

companies have almost 20 factories doing one thing or another over there.” And the New York Times reported that Mr. Ross is vice chairman of the Bank of Cyprus, making him a de facto business partner with Viktor F. Vekselberg, one of Russia’s most prominent businesspeople and a person with ties to the Kremlin. Several newspapers have reported that Mr. Ross plans to keep millions of dollars invested in offshore entities whose values could be affected by policies that he implements as Commerce Secretary. Mr. Ross reported plans to hold on to investments in an oil-tanker company and 10 other entities that invest in shipping and real estate financing, according to Federal financial-disclosure and ethics filings cited in the reports.

I have questions about Mr. Ross’s ability to work for Americans. Starting in the 1990s, Mr. Ross ran an investment firm that specialized in distressed assets. The Securities and Exchange Commission said that Mr. Ross’s firm had failed to disclose how it calculates its fees for some funds, which led to investors to pay roughly \$10.4 million of management fees that they should not have in the decade leading up to 2011.

The Commerce Secretary is a part of the President’s economic team; yet Mr. Ross appears all too willing to play fast and loose with fiscal showdowns. When, in April 2011, Bloomberg’s Mark Crumpton asked Mr. Ross whether S&P’s downgrade of America’s credit rating is “a step in the right direction,” Mr. Ross said it was. Ross said: “Well I think it’s a step in the right direction in that it will put pressure on the Democrats in the Senate and on the President to go along with some of the Republican reviews about really cutting the budget deficit and ultimately cutting the total indebtedness of the United States. So in that limited sense I think it is a step in the right direction.”

Mr. Ross was all too quick to dismiss the strain that a furlough put on Federal Government workers. In October 2013, CNBC’s Betty Liu had this exchange with Mr. Ross:

Ross: I think shutting down the government—so-called shutting down the government, which it’s not really shut down—

Liu: What do you mean?

Ross: Well, many parts of it are still quite open. And it’s just at the fringe that it—that it really matters.

Liu: Yeah, but tell that to the government workers though who are furloughed, right?

Ross: Yeah, but they’re going to get their pay. They know they’ll get their back pay. So I don’t see that that’s a permanent damage.

Mr. Ross was all too quick to dismiss the pain of homeowners who lost their homes in the financial crisis. Bloomberg TV’s Betty Liu had this exchange with Mr. Ross:

Ross: I think you have to look far and wide to find a home owner who’s an actual victim. These are all theoretical things. They’re mostly technical problems that the banks did wrong. To the best of my knowledge—

Liu: I think it’d be really hard to find, to pinpoint down to individuals, right?

Ross: Well there’s never been a case that I know of where someone was dispossessed who didn’t have a mortgage and wasn’t in default.

Liu: What do you mean?

Ross: Well all these claims that there was robo signing and all these imperfections, that’s true. Those were not what should be. But the real question is was anyone actually dispossessed wrongly.

Liu: Of their property.

Ross: Yeah, incorrectly. And I don’t think you find a single case.

The Commerce Secretary oversees the NOAA and the National Weather Service. But in a conversation with Fox Business’s Neil Cavuto, Mr. Ross was dismissive of the reality of climate change. Mr. Ross said: “Well, I think unless the weatherman can tell me if it will rain tomorrow why would I believe you can make a 100 year forecast. So, I’m skeptical about the underlying basis.”

And so President Trump has nominated to be Commerce Secretary a person who has so much wealth and so many foreign interests that it appears that it will be difficult for him to work in the interests of middle-class Americans. His extensive foreign business interests call into question his ability to fight to enforce America’s trade laws. Mr. Ross has expressed cavalier attitudes toward economic brinksmanship and shown little concern for the people laid off or who lose their homes as a result. And Mr. Ross has expressed an open skepticism toward the reality of climate change that calls into question his ability to run the agency that does research into global climate. For these reasons, I cannot support his nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

#### ENDING GLOBAL HUNGER

Mr. MORAN. Mr. President, I am here on the floor tonight to speak about our Nation’s efforts to end global hunger. It is an undertaking that countless individuals, foundations, and government agencies have devoted a significant amount of time, resources, and effort attempting to solve.

Those who have dedicated their lives to feeding the hungry deserve our deepest gratitude and respect. They made the decision to improve the lives of others less fortunate than themselves, and they often have done that at their own loss of comfort and their own well-being. There is no nobler a calling than trying to do something for someone else, especially when it costs you something as well.

