

may be entitled “A New Foundation for American Greatness,” but President Trump and Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos have severely undercut our students, educators, and public schools. The budget proposes to eliminate the Preschool Development Grant Program, a program that has successfully placed more than 2,700 additional 4-year-olds in high-quality preschool programs across my State. The vulnerable children in this program get a boost that helps them to lower the achievement gap among students of color, low-income children, and children with disabilities across my State. We should be expanding these programs, not reducing them. And 85 Members of this body voted in favor of the Every Student Succeeds Act and the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant Program. That progress is jeopardized by the President’s budget.

Yes, he finds money for a new program to help school choice programs, which will undermine the progress we have made in public education. Mr. President, 95 percent of our students get their education through the public schools, and that is jeopardized by the \$1.25 billion the President has included in his budget for school choice programs.

Maryland families understand the value of higher education. For too many, the cost of higher education means that it is difficult, if not impossible, for their children to have the higher education they need. Yet the President’s budget takes away some of the tools we have in order to afford higher education. That is just not right. We should be making higher education more affordable, not less affordable.

In the environment, the President’s proposed budget would eliminate the Chesapeake Bay Program. The Chesapeake Bay Program and related efforts are delivering encouraging results throughout the watershed and have built a tremendous movement forward. Yet President Trump has still targeted them for elimination. The local governments are doing their job in stewardship of the bay. The States are doing their job. Our stakeholders are doing their job. We depend upon the Federal Government to monitor and make sure that the programs are there—that all stakeholders are doing their fair share. The elimination of the Chesapeake Bay Program would jeopardize all of that progress. We cannot let that happen.

The President’s budget would cut the EPA budget by 31.4 percent, the most severe cut of any major Federal agency. The investment in our Nation’s water and waste water infrastructure has been flatlined through this budget proposal.

What in the world makes President Trump think that our Nation’s drinking water infrastructure shall be kept at status quo? Don’t we all remember what happened in Flint, MI? We have

discovered similar things in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. In Baltimore, our public school system cannot connect their water fountains to the water supply because of lead contamination. We need to have a greater commitment to make sure that the water supply to America is safe.

Under the budget, the Office of Compliance would be cut by one-third of its budget. That is EPA not being able to enforce the law. Aren’t we a country of the rule of law? You would not think so under President Trump’s budget.

The President’s budget also does not contain a critical infrastructure plan. We heard that during the campaign. But nowhere in this budget is he providing for that increase. Instead, it proposes cuts in some of the highway trust programs.

Every day, civil servants perform countless tasks that help support and defend and protect America. Civil servants are saving lives, empowering small businesses, keeping America safe from harm, and otherwise ensuring a safe and prosperous future for our country, including our children and families. We know that our Federal employees often perform the type of work that no one else can do. It is a highly qualified Federal workforce. On May 5, Donald Trump issued a proclamation declaring May 7 through 13, 2017, as Public Service Recognition Week. He stated:

Throughout my first 100 days, I have seen the tremendous work civil servants do to fulfill our duty to the American people. At all levels of government, our public servants put our country and our people first.

He has a bizarre way of showing his appreciation. Earlier this week, he released a budget that punishes Federal workers by making them pay much more for their pensions, an additional \$5,000 for an average Federal worker, while making these pensions much smaller.

The relentless assault on the Federal workforce must end. The civilian workforce was smaller last year than it was 40 years ago, according to data from the Office of Personnel Management. Federal workers increasingly have been asked to do more and more with less and less. They have already sacrificed financially, contributing \$190 billion to deficit reduction just since 2011.

Workers hired in 2012 already are paying more for smaller pensions. Sequestration-related furloughs cost Federal workers \$1 billion in lost pay, and there was a 3-year pay freeze from 2011 to 2013, and substandard rises since then. Salaries and wages have fallen 6.5 percent since 2010, adjusted for inflation.

Now comes the latest attack on the Federal worker’s pension, on top of continued attacks on pay, healthcare and other benefits, collective bargaining, and due process rights. President Trump would eliminate the annual cost of living adjustments for people in the Federal Employees Retirement System, including current retirees, and reduce them by half a percentage point for people in the old Civil Service Retirement System, including current retirees.

