

up with a workable healthcare plan when the day came that they were actually in charge.

Now we have this Frankenstein bill from the House, assembled from spare parts intended to buy off different Republican constituencies, and the Republican majority in the Senate, which we thought at one point would show more honor and more courage, seems to be taking the same approach. They are working on modifying the bill so it can get 50 votes in their caucus, no matter what the impact is on the country. Most of the devastating consequences of the House bill will remain.

Mark my words, my Republican friends, the Republican Party will regret the day it passes a bill that looks anything like what is now being considered. Every independent analysis has shown that TrumpCare will devastate sicker, older Americans, folks in rural areas, the working poor, younger couples and middle-aged couples who have a parent in a nursing home. It will raise costs on middle-class families, and those struggling to get there will be left with a healthcare system that works only for the healthiest and wealthiest among us, and the Republicans will own every last shred of the responsibility. They will own it completely because there has not been a scrap of bipartisan input on the bill, not a single Democratic amendment, not a single hearing, and no one even knows exactly what the bill looks like.

A senior GOP aide said in the paper today that they weren't releasing the bill text because "we are not stupid." I challenge that claim. Keeping a bill this bad holed up in secret and then forcing it down the throats of the American people is much more stupid than simply showing the bill, allowing it to be vetted and amended, and allowing it to be improved. It is much more stupid.

The Republicans are going down a dark path, down a dangerous road that will have devastating consequences for their party and of course for the American people. Believe me, this is not what Democrats want.

We Democrats are actually willing to take on some of the responsibility. We are willing to work with our Republican colleagues to make improvements to our healthcare system and to fix problems with the existing law. That involves some political risk. We are willing to take on that risk to try and help more Americans afford healthcare.

The Republicans are doing just the opposite by hiding their bill under lock and key. They are trying to avoid the risk of public backlash on a bill that, at least the polling shows, has the support of a mere sliver of the American people—18 percent. It will backfire. It will do potentially irrevocable damage to their party and more importantly to our country.

The Republicans ought to turn back before it is too late. They will rue the

day they rushed this bill, in the dark of night, that does so much damage to the American people.

I yield the floor.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

#### COUNTERING IRAN'S DESTABILIZING ACTIVITIES ACT OF 2017—MOTION TO PROCEED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to S. 722, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 110, S. 722, a bill to impose sanctions with respect to Iran in relation to Iran's ballistic missile program, support for acts of international terrorism, and violations of human rights, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip is recognized.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, before he leaves the floor, I want to say to my friend, the Democratic leader, among his other attributes, he now claims omniscience. He knows everything—even about things that haven't even been written yet, and I, for one, appreciate as a Republican his concern about the Republican Party.

I would challenge his memory because I was here in 2010, when 60 Democrats in the Senate jammed through ObamaCare, a bill that we frankly need to save the American people from as it begins to melt down.

As the distinguished Presiding Officer from Iowa knows, there is not a single carrier in Iowa that is willing to sell ObamaCare insurance on the exchanges because they are simply bleeding money.

Mr. SCHUMER. Will my good friend and gym mate from Texas yield for a question?

Mr. CORNYN. I will yield for a question.

Mr. SCHUMER. Is omniscience a comment of all-knowing, and if I don't know what the bill is all about, then I couldn't be omniscient; isn't that true?

Mr. CORNYN. Madam President, I would say to my friend from New York that he is omniscient if he claims to know the content of a bill that has not yet been voted on or agreed upon by Republicans in the Senate. I would just put that in the same category as his other advice to folks on this side of the aisle and again challenge his memory to how we got here in the first place.

I was here on Christmas Eve when we voted. I ended up voting against, but Democrats voted to jam ObamaCare through this body and on a strictly party-line vote. The fact is, ObamaCare is failing millions of people because if they have access to coverage at all, many of them have seen their premiums go up an average of 105 percent since 2013. That is the average in the 30-plus States that carry ObamaCare insurance on the healthcare exchanges—a 105-percent increase. Many of them have also seen their deductibles get so big that they cannot even really use the insurance they have because basically they are effectively self-insured.

So I take with a grain of salt the comments from my friend from New York that somehow we are doing something that is so horrible when we are trying to rescue the American people and clean up the mess our Democratic friends created when they jammed ObamaCare through on a party-line vote. If they were serious about it, what they would do is accept our invitation to work with us to improve healthcare for all Americans. It would be much better if we could do this on a bipartisan basis. It would certainly be more durable and be sustained for much longer than things done strictly on party-line votes. Yet, in the absence of any real help from our Democratic friends, who just seem to be standing idly by and not lifting a finger to help the people being hurt by ObamaCare today, we are going to have to do the best we can with the hand we have been dealt on behalf of the people whom we represent.