Regardless of our faith, our creed, or our religion, almost all of us are taught early in life that it is our duty to help those in need. Americans consistently have taken that moral responsibility to heart. As individuals,

we help our neighbors through our churches and other local organizations. We help feed our hometowns. As a country, we lead the world in providing food aid to millions of people who are in need of that assistance.

In 1983, at a signing of a World Food Day proclamation, President Reagan cited 450 million people in developing countries who were undernourished. Our global population has risen by 3 billion people since that time, and today there are nearly 800 million undernourished people in the world who do not have enough food to lead healthy, normal lives.

While strides are being made in the fight against food insecurity, it is clear that our commitment cannot waiver, and ending hunger must remain a priority.

At that same White House ceremony, President Reagan chided the Soviet Union for failing to provide humanitarian relief to those in need. President Reagan offered a direct challenge to the Kremlin to explain why the Soviet Union only provided weapons but not food assistance to the underdeveloped world.

While the threats in the world today are different than those faced during the Cold War, American food assistance remains a powerful foreign policy tool. American food aid elevates our country’s moral standing and leadership in the world, as realized by President Reagan, but our efforts to reduce food insecurity also serve our own national interests by promoting political, economic, and social stability in the world.

Food-related hardships and hunger—either due to price increases or food shortages—act as a catalyst for protests and armed conflicts. We have witnessed regions of the world that are critical to America’s strategic interests descend into chaos due to people not having access to affordable food.

From 2007 to 2011, spikes in global food prices led to increased food insecurity and unrest in the world. In the Middle East and North Africa, food-related challenges were one of the major drivers of the mass uprising that we call the Arab Spring.

In Syria, Islamic State rebels use the promise of food and basic necessities to recruit soldiers. Food shortages have led refugees to leave camps and return to an active war zone in search of food for themselves and their families.

Closer to home, food prices contributed to rioting in Haiti in 2007 and 2008. As food prices increased and economic conditions deteriorated, U.S. Coast Guard interceptions of people from Haiti attempting to immigrate to our country rose by 20 percent, straining Coast Guard resources.

The National Intelligence Council warns that a continuation of the fundamental contributors to food insecurity—such as expanding populations, slowing of agricultural yields, and gaps in infrastructure and distribution systems—will result in increased food insecurity, hunger, and instability in the

Middle East, Africa, and South Asia over the next 10 years without greater, greater intervention by the United States and others.

In America, we take our food system for granted. Americans spend less than 10 percent of our disposable income on food. Even though less than 2 percent of our country is directly engaged in farming, Americans have direct access to the safest, most affordable, and highest quality food in the world.

I am proud of the wheat farmers and the ranchers in my home State of Kansas. Agriculture production is a noble calling. Feeding the world is important and a meaningful way to spend one's life, and Kansas families have done it for generations.

Our country's food system at home is critical to our own security and well-being, and helping other countries achieve food security and stability serves our national interests as well.

Utilizing U.S.-grown commodities in food aid programs also benefits American farmers and ranchers by creating export markets for our agricultural products, sometimes reducing an excess of supply.

Almost 10 percent of exports of the hard red winter wheat grown in Kansas in 2016 was utilized by international food programs, representing a significant market share for wheat grown in our State. Today's low commodity prices only serve to highlight the need for ag export markets for producers.

A few months ago, I called on the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Department of Agriculture to significantly increase the amount of wheat in our global food aid programs.

Our country's abundance of food imparts a moral duty to provide humanitarian relief to those in need. We have witnessed great unsettlement and mass migration in the world due to political instability and civil wars. The vast majority of people affected, including displaced refugees whose lives were uprooted and whose ability to feed themselves was taken away, are suffering through no fault of their own.

In other parts of the world, people are born into such poverty that simply finding sufficient food is a daily challenge. Reading recent articles, the question has often been: Where am I going to find food to feed my family?

People in Cambodia indicate they have no idea. It is a day-to-day, moment-to-moment, meal-to-meal experience. Even if that food is available, it is often not accessible to people without the means to pay for it.

Many of these people—weary, desolate, and hungry—survive only because of the generosity of the American people. Those hungry and less fortunate depend on a nation with moral strength and clarity to give them a helping hand.