According to certified financial planner Art Stein, the annuity would lose one-third of its value over 20 years if inflation averages between 2 and 3 percent annually, and nearly half of its value if inflation averages 4 percent. According to the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association, the average FERS annuitant would lose \$99,471 over 20 years, and the average CSRS annuitant would lose \$60,576 over 20 years under the Trump budget.

That is outrageous. That is outrageous. We are talking about people who are already retired. They can’t re-enter the workforce. They have no choice. Yet we are telling them that they are not going to get what we promised. It is important to understand that 85 percent of the Federal workforce is located beyond the Washington metropolitan area. Federal workers are in big cities and small towns across America, striving to make things better for their neighbors.

Do we really want to engage in a race to the bottom with respect to our Federal workers? These are the people who make sure our parents’ Social Security checks arrive on time. They make sure the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the food we eat are safe. They are trying to find a cure for our spouse’s cancer and our sibling’s type 1 diabetes.

They support our sons and daughters in harm’s way, and they care for the wounded warriors at home. They patrol our borders and discover and disrupt terrorist threats aimed at our community. They are working to ensure that our grandchildren inherit a habitable climate. When we punish Federal workers—30 percent of whom are veterans, by the way—we are not just harming them and their families, but we are harming each and every American.

I intend to do everything within my power to work with Republicans, using the model of the fiscal year 2017 omnibus appropriations, to prevent the enactment of this dangerous executive branch attempt to cripple our economy and do lasting damage to our Nation’s global leadership. Congress has the responsibility to ensure that we have a more realistic budget that helps the American public, contributes to genuine economic growth, and furthers America’s true values.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). The Senator from Utah.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the continuing effort to repeal and replace ObamaCare. This effort has essentially been going on since the day the bill was signed into law. I think most of us on the Republican side recognize the overwhelming consensus surrounding the

failures of ObamaCare as a major reason we currently find ourselves in the majority.

As you know, the House passed the American Health Care Act, a bill that would repeal and replace ObamaCare, earlier this month. This is an important step in the process. Later today, we expect to hear from the Congressional Budget Office about the House bill. The CBO score will lay down an important marker for the repeal and replace efforts in the Senate. It will allow us to work to ensure that the House bill fits into the constraints of the reconciliation rules in the Senate, while we continue to strive toward our own policy goals to implement patient-centered healthcare and healthcare reforms that address cost and promote choice and competition.

I am very interested in what they say. These changes are more important than ever. Just today, we received a report from HHS that, from the time ObamaCare took effect through 2017, there was an average premium increase of 105 percent across the 39 States using healthcare.gov. This is just one snapshot of the runaway costs of ObamaCare, and it is just one of many examples indicating why we need to act as quickly as possible to repeal and replace the misguided law.

As the Senate continues to discuss the policy matters related to this effort, we will need to confront a number of different issues as we work to provide enduring reforms for our beleaguered healthcare system. As chairman of the Senate committee with jurisdiction over most of the salient issues under discussion, I want to make my views on these matters very clear.

First, it is my view that all of the ObamaCare taxes need to go. We should not be treating the ObamaCare taxes as a smorgasbord, picking and choosing which ones to keep and which to discard. I don't think there is a single tax increase in ObamaCare that has enjoyed support on this Republican side.

When all is said and done, the tax provisions of the Affordable Care Act represented a trillion-dollar hit on the economy in just the first 10 years. That is nearly 1 percent of the projected gross domestic product over the same period. In my view, it would be inappropriate, after spending the better part of a decade railing against ObamaCare's burdensome job-killing taxes, for us to then turn around and say that some of them are fine so long as they are being used to fund Republican healthcare proposals.

It is very simple. We need to repeal all of the ObamaCare taxes—the medical device tax, the health insurance tax, the so-called Cadillac tax, the taxes on healthcare savings and pharmaceuticals, and several others. They all have to go.

