

He is right. The American people deserve a thorough, independent investigation into the extent of Russia's interference in the 2016 Presidential election.

This is not a partisan issue. Americans deserve answers now. And where should they get those answers? They should get those answers from this Chamber, because we, as Members of the Senate, cannot be fired.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. TOOMEY). The Senator from Texas.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I was listening with interest to our friend and colleague from Minnesota talk about the Russia investigation. I agree with her 100 percent that it is our responsibility to get to the bottom of what exactly happened with respect to Russian involvement in our elections, much as they got involved in the elections in France, using the combined process commonly known as active measures. Active measures are a combination of cyber espionage, propaganda, and a use of social media through paid trolls who can then actually try to raise the visibility of some of this propaganda such that it then becomes part of the mainstream media and becomes accepted as part of the debate in democratic societies.

I believe we share a bipartisan and universal commitment to get to the bottom of what happened in our last election.

I would note that there are two members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who actually serve as members of the Senate Intelligence Committee, which is actively involved in a rigorous bipartisan investigation. That would be myself and Senator FEINSTEIN, the ranking member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, who is also the former chair of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Senator FEINSTEIN has said recently that there is no evidence of collusion between the administration and Russia. I think she would share with me a commitment not to stop there but to find out where the facts take us. Indeed, thanks to Chairman BURR and thanks to Vice Chairman WARNER, our bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee has unprecedented access to raw intelligence, from the National Security Agency, the CIA, and from all sources of the intelligence community. We have access to some of the most sensitive intelligence gathered by the U.S. Government. I think that is due to the credit and leadership of Chairman BURR and Vice Chairman WARNER that our committee has remained bipartisan and we are leaving no stone unturned to get to the bottom of what exactly happened.

So I know people are concerned, and I share that concern. We need to come up with a program of countermeasures to deal with this because the Russian Government has been amping up their game for some time now, and now they

are operating at certainly dangerous levels when it comes to trying to interfere in our most basic democratic institutions, like our elections.

I would say, as far as the Department of Justice is concerned, that Rod Rosenstein was confirmed by this body by a vote of 94 to 6. That is probably the only Trump nomination so far since he has been President that has enjoyed such broad bipartisan support. It is because of his distinguished record, most recently as the U.S. attorney in Baltimore.

I remember hearing from our Senators from Maryland, for example, Democrats who were praising Rod Rosenstein and saying he was exactly the kind of person we needed in this sensitive job as Deputy Attorney General.

But now our colleagues seem to forget their very own conviction and vote on Rod Rosenstein, and now they say that he can't be fair, that he has somehow an appearance of a conflict of interest, making it necessary to appoint a special counsel, which, by the way, also then reports to the leadership at the Department of Justice.

I think we ought to give Mr. Rosenstein a chance to demonstrate that he is capable of leading that investigation at the Department of Justice, understanding that our role here in the Congress is not to pursue a criminal investigation and case. That is the job of the Department of Justice. Our job, in parallel fashion, is for oversight reasons and to let the American people and ourselves know exactly what happened. That is why the investigation of the bipartisan Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is so important, in addition to the hearings we are having in the Judiciary Committee, on which the Senator from Minnesota and I happen to serve as well.

So we do need to get to the bottom of what happened, and I am confident we will. It is our duty, and we will get the job done.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

On another topic, Mr. President, last week our colleagues in the House took the first necessary step to deliver on our campaign promises for the last three elections to repeal and replace ObamaCare. Why is that important? Well, because of the impact of ObamaCare on premiums and deductibles for many people, millions of people, literally, are now being priced out of the insurance market, and their insurance, even though they have the policy, is really unavailable to them because they have, for example, such high deductibles. We know insurance companies continue to pull out of the marketplace, and people are reduced to little or no choices when it comes to where to buy their insurance, because, frankly, ObamaCare was oversold and underdelivered.

The President said: If you like your policy, you can keep it. Well, that proved to be false. He said: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor.

Well, that didn't turn out to be true, either. He said that a family of four would save an average of \$2,500 on their premiums, and that didn't prove to be true, either.

So like most command and control from Washington, DC—notwithstanding, perhaps, the aspirations of our colleagues across the aisle to deliver affordable healthcare to the American people—it simply failed to do so, and it is in serious distress—even a meltdown.

So we would invite our colleagues across the aisle—our Democrat friends—to join with us to help rescue the American people from this failure of the Affordable Care Act.

The House passed a bill last week—the American Health Care Act. It is not a perfect bill. I dare say the Senate is going to take up a bill of its own, and we will try to work with our House colleagues to try to get legislation to the President and signed into law that will rescue the American people and will finally deliver on our promise of more affordable premiums, better access, and real choice.

But it is really not enough to just stand back and criticize those who are actually trying to rescue those who are in harm's way as a result of the failures of ObamaCare. That, so far, is what our friends across the aisle are doing. They are not lifting a finger to help the people hurt today by ObamaCare. We would challenge them to get involved and to work with us.