There is still more work to be done in the fight against hunger, and America ought to continue to rise to the challenge of providing food and helping

people feed themselves throughout the world.

It is a turbulent world stricken with conflict, and sometimes the hunger and problem seem so great that it would be easy just to walk away and say it is too big of a problem to solve. But certainly we have the ability.

We have the means to feed one person. If we can feed one, why not two? And if we can all feed two, why not three?

We can't simply look at this challenge as being too big to overcome and that the world will always have hungry people and then just say: We have no responsibility to respond.

Food aid provided by the U.S. reduces despair and increases stability. My point is that it has a moral component. It is the right thing to do, but it is also beneficial to our own Nation, providing stability around the globe and increasing our own national security.

The importance of these issues motivated me when I was in the House to chair the House Hunger Caucus, and now I cochair the Senate Hunger Caucus. I can't remember what year it was, but I had a midlife crisis. I have probably had several since then. But my thoughts were at that point in time, back in my House days, that at least then I thought of myself as a pretty good Member of Congress. I answered the mail. I met with constituents. I visited my State on a weekend-by-weekend basis. I had input. I did the things that a good Member of Congress is supposed to do. I represented my constituents well.

But we all can do something more than just be a good Member of Congress, and that was my conclusion. If there is an issue that we want to champion, if there is an issue on which we want to make a difference, if there is a moral cause we want to rise to the occasion to support, hunger, particularly for Congressman—now a Senator—from Kansas, ought to be a place I put my stake in the ground and go to work.

I suppose I have taken a few months off of this issue—and maybe I am having another midlife crisis—but it is time for me to reengage and to engage effectively as best I can to see that we live up to a moral commitment that also benefits our own country.

So I now cochair the Senate Hunger Caucus. I have since I came to the Senate. I serve with a number of my colleagues, including the one who is on the floor tonight, the Senator from Illinois. I ask my colleagues to join us in the effort to meet the needs of a hungry world, to take the step to see that one more person is fed, one more family has less insecurity, one more mother or father no longer worries about whether their children are going to go to bed hungry.

Former Kansas Senator Bob Dole has set many standards in the way that he led his life, which we should all aspire to meet, not the least of which is his unwavering commitment to ending hunger. Those of us in this Senate

today ought to seek to carry on Senator Dole's legacy. I would encourage my colleagues to join me and others as we work to put the Senate Hunger Caucus together, to enhance its ability to address the issues that we face in the real world to fight hunger.

I am committed to reengaging these efforts. Along with the other caucus cochairs—Senators BOOZMAN, CASEY, DURBIN, and BROWN—I would extend an invitation to each of my colleagues to join that caucus so that we can take the small step of fighting hunger by becoming more knowledgeable, more aware and engaging in the moral and strategic battle to end hunger around the globe.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, let me start by commending my colleague from Kansas. It is an honor to join him in this Senate Hunger Caucus effort. He does it in the tradition of Senator Bob Dole of Kansas. Along with George McGovern, they were two of the most unlikely political allies. They really dedicated a large part of their public lives to fighting hunger.

I am happy to join him in the memory of Paul Simon, who did the same for the State of Illinois. So I am looking forward to joining the Senator in this effort. I hope the Senator doesn't have to suffer another midlife crisis in the future. Let's continue this in a good bipartisan spirit.

I thank the Senator from Kansas.

Mr. President, I have come to the floor repeatedly in recent months to raise concerns about the Russian cyber act of war against our Nation, about Russia's aggression elsewhere against the West, this President's disturbing alliance with Russia, and the majority party's incredible silence on the Senate floor on these matters.

Well, I just spent several days visiting our allies in Eastern Europe—notably Poland, Lithuania, and Ukraine—and return even more concerned.

You see, regardless of the partisan leanings of who is in government in these nations, the concern is the same.

Is the United States, history's champion of democracy and collective security in Europe, backing away from these values and commitments just as Russia is more aggressively challenging them?

Is the American President really using phrases like “enemy of the people” to describe a free press—a term used by Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, that was so ominous that Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev later demanded the Communist Party halt its use because it “eliminated the possibility of any kind of ideological fight”?

Are the Trump administration's bizarre blinders to Vladimir Putin's aggression and true nature—and the silence of too many of my Republican colleagues on this danger—a harbinger of some kind of Western retreat to the Russians?