Second, we need to fully repeal the individual mandate. There has been some talk about keeping the mandate around temporarily, if nothing else, to help shore up the new system. But as I

said with the ObamaCare taxes, Republicans have spent years condemning the individual mandate as an unconstitutional assault on individual liberty. We have also argued that it was ineffective and that it has failed to draw enough younger and healthier consumers into the insurance market in order to offset the cost of ObamaCare's draconian market reform mandates.

I don't see how we can now turn on a dime and say that the individual mandate is now somehow acceptable because we are using it to prop up a system that Republicans have designed. Like the taxes, the individual mandate, in my view, needs to be repealed. Lastly, we need to resist any temptation to alter the tax treatment of employer-provided health insurance as part of this particular exercise. Don't get me wrong. There have been a number of health reform proposals over the years that have dealt with this issue, including a legislative framework that I drafted, along with two of my colleagues. However, given the limitations we face in this current exercise and the fact that we are not starting from a blank slate but rather attempting to repeal a law that has been implemented for a number of years, we should be wary of the impact of pulling employer-sponsored insurance into this current debate.

The purpose of this budget reconciliation exercise to repeal and replace ObamaCare is to address costs in the individual markets. I believe it is important that everyone, whether they are Members of Congress, stakeholders in the business community, or living elsewhere in the country, manage their expectations about the possible outcomes of this process given the limitations we are facing.

While the constraints inherent to the budget reconciliation process may be inconvenient at the specific moment, they serve a number of important purposes. Under this process, the Senate will need to reduce the deficit by at least as much as the House bill. There is no way around that. The process for determining what provisions of the House bill will need to be changed is still ongoing. Of course, we will have to take a good long look at the numbers we get from CBO later today.

Not only do we need to take into account the CBO numbers and the budget rules, but we also need to consider what the best policy is, and, at the end of the day, what approach is doable. We can do a lot in this exercise, but we should not make this the be-all and end-all of our healthcare reform effort.

As I said before, everyone should be managing their expectations at this point. While we can and should be ambitious in our efforts, we need to be realistic about the limitations that exist and be willing to practice the art of the doable, to compromise, and to really recognize what issues will need to be set aside for another day.

None of this is going to be easy, but I believe we are up to the challenge. I

look forward to working with my colleagues on these issues and to finding solutions that will help us keep the promises we made to our constituents.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to follow the comments made by the President pro tempore of the Senate—the Senator from Utah—talking about problems that people have and problems that grow every day with their future look at healthcare and what it may mean for their families.

This is a top-of-the-mind issue for families in Utah, or Missouri, where I am from, or Montana, where the Presiding Officer is from, or Massachusetts. Anywhere in the country, anyone who is looking at this system and hoping to have a system they could rely on is finding that it is just not working. This is a plan that clearly has failed. It was a plan that gave all kinds of assurances, virtually none of which have been kept.

In our State today, we got some bad news in Missouri about what that health insurance exchange looks like next year. Blue Cross Blue Shield serves 30 counties in our State. Another Blue Cross-related group, Anthem, serves the rest of the State. But today, Blue Cross Blue Shield announced that it is going to pull out of the exchanges next year. Some 31,000 people in 25 counties around Kansas City will have no insurer at this moment who is willing to sell policies on the individual exchange. This is devastating news for those families—maybe they are already on their second or third insurance company in as many years—trying to wade through yet another individual plan that tells them what might or might not be covered. This is certainly a long way from the assurances that you would be able to keep your plan and you would be able to continue to see the doctors you like. It seems a long way from that pledge. Remember that pledge? If you like your plan, you can keep your plan. If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. It didn't turn out to be that way at all.

In fact, in the five other counties that Blue Cross is leaving in our State—and I don't say this with any disrespect toward that nonprofit company—they are losing money. This system won't work, and that is why we are down from multiple companies willing to offer insurance in all kinds of counties around the country to now States, like Iowa, having no insurance company at all that will offer an individual policy anywhere.

In the five metropolitan counties in the Kansas area, they have three competitors this year in those five counties. Humana announced in February that they would be leaving next year. Blue Cross announced today that they would be leaving. So 5 metropolitan counties at this moment, at least, have only one company that will even offer

a policy, and 25 counties have no company that will offer a policy based on that announcement. If you only have one choice, do you really have any choices at all?

