and I will do everything we can within our power to repeal this tax.

I thank the Senator from New Mexico for his leadership in making real progress in fully repealing the Cadillac tax a reality, as we are here to speak about today. With our vote last week, the Senate sent a clear message that we can, and we should, fully repeal this tax. It takes both sides of the aisle listening to the American people.

With that, I ask Senator HEINRICH what he has heard from his constituents that makes full repeal of the Cadillac tax so important.

**MR. HEINRICH.** Mr. President, I start by thanking my colleague, Senator HELLER of Nevada, for his partnership and his leadership in pushing this issue forward and doing so effectively. I think the amendment we saw last week speaks to just how bipartisan this has become and how important it is. These days, there truly aren't many things around this place where we get a 90-to-10 vote.

This tax, which will go into effect in 2018, was meant to help pay for other parts of the Affordable Care Act by charging a 40-percent tax on the highest cost, employer-based health plans. It was supposed to target only overly generous health plans—the "Cadillacs on the health care highways," so to speak. In practice, however, the tax has become more of a "Ford Focus tax." It will impact middle-income families who, for reasons that are largely outside their control, have health plans that already or soon will reach their policy limits.

The tax will force many employers to pay steep taxes on their employees' health plans and flexible spending accounts. It will possibly eliminate some employer-provided health care plans altogether.

The Cadillac tax has already limited options for New Mexicans to curb costs and keep plans affordable. Let me give an example. I recently heard from Jamie Wagoner, the benefits and compensation manager for the city of Farmington, NM. Under her leadership, the city began implementing wellness programs to slow the increase in health

spending—exactly what we all wanted. Unfortunately, the city recently learned that its wellness programs would ultimately be factored in as a benefit subject to the Cadillac tax.

It doesn't make sense that benefits designed to promote health and wellness, and ultimately drive down costs, actually end up triggering this new tax. This creates an inverted incentive for employers to avoid preventive benefits, such as wellness programs, that we all know are central to keeping our health care costs under control.

There are better ways to pay for the good things in the Affordable Care Act. Doing away with this onerous tax on employees' health coverage before it goes into effect will protect important benefits for workers and ensure that businesses and families get a fair deal.

I have always opposed this tax on the middle class, and I worked to strip it from the ACA when I was a freshman legislator in the House of Representatives. In New Mexico, small business owners, labor unions, counties, rural electric co-ops, municipalities—you name it—all oppose the tax. When was the last time we had a piece of legislation that united all of those constituencies?

That is why Senator HELLER and I introduced the Middle Class Health Benefits Tax Repeal Act of 2015 to fully repeal this tax. This bipartisan effort also has companion legislation in the House of Representatives—legislation that has 178 cosponsors from both sides of the aisle. There was a vote on an amendment that Senator HELLER offered to include a full repeal of the Cadillac tax in the budget reconciliation bill, and the amendment was adopted 90 to 10, as my colleague pointed out.

The landmark reforms in the ACA have given thousands of my constituents access to affordable, quality health care for the first time in their lives. But even the strongest supporters of this law know it is not perfect, and there are some parts of it that we absolutely need to fix. This is one of them.

Republicans and Democrats need to put aside the partisan politics, put aside the grandstanding, and remember why Congress passed the ACA in the first place—to expand access to quality health care for all Americans. We need to work together to produce pragmatic policy that helps us achieve that goal.

So I ask my colleague from Nevada specifically how this Cadillac tax, as it is called, would impact his residents and constituents in the State of Nevada.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from New Mexico for the question. It is a simple answer. That answer is 1.3 million people—1.3 million Nevadans are affected by this Cadillac tax. There are 1.3 million workers who have employer-sponsored health insurance plans, and they will all get hit by this Cadillac tax.

Let me tell you what I am talking about. In this case, we are talking about public employees across the State. We are talking about service industry workers, those who work in Las Vegas on the Strip. They will be impacted by this legislation. We are talking small business owners across the State of Nevada. They all know they are going to get hit by this 40-percent excise tax. Not to be left out, of course, are the retirees, the seniors in the State of Nevada that will also be affected by this particular tax.