Madam President, on another matter, as a global leader of state-sponsored terrorism, Iran continues to threaten the very existence of the nation of Israel and destabilize the Middle East by creating a breeding ground for violence and hatred.

For the past several years, the United States and our allies have attempted to contain Iran, often to no avail. For one, President Obama's lopsided nuclear deal left a zero imprint on Iran's terrorist activities. So last week the senior Senator from Tennessee, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, introduced legislation to apply impactful and powerful sanctions on the nation of Iran. This bill will give the President the ability to block any trade that could benefit Iran's ballistic missile programs or support its military buildup.

I plan to introduce a bipartisan amendment to this bill that would target Mahan Air. This is Iran's largest commercial airline that doubles as the preferred mode of transportation for terrorists and their weapons. That is right. It is a civilian airline, but it is actually used to facilitate terrorism and to transport weapons. Mahan Air not only supports the efforts of the Quds Force, which is a special unit of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard

Corps, but it supports Hezbollah as well. This terrorist airline is a conduit for personnel, weapons, and a violent ideology throughout the region.

Unfortunately, despite its proven transgressions, Mahan Air continues to expand international operations by adding more international airports to its flight patterns, including several in Europe. This is an obvious threat to the safety and security of the people where these planes are allowed to land. Not only are the goods they transport a cause for concern, but their very presence is a security risk to Americans who fly in and out of airports at which a Mahan aircraft may land.

Through all of this, of course, Iran continues to support their terrorist activities, indeed carrying on under the guise of commercial civilian aircraft flights.

My amendment would require the Department of Homeland Security to compile and make public a list of airports at which Mahan Air has recently landed and then require the Department of Homeland Security to assess what security measures should be added.

We have a duty to protect American citizens, and I am thankful that Chairman CORKER will bring this legislation to the floor. The fight against terrorism is multifaceted, and it is not easy, but we can start by targeting state sponsors of terrorism like Iran with economic sanctions while we strengthen our military and continue the great tradition of American leadership around the world.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Finally, Madam President, let me return to where I began—to the issue of ObamaCare.

There is a lot of work to be done here at home as well. I know it is easy for us to get mired in the “how,” but it is also important for us to remember why we are repealing ObamaCare and why we are replacing it with something far better for American families.

I want to continue to highlight one of the many stories I am hearing from my constituents. I wonder whether the Senator from New York is hearing some of these same stories from his constituents.

This gentleman is a small business owner in the Fort Worth area who told me that since ObamaCare was implemented, this small business owner has been forced to change his insurance every year. Can you imagine going through that headache and hassle when President Obama said: If you like your health coverage, you can keep it. He was also the one who said: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. He also promised that premiums would go down an average of \$2,500 for a family of four—none of which has proved to be true. In this particular gentleman's case, as is the case for many Americans, his rates have gone through the roof, rising from roughly \$350 a month to \$800 a month. Despite the higher cost, he now receives less

coverage because his out-of-pocket maximum has risen from \$3,500 to \$14,000. That is simply outrageous. Throughout the entire process, he has been fighting a losing battle.

As is the case with many States, including Iowa, provider after provider has pulled out of my State as well, as they are unable to afford ObamaCare at all.

This small business owner is not only forced to literally find new insurance every year, but he has to change providers each year and has fewer options available. Along the way—this is the other promise President Obama made that has been broken—this gentleman has lost access to his doctor of 20 years. He refers to the hope he had when President Obama looked into the camera and said: Now listen to me. You can keep your insurance, and you can keep your doctor, and you will pay less. That is what President Obama said when he was selling ObamaCare. Instead, this gentleman, this small business owner from Fort Worth, did not get to keep his insurance. He lost his doctor of 20 years, and he now pays nearly three times more for less coverage and higher deductibles.

He closed his letter to me with a question. He asked: Can I count on you?

I look around the Chamber, and I ask all of us: Can the American people count on us?

I know they can because it is our responsibility to provide something far better than what they have had under ObamaCare. They can count on us if we work together to find solutions that actually provide the high-quality healthcare American families deserve at prices they can afford. In many instances, this means getting government out of the way and allowing the marketplace to lower costs and increase quality, which is what markets do much better than government regulation.