Under this plan, unless we go in a very different direction, the choice is to buy the policy or pay the penalty. This exchange that was promised where the average family would see their insurance costs go down \$2,500 a year—this is as far from that promise as you could possibly get. Not only has your policy likely gone up more than \$2,500, but your deductible has gone up in even higher percentages than that.

Certainly, 30 percent of the counties in America right now only have one company that will offer insurance. As I said earlier, our neighboring State to the north, Iowa, has no company that will offer insurance to anybody on the individual market. What kind of system is that?

In my State, we have 114 counties and the city of St. Louis in addition to those 114 counties. At this moment, 97 of them have only one company that will offer insurance. Unless things change dramatically, in January, 25 of those 97 will have no company that will offer insurance. Now, 77 counties—unless the one company offering insurance decides it can't participate in that market either—would have only one choice. I think it is likely that those 77 counties will see some change in whether they have one choice or no choice.

Last week, I came to the floor to talk about Missourians who have problems and who are seeing their out-of-pocket costs skyrocket under this. Let me share another story about one of the several people we heard from this week.

Holly is a cancer survivor. She lives in Southeast Missouri. She was forced again this year to switch insurance policies when the insurance company she had left the individual exchange, the ObamaCare exchange. That left Holly with only one choice. Again, people in the vast majority of our counties have the same option—they have one option. Holly had one option, and that carrier didn't cover any of her four cancer doctors. Now, remember, this is a cancer survivor who literally has been in a fight for her life, and now she can't get a policy that allows her to see the doctors in whom, in that fight for her life, she developed confidence. So that means she can't see her oncologist under any policy she can get. She can't see the radiation oncologist, the surgical oncologist, and the reconstructive surgeon. None of those people are now available to her.

This is in a world where Holly, you, me—all of us were told: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. Well, she liked all four of her doctors, and she can't keep any of those doctors. We were told: If you like your policy, you can keep your policy. If it weren't so serious, looking back at that promise, it would be like it was

some cruel joke that somebody is coming up with that couldn't have been further from the truth. When you are battling cancer and you lose access to the doctors you know and trust, no reasonable person can argue to you that the system we have is working. The status quo is unacceptable. It is clearly unsustainable.

There is a lot of discussion about what kind of change we are going to have. The “why” here is more important than the “how.” The “why” here is the most important part of this debate because the reason we have to change is that the system we have is absolutely not working.

Americans like Holly and all the families in the Kansas City area who are certain to lose this year's coverage next year may or may not have coverage at all. No company besides this one company that left was willing to be there this year. They deserve better. That is why I am going to continue to work with my Senate colleagues to give families more choices to expand their access to the healthcare providers they want and the kind of insurance coverage they would like to have.

This plan simply hasn't worked, it isn't working, and it is going to get worse before it gets better. That is why we are debating how to change it, not debating the effort that has totally failed. Now we need to get in and figure out how to stabilize this marketplace and answer those important questions for families all over this country who not only don't have the coverage they want, but they also don't have access to the healthcare they need.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I congratulate my colleague from Missouri for the excellent comments he made.

I bring to the floor a report that came out last evening, which is essentially the analysis that the Obama administration never wanted the American people to see, and it has to do with ObamaCare from 2013 to 2017. This report that the Obama administration would love to hide from the American people makes the point that my colleague from Missouri just made.

In those years, from 2013 to 2017, once ObamaCare came into place, premiums around the country in the States that are buying on the Federal ObamaCare exchange went up 105 percent on average—more than double. It more than doubled in 20 States, and it tripled in three States: Oklahoma, Alaska, and Alabama. In Wyoming, it went up 107 percent in just 4 years. Tell me something else that has gone up by that price in our lives anywhere over that short period of time. Those are the numbers that are out today.