Many of our colleagues have come to the floor and talked about stories they have heard from their constituents back in their States and the harm that the Affordable Care Act has caused. Premiums have skyrocketed. Millions have been kicked off their healthcare plans. The economy is saddled with billions of dollars in new regulations. Employers are laying people off or not hiring new people because, frankly, they don't want to suffer the additional financial burdens of ObamaCare.

Instead of having more access to more health insurance options, Texans—the people I represent—have less of both.

The bottom line is ObamaCare has failed, and it is up to us to provide some relief to the people who are being hurt by the failure of ObamaCare. We invite our colleagues to work with us to do that.

Since the creation of ObamaCare, I have been hearing regularly from my constituents back home in Texas how they need relief from the healthcare law and they need it now. Every letter, phone call, or conversation produces similar themes. One of my constituents, for example, is a woman who was paying about \$300 a month for her health insurance, but under a span of just a few months, that premium skyrocketed to \$800—\$300 to \$800. I don't know many people who can withstand that kind of increase in their expenses for healthcare.

She wrote to me and said: "This has to stop—and quality, flexible plans need to return for individuals."

I agree with her.

Another wrote in to say that before ObamaCare her daughter was getting what she considered to be adequate healthcare insurance for about \$190 a month with just a \$500 deductible. Now that has gone up to a payment of almost \$400 a month—roughly, doubled—with a deductible of more than \$6,000. What are people supposed to do with a deductible of \$6,000 which says you have to pay \$6,000 before your insurance pays a penny? It is essentially no good to most hard-working, middle class families.

So ObamaCare does not equal healthcare that is affordable or better for Americans. It is simply not working.

In fact, in Texas, if you have a gross income of about \$24,000 a year, under ObamaCare, you could end up spending about 30 percent of your total income on healthcare costs alone—30 percent of your gross income on healthcare and related costs.

Fortunately, thanks to the passage of the American Healthcare Act, or the AHCA, which passed the House last week, we have the beginning of a path forward to provide a lifeline to those people who are simply priced out of the market today—the 30 million people who don't have insurance—and those who simply can't use the health coverage they have under ObamaCare.

So I look forward to working with our Senate colleagues—hopefully, all of our Senate colleagues, if they are willing—to help improve the House bill and to get it passed in this Chamber and signed by the President.

This is not something we can do without the support of every Republican Senator, but my hope is that we would do this with the help of more than just Republicans.

Our goal to repeal and replace this bill has been, of course, no secret.

We need legislation that will reform Medicaid. With the American Healthcare Act, we have the first major healthcare entitlement reform in a generation, without eliminating anybody who is currently covered by Medicaid today.

We also need to do away with ObamaCare's job-killing taxes, like the individual and the employer mandate. I remember, in Tyler, TX, a few years ago, meeting with a single mom who worked in a restaurant who told me that her hours had been cut from 40 hours a week to less than 30 hours a week because her employer didn't want to pay the employer mandate and so basically had to cut people from full-time work back to part-time work. So what did she do? She had to get another job as a single mom, working in a restaurant in Tyler, TX. That is the sort of unintended consequence of ObamaCare.

Then there is the medical device tax—something the Presiding Officer

has led on—which is a tax on innovation. This isn't even a tax on income. It is a tax on gross receipts. I have had some medical device companies from my State tell me they have had to move their operations to Costa Rica in order to avoid the medical device tax, which has crippled their ability to innovate and invest in their business. Then there is the tax on investments and the tax on prescription drugs. Middle-income Americans and our job creators need and will get massive tax relief when we repeal and replace ObamaCare.

So that is what 52 Members of the Republican conference are working on and what we would like to work on with our colleagues across the aisle, if they are willing to help. We welcome their ideas. Actually, a bipartisan solution would be preferable to one done strictly along party lines. But all Members of the Republican conference are at the table working on that today. There is no denying that our country can't afford another one-size-fits-all approach to healthcare. The American people need relief from the unworkable, unsustainable system that President Obama promised—or delivered, which is very different from what he promised. I am confident that we can get there by working together to responsibly provide relief and, in doing so, empower individuals to deliver more options and competition and responsibly help those who need care to have more access to it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 37, Jeffrey Rosen to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 nomination of Jeffrey A. Rosen, of Virginia, to be Deputy Secretary of Transportation.

Mitch McConnell, John Cornyn, Tom Cotton, Dan Sullivan, Shelley Moore Capito, John Barrasso, Roger F. Wicker, Mike Rounds, Orrin G. Hatch, Bill Cassidy, Pat Roberts, Mike Crapo, Lamar Alexander, Richard Burr, John Thune, Jerry Moran, James E. Risch.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

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

The motion was agreed to.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 35, Rachel L. Brand to be Associate Attorney General.

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

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General.

CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

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 nomination of Rachel L. Brand, of Iowa, to be Associate Attorney General.

Mitch McConnell, John Boozman, Jeff Flake, Thom Tillis, Richard Burr, Mike Crapo, John Barrasso, Chuck Grassley, Mike Rounds, John Kennedy, John Thune, Pat Roberts, James E. Risch, Orrin G. Hatch, Shelley Moore Capito, Lindsey Graham, John Cornyn.

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the mandatory quorum call with respect to the cloture motion be waived.

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

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.