Well, I met with many of our dedicated diplomatic and military personnel in the region who, as part of ramped up reassurance efforts by the previous administration, are working to keep Putin in check.

These included more than 100 U.S. military personnel working with their Lithuanian counterparts about an hour outside of the capital in Rukla. These U.S. troops and their colleagues rotate out of Poland and throughout the Baltics to augment their NATO partners in deterring a Russian attack.

Mr. President, the concerns about Russian aggression are legitimate and warrant serious attention. Let's take a look at just recent Russian actions in Europe. One day after President Trump spoke to Putin on the phone in late January, Russian-backed separatists increased their fighting in Ukraine—leading to the highest death toll in months.

After Vice President PENCE tried to reassure allies at the Munich Security Conference the other week, Russia agreed to start accepting identification documents issued by the separatists in eastern Ukraine—one step closer to annexing the illegally seized territory.

Putin is strong-arming Belarussian President Lukashenko to allow Russian troops to remain based in Belarus following an upcoming significant military exercise. Russia is putting more and more sophisticated weapons into Kaliningrad, which when combined with permanent troops in Belarus, will significantly increase security threats to the region. Russia just announced a referendum to rename land it illegally seized by force in Georgia.

Putin is trying to stir unrest in Kosovo where NATO is trying to maintain stability after the horrific violence of the Balkan war. He attempted a coup in Montenegro. And Russia continues its aggressive disinformation campaign and cyber attacks throughout Europe, trying to manipulate elections and sow instability and lack of trust in democratic institutions. One Polish expert summed all this up wisely, saying "if the United States does not respond to the Russian attack on its election, Putin will feel he has a free hand to keep taking such destabilizing actions in the West." I worry that is what is already happening.

So, what is the response to these actions by this White House and the majority party—the party of Ronald Reagan who understood the Russians so well?

So far, with the exception of a few important voices, largely silence.

In fact, as I have mentioned here before, since October when the first intelligence reports came out about the Russian attack on our election, not a single Republican has come to the floor to discuss this act of cyber war by a former KGB official on our country.

And our President, who has attacked hundreds by Twitter for even the most benign perceived slight, has refused to say anything negative about Putin.

Obviously, we need to get to the bottom of the Russia attacks on our election and if anyone in the Trump campaign had inappropriate contact with the Russians. An independent commission led by respected individuals such as Sandra Day O'Connor or Colin Powell could lead such an effort. And we need to see the President's tax returns to clarify what his son said in 2008 regarding Trump's businesses seeing "a lot of money pouring in from Russia."

We need to pass the bipartisan Russian sanctions bills pending in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee—one that tightens sanctions on Russia for its actions here and abroad and one that requires congressional approval before any sanctions on Russia are lifted.

And we need to make sure we include continued support to Ukraine and for the European Reassurance Initiative in our next appropriations bills.

Mr. President, I remember as a young Congressman trying to get into Lithuania more than 25 years ago when it courageously tried to hold an election breaking free from the Soviet Union.

Those brave Lithuanians had little but their idealism and a few rifles to protect themselves from the Soviet tanks.

But in the end they prevailed, and one by one, Eastern European nations freed themselves from Communist tyranny, a struggle Ukraine is still fighting against Russia.

Today one can still visit the KGB museum in the capital of Lithuania—a hall of horrors that nobody should ever forget. One Lithuanian member of parliament I met, who remembers life not only under the Soviets but also under the Nazis, recalled how his mother had survived 4 years in a Nazi concentration camp.

He emotionally said that he had always seen the United States as the champion of freedom, democracy, and a Western global order. I could tell he was deeply worried about any backsliding on that important role and any possibility of returning to the darker days in Europe.

I don't know exactly what Steve Bannon is whispering in Trump's ear regarding his dark world view and indifference to the transatlantic Western alliance, but this post World War II partnership has served American and global interests. The relationship has brought stability to Europe after decades of horrific war. It has brought democracy and common markets and served as a check against the Soviet Union and now Russia.

I am glad Vice President PENCE made some references to this at the Munich Security Conference, but those words will not be enough on their own. Quite simply, any sympathies in the White House with Russian efforts to undermine the transatlantic relationship are outrageous and dangerous, and I will oppose them here in the Senate.