More than 7 years ago, the Washington Democrats wrote an enormously costly and complicated healthcare law. They forced it through the Senate, and they made lots of promises. They

promised it would provide care for less money. They promised that you could keep your doctor and that you could keep your insurance. They promised that if you just allowed Washington to have more control, everything would be better for you. It hasn't worked out that way. These are the numbers we are looking at today, and it looks as if prices are going to go up again next year because of the mandates and the requirements of the Obama healthcare law.

In Connecticut, insurance companies say they want an average increase of about 24 percent; in Maryland, the average is 45 percent; and in Oregon, 17 percent. Americans are again facing double-digit increases in their ObamaCare premiums next year, just like this past year.

Some companies simply said: Hey, I am done. I am not going to sell anymore. It is just not worth it.

That is what Aetna has done—pulled out entirely. The thing that is so interesting about Aetna's decision is that they were one of the major cheerleaders early on back in the beginning of ObamaCare. They said: Oh yeah, we want to do this. We want to sell insurance all around the country. Well, now they are pulling out of ObamaCare all across America. What that means for people at home is that they have fewer choices.

People living in two-thirds of the counties in this country—and in every county in my home State of Wyoming—are down to fewer and fewer choices. We have one choice of a carrier to buy from on the exchange in Wyoming. In two-thirds of the counties, people have only one or two choices. There are now places where people have no choices. Even if they get a subsidy under ObamaCare, there is no place they can use it, so it is useless to them.

The companies that remain—what are they doing to help try to control costs? Well, they are cutting back on access to doctors and to hospitals, as we just heard is the situation of the patient in Missouri.

Democrats say that people have to buy the insurance anyway because they say they put a mandate on it. Americans, like it or not, you have to buy ObamaCare insurance. If you don't like it, we are going to fine you. That is what the Democrats said. Well, in spite of the mandate, 20 million Americans said “No, thank you,” and about 8 million paid a fine. Another 12 million got an exemption because there are actually 41 different ways you can get exempted from ObamaCare. People realize it is not a good deal for them. They know ObamaCare has made insurance so expensive that it is not a good value for their hard-earned dollars.

It is astonishing to hear Democrats now say that basically the problem was that Washington didn't have enough control. We need more government control, they are saying. There are a number of Democrats who want a single-payer healthcare system. Some call

it Medicare for all. They can call it what they want—it means higher costs and more Washington control over the healthcare American families need.

The State of Vermont looked at this idea a couple of years ago. Even in this very small, very liberal State, they dropped the idea almost immediately. Why? Because they said it was too expensive.

That didn't stop other States from looking at it. Recently, this occurred in the State of California. Democrats in California recently offered a plan to have the State take control of all healthcare for everyone who lives there. Universal healthcare for all, they call it—doctor visits, hospitals, inpatient care, outpatient care, emergencies, dental, vision, mental health, nursing homes, everything, cradle to grave, universal health coverage.

So what do the stories in the California papers say about this? Well, they did a budget analysis. The budget office of the State of California did a budget analysis and said: What would such a thing cost? They came up with a cost of \$400 billion a year. That sounds like a big number, but how do you put that in perspective? What else can you do? Four hundred billion dollars. So they said: Well, let's compare it to the budget of the entire State of California. The entire budget for the State of California today is \$190 billion, so the cost of universal healthcare alone is twice the budget of the whole State of California. That includes teachers, firefighters, police, everything. They are proposing to spend twice the amount that they spend on everything on universal healthcare.

So what do the Democrats say? Well, we will just have to raise taxes. That is their answer to so much of everything. I guess they figure that hard-working families in California would need to pay these taxes every year—not just once but every year because that price tag is \$400 billion each and every year.

Democrats have no good ideas on how to deal with this collapse of ObamaCare. Republicans are offering real solutions. We are looking for ways to bring costs down, to give people more freedom, and to give people more control over their own healthcare. We are working to make sure people can get the care they need from a doctor they choose at a lower cost. We don't have that with ObamaCare.

The Democrats are pushing the exact opposite approach. They are offering higher costs, higher taxes, more government control, more government say in your family's life.

ObamaCare has failed. Republicans are committed to finding long-term solutions to our Nation's healthcare needs.

Thank you. I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. CARPER. Thank you, Mr. President. Good afternoon.