Right now, every Senator on this side of the aisle is discussing with our colleagues how best to accomplish that, and we are also discussing this with the people whom we represent—the physicians, the healthcare providers, and others—to try to determine the best way forward. I hope our Democratic colleagues will join us rather than give us lectures from the Senate floor about the way we are conducting our business, particularly when their hands are unclean, to say the least, when it comes to the way they jammed ObamaCare down the throats of the American people to such bad effect. I would encourage them, rather than to just obstruct, to actually work with us in a bipartisan fashion. We would come up with a better product, a more durable product, if our Democratic friends would work with us rather than just sit on their hands or actively obstruct our efforts to get the job done.

I urge our colleagues from both sides to work together to find a solution that repeals what is broken in

ObamaCare and replace it with patient-centered, accessible, and affordable healthcare. I hope that eventually others will come around to join us if for no other reason than their constituents are hurting from the status quo.

Madam President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wisconsin.

#### ANNIVERSARY OF THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB MASS SHOOTING IN ORLANDO

Ms. BALDWIN. Madam President, I rise to recognize the first anniversary of a horrific tragedy that shook this Nation. One year ago, in the early morning hours of June 12, 2016, we all witnessed an unthinkable act of hatred and terror at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, FL. It was Pride Month and Latin night, and dozens of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, along with friends and family, were gathered simply to have fun in what should have been a place of acceptance, affirmation, and safety. In a matter of moments, what should have been a celebration turned into one of the worst mass shootings in American history—a targeted act of terror and hate, an attack on the freedoms we all hold dear. These 49 innocent people lost their lives in this attack, and 53 others were wounded. Many, many others bear the emotional scars.

This was not only a deadly act of domestic terrorism; it was a hate crime—a crime that targeted victims because of who they were and was designed not just to harm its victims but to terrorize everyone in the community.

Last year, I came to the floor to read the names and tell the stories of the victims of this massacre in Orlando, because we cannot and we must not forget these men and women. Their stories need a voice. Today, I rise again to remember the victims.

As I did 1 year ago, I come to the floor to ask my colleagues to find the courage to stand up, speak out, and act to confront the rising tide of hate crimes and discrimination in America. We must never forget the victims of this hate crime, and we must honor them with action.

While the Pulse shooting was an unimaginable horror, it is, sadly, far from the only act of violence that has been perpetrated out of hatred. Even before June 12 of last year, we had seen an alarming increase in reports of hate crimes against LGBTQ people but also against racial and religious minorities and immigrants. In the aftermath of a divisive election, we saw hundreds of documented instances of discrimination, harassment, and even violence against members of minority communities as well as increased hostility within our Nation's schools. In this year alone, at least 11 transgender people have been murdered, most of them women of color.

The fact is that many members of racial, ethnic, disability, and religious minority communities, as well as LGBT people, live in very real fear for their safety. They are scared, and it is

incumbent upon President Trump as our Nation's leader to demonstrate to them and to all Americans that discrimination and violence against any individual because of who he is, whom he loves, and how he worships will not be tolerated in this country.

When I stood here last year, I called for a greater investment in the Federal Government's effort to both try to prevent hate crimes and fully investigate and prosecute them whenever they happen. After President Trump took office, I was joined by a number of my Senate colleagues in urging him and the Attorney General to support robust funding for the Department of Justice's programs that combat bias-motivated crimes. I believe a documented increase in hate crimes demands an increase in the resources that are committed to fighting this problem. Yet the budget put forward by President Trump and Attorney General Sessions seeks no increases. In fact, it proposes cutting more than 100 staff from the Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division.

This administration has failed to step up and speak out against this disturbing trend across our country or to commit the resources necessary to fight it.

Instead of showing the moral leadership our Nation needs in the face of increasing hatred and division, President Trump and his administration have taken steps to roll back our Nation's progress in many areas, including progress for the LGBT community.

Rather than issue a proclamation recognizing Pride Month and committing to address the many challenges still facing LGBT Americans, President Trump recently issued an Executive order that could open the door to discrimination with Federal taxpayer dollars.

Rather than stand up for transgender students facing bullying, harassment, and discrimination, this administration rescinded guidance to schools about the rights of those vulnerable young people under Federal law.

Rather than building on the steps taken to better understand the needs of LGBT people by simply counting us, the Trump administration has walked back efforts to ask about LGBT Americans in Federal surveys at the Department of Health and Human Services and the Census Bureau.

