

be removed, then my dream would be destroyed."

This young woman's dream and her drive to give back to her community in southern New Mexico are incredible, but her story is far from unique. Her story is similar to thousands of other DREAMers in my home State and hundreds of thousands across our country, some of whom have escaped unthinkable hardships. They are working to contribute to their communities and to create a brighter future. These DREAMers should be met with compassion.

During my listening session, I also heard from a Catholic priest who serves many immigrant families in his parish. He said he was deeply impacted by hearing this young woman's story during our listening session. He told me that her story "reflects exactly what [he's] seen and heard from many families not only from [his] parish but also from neighboring parishes." He said, "There is a lot of fear and people are so concerned and worried—especially families—[about] what can happen after the election."

I want to make it very clear that in the coming years, I will not waiver in standing up for all New Mexicans in my role in the Senate. We should never be a country that kicks out some of our best and brightest students, and we should not be a nation that tears families apart. I will not stand for policies that are contrary to our fundamental American ideas and values.

I would like to thank the young woman who shared her story with me for having the courage to speak out, particularly with the uncertainty of her situation and in the wake of the recent election. The idea that young men and women like this hard-working nursing student in southern New Mexico will have to retreat back into the shadows or fear being removed from their homes as a consequence of congressional inaction on immigration reform is simply unconscionable.

I am calling for the Obama administration to take every possible legal action to protect DREAMers—individuals who are American in every way but for their immigration status—so that they are not targeted for removal by the incoming administration. Last week, I sent a letter to the White House urging President Obama to use his pardon authority to protect DREAMers from deportation.

I also plan to continue pushing for comprehensive immigration reform in the new Congress, which I still strongly believe has bipartisan support among my colleagues—those colleagues who want real solutions rather than rancorous rhetoric. We need to modernize our immigration system to meet the needs of our economy and provide an accountable pathway to earn citizenship for the undocumented workers living here in the shadows, including making the DREAM Act law.

As southwest border security is discussed in the context of immigration

reform, I will continue to be focused on pragmatic and accountable policy decisions that include the many concerns of our border communities. As the son of an immigrant myself, I am familiar with the unique promise that America represents for so many families. I am grateful that when my father and my grandparents fled Germany in the years leading up to World War II, our country chose to see them for what they were—enthusiastic American immigrants.

Our Nation's remarkable spirit is rooted in our diversity, our history, and our culture, which has always been enriched by our immigrant communities and their family members. I encourage my colleagues and our incoming President-elect to look at the human faces of our broken immigration system and to work toward real solutions.

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.

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

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

#### MEDICARE

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. President, every year I hear from hundreds of constituents about the transformative impact Medicare has on their lives. For many of them, Medicare is literally the difference between life and death, between living with dignity or in abject poverty. It is as dramatic as that.

Before we passed Medicare 51 years ago, slightly more than half of our seniors—in Hawaii we call our seniors kupuna—had health insurance. Only half. The insurance they had was very expensive and did not cover much. Millions could barely afford routine medical care, let alone treatment for a catastrophic illness. For the past 50 years, our seniors have approached retirement with the peace of mind of knowing that Medicare will be there for them. It is part of a commitment we have made to care for and honor our kupuna.

To understand what life would be like for our seniors without Medicare, we don't need to look to the distant past before we had Medicare; we can learn from what happened, for example, 3 years ago to a family in Maui, to Phyllis and Tommy Duarte of Maui.

Phyllis and Tommy contacted my office after they received a notice that the Social Security Administration had canceled Phyllis's Social Security payments. Like millions of kupuna across the country, Phyllis and Tommy live on a fixed income and depend on Social Security to pay their bills. After several months without receiving her Social Security check, Phyllis could no longer pay the premiums for her Medi-

care Part B plan. They threatened to terminate her coverage, which is when she contacted my office. Fortunately, we were able to resolve the situation within a few weeks. Phyllis started receiving a check and continues to pay her premiums. Only a short time later, Phyllis fell and broke her arm. It required surgery and years of ongoing physical therapy. The final bill: \$200,000. Phyllis and Tommy were only weeks away from understanding just how devastating it would be to live without Medicare coverage.