PARIS AGREEMENT

Mr. President, there is an African proverb that goes something like this: If you want to go fast, go alone; if you want to go far, go together.

The Paris Agreement was developed in that spirit; that 195 nations and territories can do more to protect our planet from climate change, the greatest environmental challenge of our lifetime, than the United States or any country can do isolated or on its own. Nearly 200 countries now have agreed to do their part to limit our global temperature rise by developing national plans to reduce their own emissions.

We know climate change is a global challenge that does not respect national borders. Emissions anywhere affect people everywhere, with the poorest and most vulnerable populations affected most. There is a reason why we call it "global warming." We know no one country, no one region, no one continent can solve this problem alone.

President Trump's inner circle has a different take on this historical agreement. For instance, during an appearance on "Fox and Friends" last month, Scott Pruitt, the EPA Administrator, denounced the Paris Agreement, calling it "a bad deal for America."

Asked about his biggest objection to the accord, this is what he said. He claimed China and India had no obligation until 2030—no obligation until 2030—even though "they are polluting far more than we are."

Well, that is just false. First, in 2015, the United States on a per capita basis produced more than double the carbon dioxide emissions of China—more than double—and eight times more than India. Also, contrary to what the Administrator continues to espouse, both China and India have pledged to reach their carbon emissions reduction goals by 2030, which means they are taking steps now—not 5 years from now, not 10 years from now, not 13 years from now—now, to meet those commitments. India is on schedule to be the world's third largest solar market by the end of 2017. In fact, last year, India unveiled the largest solar power facility in the world.

Meanwhile, Chinese leaders have ordered their country's coal companies to cut 1.3 million jobs over the next 5 years. Some of these workers will find jobs in the clean energy sector, which Beijing expects to generate more than 13 million jobs by 2020.

Make no mistake, if the United States cedes its leadership position on climate change, China will be ready and willing to assume that role—our role. In doing so, they will move ahead, and we will fall behind. It is just that simple.

We have a chart here that includes a quote from China's top climate negotiator. He told Reuters about 6 months

ago that if Trump abandons efforts to implement the Paris Agreement, "China's influence and voice are likely to increase in global climate governance, which will then spill over into other areas of global governance and increase China's global standing, power and leadership."

The Chinese clearly understand that the Paris Agreement affords their country the opportunity to emerge in the 21st century as a clean energy superpower.

I have been there. A year ago, I was there. In the trains they built and the train systems they built, the huge electric buses, all electric buses that I rode, it is clear they know what they are doing, and their intent was to eat our lunch by pursuing this clean sustainable energy approach.

Unfortunately, those in the Trump administration seem to be the only ones who don't recognize that. Some day they will wish they had, and the rest of us will wish we had too. Withdrawing from this pact doesn't put America first, it puts America behind.

You don't have to take my word for it. Just ask our business community. They see the clear benefits for their businesses and for America if we continue to play a lead role in the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Over 1,000 American companies and investors, some of which are represented here on this chart, have written to President Trump urging his administration and him to address climate change through the implementation of the Paris Agreement. The businesses, which include Exxon, Starbucks, Apple, General Mills, Walmart, Nike, Morgan Stanley, and BP—just to name a few—this is what all these companies and their leaders said: Failure to embrace the Paris accords "puts American prosperity at risk. But the right action now will create jobs and boost U.S. competitiveness."

I have another chart.

We have two letters here. One was written to a new President, President Obama, in 2009. Again, this is a full-page ad.

This is another ad that appeared in the past week to another new President, in this case, President Trump. Interesting enough, back in 2009, a Manhattan businessman named Donald J. Trump agreed with the 1,000 companies I mentioned earlier—the 1,000 companies that said we ought to do something about climate change. We ought to get on board and lead the way. Businessman Donald J. Trump agreed with them and joined CEOs to run an ad in the New York Times urging then-President Obama to "lead the world by example," ahead of the U.N. Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen.

In the ad right here, Donald Trump called on President Obama to allow the United States of America "to serve in modeling the change necessary to protect humanity and our planet."

Eight years later, the person who signed this letter and joined all these