We are talking about three things: reducing benefits, increasing premiums, and also higher deductibles. Let me repeat the three things that this excise tax does: It reduces benefits, increases premiums, and raises deductibles. These are three things that none of us want to see, not in this Chamber. All these lead to more money being taken out of the pockets of taxpayers and hard-working families.

For those who supported this law, this tax was intended to go after high-cost plans provided to the very wealthiest Americans. Clearly, we see in this colloquy back and forth that is not the case. This is going to hurt every middle-class, hard-working, tax-paying American.

We know this tax is hard hitting, and it will affect the middle class. For that purpose, the Senator from New Mexico and I have brought this legislation to this floor. Again, we will repeat, it was a 90-to-10 vote—something we don't see very often in this Chamber. I believe that kind of a vote is a message for every American.

I said on the floor recently when we were having this debate that nobody in America supports this; nobody in America supports a 40-percent excise tax on their health care benefits. Nobody does. There may be a few here in Washington, DC, but when you get outside of Washington, DC, nobody supports it. That is why we are having this discussion today, so we can inform not only Nevadans, not only New Mexicans but our colleagues here in this Chamber how important and how onerous this is.

Having said that, maybe we can get more information on what the Cadillac tax really does, and we will hear the answer to that question from Senator HEINRICH.

Mr. HEINRICH. I thank my colleague.

Mr. President, the whole policy objective of the Cadillac tax was supposed to cap excessive spending as a way to reduce health care spending and to generate revenue for other parts of the ACA. Obviously, the popular name of the tax implies that it is only going to hit a few individuals with gold-plated health insurance plans. When this was proposed and included in the ACA, people cited Goldman Sachs' executive health benefits plans as sort of the poster child for the Cadillac plan. Obviously, they chose very wisely in the way that they branded this. But this

tax targets many plans that aren't gold plated; they are barely bronze plated. It solidly taxes middle-class workers.

Proponents of the Cadillac tax are operating under the clearly flawed premise that plans with overly generous benefits are the primary drivers of increased health insurance programs, and we know today that is not the case. The data doesn't back it up.

According to a 2014 report, the richness of plan benefits accounts only for about 6 percent of the overall increases in a plan's premium growth. The costs of employer health plans are actually driven by factors that are largely out of the control of the actual beneficiary—things like the group's size, the health status of the firm's employees, or the age band for those employees. Geography alone accounts for 69.3 percent of a plan's premium growth, which obviously would be completely unaffected.

It is clear that the Cadillac tax will hurt millions of workers, their families, retirees—all with health plans of modest value. This includes low- and moderate-income families, people on fixed incomes because they are retirees, public sector employees, small businesses, the self-employed, including three-quarters of a million New Mexicans. Let me put that in perspective: There are only 2 million of us.

I ask Senator HELLER, my colleague from the Silver State: What are employers in the State of Nevada expecting will happen when the Cadillac tax goes into effect if we aren't able to pass this legislation?

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, to answer the question of the Senator from New Mexico: As he just mentioned, three-quarters of a million New Mexicans will be affected by this legislation. As I said earlier, 1.3 million Nevadans will be affected. I think we have 3 million, so roughly half of Nevadans are going to be affected by this excise tax—a 40-percent excise tax.

Fortunately, through Senator HEINRICH's hard work and our efforts here on this floor, again, I repeat, we passed this legislation 90 to 10. I think it bears heavily on the hard work my friend from New Mexico did to get this in front of this Chamber.

As we can imagine, if 1.3 million Nevadans are affected by this, you will hear from all of them. You do. You hear from all of them. I have heard from large companies, I have heard from small businesses, and I have heard from health care employees such as hospitals and the American Cancer Society. Organized labor in Nevada has contacted my office, as have senior citizens throughout my State. They are all saying the same thing. They are saying: The Cadillac tax needs to be fully repealed or our employees will experience massive changes to their health care. I think that bears repeating. The Cadillac tax needs to be fully repealed or our employees will experience massive changes to their health care.

Large employers who negotiate multiyear contracts are seeing this tax come up quickly for 2018. Yes, this tax goes into effect in the year 2018. As my friend from New Mexico and I know, they are negotiating these contracts today. For 2018, they are negotiating contracts for large companies, labor organizations, and even public employees—today for 2018. That is why it is so important at this moment. They are planning and negotiating with employers now for how this tax will impact their employees' benefits within the next 2 years.