It is because of people like Phyllis and Tommy that I fought tooth and nail to make sure Medicare will always be there for our kupuna. It is why I have been on the frontlines to beat back every attempt to privatize and voucherize Medicare since I have been in Congress.

That is why I will do everything in my power to stop our new President and his allies in Congress from shredding this crucial safety net program. Over the past month, Speaker RYAN has made it clear that he intends to resurrect his plan to turn Medicare into a voucher program for private insurance. Under his system, private insurers could deny or delay coverage because seniors would no longer have Medicare's consumer protections. His plan caps the value of these vouchers to the point where they will not keep up with the rising costs of health care. The Congressional Budget Office calculated that the Ryan plan would increase out-of-pocket expenses by \$6,000 per year for millions of seniors—millions who are already on fixed incomes. My colleagues know that I am not given to hyperbole, but this attempt to privatize Medicare is a clear and present danger to millions of seniors.

I know from talking with kupuna in Hawaii that one of the things they worry about most is their health and whether their needs will be met. Anyone who talks to seniors and understands what they are going through would recognize that privatizing Medicare means seniors will have to go out and find medical insurance on the private market. How can you think they will be able to accomplish that? Are insurance companies going to step up to take care of some of the most vulnerable members of our population even though it is not profitable for them to do so? I don't think so.

During the campaign, President-Elect Trump said the right thing about protecting Medicare, but choosing TOM PRICE to head the Department of Health and Human Services sends the opposite message. For years, Congressman TOM PRICE has been PAUL RYAN's closest ally in his crusade to privatize and voucherize Medicare. The Ryan-Price plan would hurt more than 217,000 seniors in Hawaii and millions across the country, including those who live in Janesville, WI, and Roswell, GA. I wonder how Speaker RYAN and Congressman PRICE would explain to seniors in their districts, their States, how

voucherizing Medicare will not hurt them.

Saving Medicare is going to be a daunting fight, but I am not going to shy away from it. I am going to do whatever I can, whenever I can, to protect Medicare for our seniors.

I yield the floor.

#### TRIBUTE TO HARRY REID

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to take a moment to express my appreciation to the Democratic leader, Senator HARRY REID, who spoke earlier on the floor.

I was here with many of my colleagues and listened to his incredible story about his background from Searchlight, NV, to his ascension to the Senate and becoming the Democratic leader.

When I first came to the Senate, Senator REID asked to meet with me. I thought he was going to talk about my philosophy on different issues or what my interests would be or how I was going to try to move forward on particular bills, but what he really wanted to talk about was my family, what I thought was important in life. He was very interested in my family traditions and how that would be impacted by my life in the Senate.

I must tell you, it was very personal. I think many of us have seen many sides of HARRY REID, but one side of him is clear. He treats the Senate as his family, and he treats each one of us as his family.

I wish to express my appreciation for his service in the U.S. Senate and for his public service over so many years.

Myrna and I are friends of Landra and HARRY. We wish them only the best as he moves forward from his career in the Senate.

It has really been a pleasure to serve with him in the Senate. This is an incredible place to serve. Senator REID has certainly made this Senator's life in the Senate much more enjoyable and productive.

Mr. President, part of American culture is to celebrate our small towns. There are few American towns smaller than Searchlight in Clark County, NV. That is the hometown of our beloved Democratic Leader, Senator HARRY REID.

Senator REID epitomizes the American Dream. He grew up without indoor plumbing, in a small cabin built out of scavenged railroad ties, and attended a two-room elementary school. His father was a hard-rock miner. As a young boy, Senator REID would go deep into the mines with his father. Searchlight didn't have its own high school so Senator REID had to hitchhike each week to Henderson, 40 miles away, where he attended Basic High School and boarded with relatives and other families.

Local businessmen saw his potential and helped him attend Utah State University, a debt he repaid. He earned his law degree from George Washington

University and supported his young family by working as a U.S. Capitol Police Officer.