To reiterate, Mr. President, during the Presidents Day break, I took a trip

to three capitals, which I consider to be timely and important visits: Warsaw, Poland; Vilnius, Lithuania, and Kiev, Ukraine. I have been to these cities many times, and I have a particular attachment to them. My mother was born in Lithuania, and so returning there, as I have for over 35 years, I have seen a sweep of history as that small Baltic State has moved from a republic of the Soviet Union to a free and independent nation today. I am so proud of the courage of Lithuanians that had brought them to this moment.

Going to Warsaw, Poland, is natural for a Senator from Chicago. We have more Polish Americans in that city and in our State than anyplace outside of Poland. We are very proud of our Polish heritage. They are wonderful people. They are not only hard-working, good Polish Americans, but they are also always thinking about their own homeland, which was under the control of the Warsaw Pact, a Soviet-inspired alliance, for decades, at the expense of their freedom.

I also visited Kiev, Ukraine. That capital has become well known to many of us since the invasion by Vladimir Putin, which is the point I would like to make.

The thing that ties these three countries together, despite their differences in history, is the fact that if you ask each of these countries today to identify the major external threat to their existence and to their freedom, they would identify Vladimir Putin of Russia. I found that in Warsaw, again in Vilnius, the capital of Lithuania, as well as in Ukraine.

It was interesting—and Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN joined me on my trip to visit Poland—that as we met with the leaders of that nation, we heard repeatedly their concerns about Russian aggression. It was something that was critically important to them. They were heartened by statements made by Vice President PENCE at the Munich conference about the future of the NATO alliance, but let's put it in context. The reason the Vice President had to travel from Washington to Munich, Germany, to say to the Western world that was gathered there that the NATO alliance was still strong was because the current President of the United States, Donald Trump, had tweeted that NATO was obsolete, and one of his followers, Steve Bannon of Breitbart fame, had questioned whether we should be engaging in these kinds of alliances.

Well, I think those alliances are critical. The NATO alliance has been one of the most successful in history. So when Vice President PENCE went to Munich to assure our NATO allies that we were still on their side, it was an important message.

I did find one other thing telling and memorable about that trip to Warsaw. One of the Polish leaders said to me: We have read that the Russians invaded your election. We are used to this. He called it the hybrid war. He

said: It isn't just aggression by Russians with military aggression, which is scary enough, but it is a war of cyber aggression and a war of propaganda, and clearly Vladimir Putin believed in your last Presidential election that he could use some of those same tactics that he uses against Poland and the Baltics in the United States. This leader in Poland then challenged me: What are you going to do about that? Now that you know that Vladimir Putin has invaded your election, now that your intelligence agencies tell you that, will you do something? Will you take this seriously? Will you investigate it? He said: Our worry in Poland is, if you will not respond to Vladimir Putin's invasion into your cyber space, what will you do if he invades Poland? Will you stand by us as you promised in article 5? If you don't take him seriously when he invades your sovereignty, will you take it seriously when he invades ours?

It is an important question and a right question. I hope we take a lesson from it—not to take Vladimir Putin for granted, not to view him as a superhero or great leader but to understand that people around the world are watching to see how we react to this Russian invasion of our election.

In Lithuania, they face propaganda on a daily basis. German troops under the flag of NATO are now in Lithuania making it clear that we are committed to the future and security of that nation. What did Vladimir Putin and the Russian propagandists do as soon as these German troops moved into Lithuania? They created an absolutely false rumor that a German soldier had raped a Lithuanian woman. It wasn't true, but it was the kind of false information that they have spread in the hopes of undermining the confidence of Lithuania and the NATO alliance.

I met with the President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, and she is a very decisive leader. I thought of Margaret Thatcher's style when I met with President Grybauskaitė. She is an "Iron Lady" in her own right to protect Lithuania and other Baltic States from Russian aggression.

The last trip we made was to Ukraine, and Congressman MIKE QUIGLEY of Chicago joined me in that visit. In that visit, we had a chance to meet late at night, 9 o'clock at night with the President of Ukraine, Petro Poroshenko, who was kindly waiting for us to get off the plane and come join him at his Presidential offices. They are struggling even to this day. As President Trump is in conversation with President Putin about future relationships, sadly, at that very same moment, aggression by the Russians in Ukraine was growing. Over 10,000 people have been injured or died now because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. There is speculation, and I hope it is just that, that some backroom negotiations are underway to recognize this Russian aggression in Ukraine. I sincerely hope that never happens. We should never condone

what Vladimir Putin has done to that country of Ukraine. They are struggling now to get back on their feet. They are making reforms that are unpopular but necessary. They are strengthening their economy and at the same time they are fighting a war.