I was talking with D. Taylor from the Culinary Union, a prominent organized labor group in my home State of Nevada, as well as in New York City and California. D. told me that if Congress doesn't repeal the Cadillac tax, culinary employees will see massive changes to their health care plans.

In a letter he sent me in September, urging Republicans and Democrats to work together on this issue—which we are—he called the 40-percent excise tax a “dark cloud . . . that has already started to impact negotiations and shift costs to [their] members.” That is what it is doing to the Culinary Union in Nevada. It is a dark cloud, according to D. Taylor, and it is already impacting negotiations, shifting costs over to the employers.

To make matters worse, the chief financial officer of a waste recycling company, Action Environmental, recently told the Wall Street Journal that his company would consider getting rid of its employee coverage altogether because of ObamaCare's Cadillac tax.

Mr. SASSSE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield for a question at some point?

Mr. HELLER. Certainly.

Mr. SASSSE. It doesn't need to be now.

Mr. HELLER. Let me finish this.

He said: “I'd be lying if I said we haven't had that discussion.” Again, this goes back to the chief financial officer of a waste and recycling company.

Delta Airlines expects ObamaCare will cost it \$100 million per year. Imagine that, one company—Delta Airlines—and the ACA will cost them \$100 million per year. One reason for new costs is the 40-percent excise tax on Delta's employee health benefits.

As if Americans don't have enough trouble as it is with issues with airlines these days, just add a 40-percent excise tax. Some have identified the Cadillac tax as a tax that just hits unions or a tax that just hits wealthy Americans, but the Cadillac tax is a tax on the middle class. I think we know that. I think we understand that. That is why we saw the vote we did last week. It is a tax on small businesses, it is a tax on the middle class, and it is a tax on retirees.

With that, I know we have a question from my friend from Nebraska. I wish to give him an opportunity to raise that question.

Mr. SASSSE. Thank you, sir, and the Senator from New Mexico. Thank you for letting me get in.

I know we don't have a lot of genuine open debates around here, so I want to be honest. This is a little bit awkward to delicately step onto the floor.

I was listening to the debate. I wasn't planning to speak, but I thought I would ask the question. I think the pay-fors in ObamaCare are problematic across the board. I am not a particular defender of any of these pay-fors, but I would ask sincerely, Why would you two be interested in prioritizing changing the tax deductibility or the limits for people who already have tax-protected insurance, but we are not talking about any sort of tax break for the small business people who have none?

The simple fact is we have the particular problems we have in America in health care because of wage and price controls at the end of World War II, where if an employee could get an extra dollar of wages, they would clearly be taxed, but if they got an extra dollar of benefits through their large employer group, that would be tax-free. That is limitless, but that tax benefit only applies to people who are in large groups. If you are in a small business, you don't get any deductibility.

I am not disagreeing with the specific policy you are advocating, but I would ask why would we prioritize this policy when there is no conversation happening on the floor for all the small business men and women in America, the farmers and ranchers who get absolutely zero tax protection? I am trying to understand the prioritization.

Mr. HEINRICH. I want to first welcome our colleague from Nebraska to this conversation. I am sure he has heard a lot about this from his constituents as well. I think the reason the timing of this is so critical is because we see the impacts of this coming at the moment. We still have enough time to do something about it, but we are already seeing the impacts on people who are negotiating contracts now, the impacts of business plans for this.

I think the Senator from Nebraska raises a valid question in that we have a certain incentive built into the current system by virtue of having large health care plans, employer-based plans not be taxed. I actually think it points a way to a more reasonable and elegant way to potentially pay for things in the ACA that some of us value, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't also have that conversation about individual plans and small business and farm and ranch plans because obviously those are people who have a very hard time attaching themselves to these large pools.

Mr. SASSSE. I thank the Senator. I think we all know we need to do genuine health care reform sometime soon in the future because the reality is, the No. 1 driver of uninsurance in America is not preexisting medical conditions, although we all should empathize with

the 4 million of the 320 million of us in America who have uninsurable pre-existing medical conditions, but we are dealing with something on the order of 70 to 80 million Americans in a given calendar year who pass through a period of uninsurance, and the vast majority of them are uninsured because of our insurance pooling arrangements that are still an artifact of the 1940s and 1950s, where people had one job for decades at a time.