Senator REID started his career in public service as Henderson's city attorney. He revised the city charter and extended the city's boundaries by acquiring Federal land. In 1968, when he was just 28, he was elected to the Nevada State Assembly. As an assemblyman, he introduced the first air pollution legislation in Nevada's history. Two years later, Senator REID became the youngest lieutenant governor in Nevada history, winning election as Governor Mike O'Callaghan's running mate. Mike O'Callaghan had been Senator REID's mentor in high school as a teacher, boxing coach, and friend.

In 1977, Senator REID was appointed chairman of the Nevada Gaming Commission. For 5 years, he was engaged in an unrelenting fight with organized crime syndicates to clean up Nevada's gaming industry. In 1981, his wife—high school sweetheart Landra—found a bomb attached to the family station wagon.

In 1982, Senator REID won the first of two elections to serve in the House of Representatives and then he was elected to the Senate in 1986. In 2005 he became the Democratic Leader, two years later, he became the majority leader, a post he held until the Republicans gained control of the Senate last year. As the Las Vegas Sun put it, he went from being the underdog to the top dog.

I have talked about Senator REID's hardscrabble upbringing because it has made him one of the toughest people I have ever known. Yet he is also one of the kindest, and most compassionate.

Senator REID may be the top dog, but he has always fought for the underdog. I think that quality is best exemplified by his advocacy on behalf of Native Americans, which includes helping to build the Nation's first utility-scale solar project on tribal land in Nevada. I know how much he is respected in Indian country.

Senator REID was instrumental in passing the Affordable Care Act, ACA, which—along with the Medicaid expansion—has provided health care to more than 20 million Americans.

Senator REID's efforts to choose qualified Federal jurists for the U.S. District Court for the District of Nevada will be felt for decades after he leaves office. Senator REID has recommended and helped confirm five of the six judges currently serving on the court. As a result of Senator REID's commitment to diversity, there have been numerous "firsts" for the court.

In 1998, Senator REID recommended Johnnie Rawlinson to be the first woman to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court. At his request, she was elevated to the Ninth Circuit in 2000.

In 2010, Gloria Navarro became the first Hispanic woman to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

In 2012, Miranda Du became the first Asian-Pacific American to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

In 2014, Richard Boulware became the first African-American man to serve as a judge on the Nevada District Court.

The Senate still has the opportunity to confirm Anne Traum, who would be the first Jewish person to serve on the Nevada District Court.

Senator REID has fought hard on behalf of his fellow Nevadans. He has prevented the Federal Government from building a nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain. He authored and passed legislation establishing Nevada's first national park, Great Basin National Park. He has led the fight to protect and restore Lake Tahoe. He prevented the removal of the Nevada Air National Guard's C-130 aircraft and the closure of the Hawthorne Army Depot, and he secured over \$600 million for the Southern Nevada Veterans Administration Medical Complex.

When it comes to combatting climate change and promoting the development and adoption of clean, sustainable, renewable energy, Senator REID has been a visionary. He has incentivized \$5.5 billion in investments in Nevada's clean energy resources through tax credits, grants, and loan guarantees. He helped to create a new fast-track permitting process for clean energy development on public lands. He facilitated the public-private partnership needed for the One Nevada Transmission Line, which connects northern and southern Nevada's electricity grids for the first time, helping to unlock the State's vast clean energy potential. While his interest in promoting clean energy—especially solar—may have a local origin, the benefits will accrue to all humanity for generations to come as we transition from our reliance on fossil fuels.

Serving as the Leader, whether in the majority or the minority, is a tough job. The leader has to fight the most intense partisan battles. The Leader has to say "no" on many occasions. The leader has to stand up for other members of the party. Senator REID has been tough enough to be an extraordinary leader. If I were in a foxhole, I would want HARRY REID by my side. I know every other Democratic Senator feels the same way—and surely most Republicans. We are going to miss HARRY REID. I wish him, his wife Landra, their five children, and 19 grandchildren all the best.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). 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.