I left there with two resolves. One was to make sure we provide military equipment necessary for Ukraine to be successful to ward off this Russian aggression; No. 2, to continue to work with them in terms of building their economy and reform; and, No. 3, that we have a visible physical presence with those NATO forces in the Baltic States and in Poland. We have a great alliance in these countries. In Poland the Illinois National Guard has been a longtime ally of the Polish forces, and we are very proud of that relationship.

When it came to Lithuania, we were able to see a group from Fort Carson in Colorado. It was a tank command. I never saw prouder soldiers in my life—American soldiers anxious to show this Senator the Abrams M1 and the fighting vehicles they were using preparing for the possibility of defending Lithuania and the Baltics. It was an inspiring moment.

I made my statement part of the record, and I know the Senator from South Dakota is seeking the floor, but I left there committed to the NATO alliance and committed to the effort to stop the aggression of Vladimir Putin, committed as well to come home to the United States and say to my colleagues in the Senate and House that we have to take it seriously when Vladimir Putin tries to change the outcome of an American election. It is a sad day in American history. I believe November 8, 2016, is a day that will live in cyber infamy for what Vladimir Putin tried to do in the United States. For us to ignore it, to sweep it under the table, to hide it behind some committee door, when no one knows what is going on inside, is not the appropriate answer. We need an independent, transparent investigation of what the Russians did, a special prosecutor at the executive level, and an independent commission like the 9/11 Commission, headed by notable Americans like GEN Colin Powell or Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, who will bring all the facts to light so we know once and for all the truth of what happened and make certain it never happens again.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The Senator from South Dakota.

#### REPEALING AND REPLACING OBAMACARE

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, 2 weeks ago, major health insurer Humana announced its decision to completely withdraw from ObamaCare exchanges for 2018. The company decision was not particularly surprising. Humana had already sharply reduced its participation in the exchanges for 2017, but the decision did confirm yet again that President Obama's healthcare law is on its last legs.

Choices on the exchanges declined sharply for 2017 as insurer after insurer cut back on participation. Nearly one-third of U.S. counties have just one choice of insurer on their exchange for 2017. Meanwhile premiums on the exchanges are soaring. Exchange premiums increased a staggering 25 percent on average for 2017. That is a 25-percent premium increase for just 1 year. How many working families can afford a 25-percent increase in their healthcare premiums for 1 year?

Things are even worse in some States. Seven States saw an average premium increase of more than 50 percent for 1 year. It is no surprise that many people who have ObamaCare insurance have found they can't afford to actually use their plan. Well, Democrats can talk about coverage all they want, but coverage doesn't mean much if you can't afford to actually take advantage of it.

It is time to give the American people some relief. Over the next few weeks, Congress will continue with the process of repealing and replacing ObamaCare. Our priority is replacing ObamaCare with personalized, patient-centered healthcare that is affordable for every American. ObamaCare was supposed to lower healthcare costs for Americans, but it has spectacularly failed to do so. Our reform efforts will focus on keeping healthcare affordable, including increasing competition, expanding innovation, and increasing flexibility.

ObamaCare has defaulted to a one-size-fits-all solution when it comes to healthcare. That means that many Americans have found themselves paying for healthcare that they don't need or want.

We need much more flexibility in insurance plans. A thriving healthcare system would offer a wide variety of choices that would allow Americans to pick a plan that is tailored to their needs. We also need to give Americans the tools to better manage their healthcare and to control costs. Along with keeping healthcare affordable, we are going to focus on restoring decisionmaking power to the American people.

ObamaCare has put Washington bureaucrats in charge of healthcare decisions that should be made by individuals in consultation with their doctor. We are going to move control away from Washington and give it back to individuals. We are also going to ensure that States have the power to innovate and embrace healthcare solutions that work for individuals and employers in their States.

Our healthcare system wasn't perfect before ObamaCare—nobody is denying that—but ObamaCare has just made things worse. The American people are ready for healthcare reform that actually works, and that is exactly what Republicans are going to give them.

#### NOMINATION OF NEIL GORSUCH

Madam President, in addition to healthcare reform, another Republican