When I was a college president, until a year ago coming to join you all here, and I would shake kids' hands at graduation when they walked across the stage, they were not going to just change jobs, they were going to change industries three times in their first decade postcollege. The No. 1 driver of uninsurance in America is job change. These kinds of policies that we are debating on the floor today make it harder to create portable health insurance plans that go with people across job and geographic change, which is actually what is driving the uninsurance in America.

I thank the Senator for allowing me to sneak in for a minute. I am a rookie learning my way around here, but I was on the floor listening to your debate. Thank you for the opportunity.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Nebraska for his input. He is right. There is a broader discussion that has to be had. The Senator from New Mexico and myself are trying to hit on an issue that we feel is vitally important going forward as this new excise tax hits the American people in 2018.

To the Senator from Nebraska, I have no doubt that there is a much broader discussion that needs to be discussed on health care. In fact, this discussion the Senator from New Mexico and I are having isn't on the Affordable Care Act at this point. We are not discussing the Affordable Care Act. We are talking about a principle within it—a tax increase that we believe is onerous and important today. What you are saying is important. Don't get me wrong. It ought to be discussed. We have to find a venue to have that discussion. Thank you very much for your involvement.

I want to ask the Senator from New Mexico how this 40-percent excise tax would affect workers in New Mexico.

Mr. HEINRICH. According to one source, the Kaiser Family Foundation, one in four employers that offer health care benefits will be affected by the Cadillac tax in 2018 if their plans remain unchanged. Despite the fact that the tax doesn't go into effect until then, many employers have already begun scaling back their coverage to avoid that. Despite the fact that the tax itself is set to go into effect in 2018, we are already seeing the impacts to small businesses, to economies now.

As employers consider ways to lower the costs of their health care plans, many are shifting costs to their employees. Increased deductibles, copays,

out-of-pocket maximums, higher copayments and deductibles leave many, especially low- and middle-income workers, underinsured, who are exactly the folks who were not supposed to be touched by the Cadillac tax. These are definitely people in my State who are not driving Cadillacs. I can assure you of that.

According to a study by the American College of Emergency Physicians, higher out-of-pocket costs result in delayed medical care as many forgo essential care when they get sick and become less likely to fill their prescriptions or stick to their doctors' treatment plans, and those with higher out-of-pocket costs are also more likely to seek medical treatment in emergency rooms—the most expensive way to get health care treatment. This is precisely what we were trying to avoid with the advent of the Affordable Care Act.

I want to ask my colleague from Nevada, in particular, you mentioned a number of different constituencies whom you have heard from about this tax—people such as the culinary workers. Are they upper class, Cadillac-driving constituents or are they middle-class folks who are just trying to put food on the table and maybe send their kids to college someday? Who is going to be impacted by this?

Mr. HELLER. I thank the Senator from New Mexico. I want to go to the same report. I think it clarifies his point and the question he just asked me.

Again, as he mentioned, 1.3 million Nevadans are going to be affected by this 40-percent excise tax. Three-quarters of a million New Mexicans are going to be affected by this excise tax. So I have hard time believing that most of them are wealthy enough to have to pay and for their employers to have to pay this kind of tax.

Let's go back to the Kaiser Family Foundation—a report that you quoted from. I have a number of statistics. I think it will better clarify. There is a quote in here that I want to emphasize that answers the point and the question you brought out. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, employees who have job-based insurance have witnessed their out-of-pocket expenses climb from \$900 in 2010 to \$1,300 in 2015. That is an average. That is on average a 50-percent increase in their health care costs in the last 5 years. Employees working for small businesses now have deductibles over \$1,800 on average. Kaiser also noted that the deductibles have risen nearly seven times faster than workers' earnings since 2010.

If you are the average middle-class family, with an average income, can you imagine your deductibles rising seven times faster than your earnings have since 2010? Here is the quote from Kaiser's president, Drew Altman, that really answers your question:

It's quite a revolution. When deductibles are rising seven times faster than wages . . . it means that people can't pay their rent . . .

they can't buy their gasoline. They can't eat.