Simply put, President Trump has not lived up to his vow to be a President for all Americans.

But where I come from, in Wisconsin, our State motto consists of one word: "Forward." I believe that no matter who is in the Oval Office, our country must move in only one direction—forward.

Remember, while Pride Month is, of course, about celebration—of who we are and of how far we have come—it is just as much about bravely standing up and speaking out so that others will not feel compelled to live in silence.

To the survivors of the Pulse shooting and the families and friends of

those who were murdered and who feel the wounds of this tragedy most deeply, we hear your voices and we are inspired by your strength.

As a community, we have never been deterred by tragedy and will not be now. One of the early leaders in our fight for equality was Harvey Milk, and he was also struck down by violent hatred. Harvey Milk famously said: "Hope will never be silent."

So today I rise to remind us of the power of hope in the face of tragedy. We must continue to work to pass on to the next generation a country that is more equal, not less. We must remain strong in fighting any rollback of progress, large or small.

There is more work to be done to ensure that all Americans are protected from hatred and discrimination, and the work toward full equality for LGBTQ people and their families remains far from complete.

For myself and those who stand united this Pride Month, we are guided by our uniquely American values. It is about freedom—the freedom to realize our founding belief that all Americans are created equal under the law. It is about fairness—whether gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Americans deserve to be treated just like their family members, their friends, their neighbors, their fellow workers. It is about opportunity—about whether every American gets to dream the same dreams, chase the same ambitions, and have the same shot at success.

This is the promise of America, and we must fight to make sure we keep it. I yield the floor.

## EXECUTIVE SESSION

### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Kenneth P. Rapuano, of Virginia, to be an Assistant Secretary of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 30 minutes of debate on the nomination, equally divided in the usual form.

The Senator from Florida.

ANNIVERSARY OF THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB MASS SHOOTING IN ORLANDO

Mr. NELSON. Madam President, I will not be addressing the matter before us because I have just come from Orlando, where so many are feeling such deep, deep sorrow today. It has been 1 year since the tragic attack on the Pulse nightclub in Orlando.

The horror of that early morning still remains fresh for so many, especially those hundreds and hundreds of people who gathered at the Pulse nightclub this morning on the occasion of 1 year since the tragedy. There was

quite a ceremony to remember the 49 innocent souls we lost. It was a massacre of huge proportions by a terrorist.

What terrorists want to do is to divide people. They want to terrorize them. They inject fear. Interestingly, the terrorist, whose name was Omar Mateen—although he changed the lives of so many, he took the lives of 49 people. He changed a lot of other lives of those who were wounded, and, of course, the families of the 49 victims are still suffering.

Interestingly, a terrorist wants to divide and inject fear, but this has had the opposite effect in Orlando. It has unified people. It has unified the community as I have never seen before. It has unified our State; indeed, it has unified our Nation. So quite the opposite effect has happened from what the terrorist intended—other than the slaughter of 49 innocent lives. Sadly, these are the 49, and they are all being honored today. It was a very moving ceremony.

One of the causes that came out of the unification of Orlando is that—instead of creating a number of victims' funds—they put it all into one fund. Tens of millions of dollars have now gone into that fund, and it is helping to finance some of the victims who survived and their medical expenses, some of the families and the loved ones of those who were lost.

Interestingly, being there, suddenly those moments came rushing back. I heard about it early on a Sunday morning when the news broke about the massacre the night before, which had occurred in the early morning hours. As I raced from my home to downtown Orlando on South Orange Avenue, I was able to get on the telephone the No. 3 at the FBI, and he gave me authorization to tell what they originally were anticipating had happened. Once I got to the scene, I was able to share that. Of course, they had a representative of the FBI on the scene. They had set up a command post. Mayor Buddy Dyer had taken charge. It was quite a scene.

The tales of heroism are nonstop. The Orlando Police Department SWAT team, which went inside—before they could get the SWAT team there, members of the Police Department and the Sheriff's Department were there. One block away was a fire station that became a triage point. First responders got there and were trying to save people's lives. It was because of the massive number of casualties—49—that while the gunman Mateen was holed up in one of the bathrooms with hostages, some whom he had already shot had bled to death. While he was in the bathroom, police and paramedics were going in and pulling people out in those dark hours of the early morning. Of course, they were using whatever vehicle—if there was a pickup truck, they would put the victims on the truck. Fortunately, Orlando Regional Medical Center is only about six to eight blocks away, and, of course, it is a trauma center hospital.