If that doesn't answer the question of who is getting affected by this—they are individuals who go month to month, week to week, day to day on their wages. When you have deductibles rising seven times faster than your earnings, you get to a point, as Mr. Altman said, that you can't pay your rent, you can't pay your gas, and you can't afford to eat.

As deductibles rise, another way employers are planning on avoiding a massive new tax is by eliminating their popular health savings accounts—HSAs—and FSAs. Over 33 million Americans who have FSAs and 13.5 million Americans who are using HSAs may see these accounts vanish in the coming years as companies scramble to avoid this 40-percent excise tax. HSAs and FSAs are used for things such as hospital and maternity services. HSAs and FSAs are used for things such as childcare and dental care, physical therapy, and access to mental health services. Access to these lifesaving services could all be gone for tens of millions of Americans if the Cadillac tax is not fully repealed. Deductibles are rising, premiums are rising, and services are being cut.

Today we have talked a lot about how employers are making major changes to their workers' health care in order to avoid this tax. If employers—whether it is a union or private company—are changing their employees' health care benefits to avoid the Cadillac tax, this tax is not going to generate the kind of revenue the Congressional Budget Office originally anticipated.

To that question directly, I ask Senator HEINRICH, are CBO's cost assumptions accurate?

Mr. HEINRICH. I thank the Senator for the question because I think this is incredibly important. The CBO estimated that the ACA would generate \$93 billion over 10 years with this tax, but when you drill down on that, only one-quarter of that—about \$23 billion—actually comes from excise tax receipts themselves. The remaining three-quarters comes from revenue that would be theoretically generated from increases in taxable wages that some economists expected would be coupled with reductions in health care benefits. In other words, all the money you are saving, you are going to pass on to the employees in the form of a raise. We simply know that is not what happens in the real world. In fact, employer surveys over the past few years have conclusively pointed to one unifying fact, that at best employers will not raise wages for their workers to compensate for downgrading of employee health insurance benefits.

In fact, a recent American Health Policy Institute study found that three-quarters of employers said that they would not raise wages in order to make up for less comprehensive health insurance plans.

I say to Senator HELLER, I know we are being joined by the leader here, and I am going to have to run to another event in a few minutes, but I want to ask you if you would maybe consider a quick wrapup. I want to make the point that I think we have gotten as far as we have with this effort because of the incredible leadership you have shown, because of the bipartisan nature of this effort, because it is simply common sense that we need to make sure people have easier access to affordable care, and that the Cadillac tax may have sounded good at the time, but we are clearly learning today that this is a Ford Focus tax that will hit your middle-class families, my middle-class working families, and it is something we ought to be able to agree should be repealed.

Mr. HELLER. Mr. President, I want to wrap this up. I know the leader is here, and I want to give him ample time.

I thank the Senator from New Mexico for his comments and for his help and support on this legislation moving forward. I appreciate all the work to get this bipartisan bill to the finish line, and I know we will continue to work together to repeal this bad tax. Once again, whether it is my bipartisan bill, our bipartisan bill, this Chamber's bipartisan bill or a year-end package like tax extenders, we need to repeal this bad tax. Fully repealing the Cadillac tax is an opportunity for Republicans and Democrats to work together and join forces to appeal a bad tax for one purpose, and that is to help 151 million workers keep the health insurance they love.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

#### TRIBUTE TO WILL RIS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to thank Will Ris for his service to American aviation and to congratulate him on his well-deserved retirement.

For nearly 20 years, Will has been senior vice president of government affairs for American Airlines—the principal government relations executive for the airline. His diverse responsibilities include directing all of American's activities with Congress, the administration, and several Federal agencies. And what could possibly be better than waking up every day and helping Congress and the Federal Government better understand the airline industry?

Earlier this year, Will announced that he will retire from American Airlines at the end of this month.

Will Ris's impact on American Airlines and its people cannot be overstated. Since joining American in 1996, Will has been a dedicated representative and the voice of the airline and its people; but, more importantly, he has been a trusted advocate on Capitol Hill. I have worked with Will and his American Airlines team on countless issues that affect passenger air service