

individuals and communities working to promote the resilience, integrity, vitality, and sustainability of the cultural heritage of those individuals and communities;

Whereas the Smithsonian Folklife Festival continues to collaborate with the American Folklife Center of the Library of Congress, the Folk and Traditional Arts Program of the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Park Service, scholarly societies, and State and local arts agencies to deepen and advance public curiosity and appreciation of rich folk and traditional arts and practices as vital and integral to the social fabric of families, communities, and other countries;

Whereas the Smithsonian Folklife Festival has inspired similar cultural exhibitions and festivals across the United States and around the world;

Whereas the Smithsonian Folklife Festival has generated educational curricula, scholarly publications, documentary films, and nongovernmental organizations committed to the documentation and presentation of folk and traditional arts;

Whereas the Smithsonian Folklife Festival fosters intercultural dialogue, cross-generational learning, and cultural equity;

Whereas the Smithsonian Folklife Festival celebrates the diversity of artistic expression and the dignity, delight, and innovation found in the creative process; and

Whereas the week of June 26, 2017 through June 30, 2017 is an appropriate week to designate as “Folk and Traditional Arts and Culture Week” in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival; Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),* That Congress recognizes “Folk and Traditional Arts and Culture Week” in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, to—

(1) recognize practitioners of folk and traditional culture, and the institutions and organizations that support them;

(2) explore the creativity found within the families and communities of these practitioners; and

(3) congratulate the Smithsonian Folklife Festival for 50 years of outstanding efforts to champion creativity, cultural diversity and sustainability, cross-generational engagement, and intercultural communication through community-based research, public presentation, and archival documentation during the week.

#### APPOINTMENT CORRECTION

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that a correction to an appointment made on March 22, 2017, be printed in the RECORD. For the information of the Senate, this correction is clerical and does not change membership of the Service Academy Board made by the appointment.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to Section 1295b(h) of title 46 App., United States Code, appoints the following Senators to the Board of Visitors of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy: the Honorable GARY C. PETERS of Michigan (Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation) and the Honorable BRIAN SCHATZ of Hawaii (At Large).

#### ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2017

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 12 noon, Wednesday, June 28; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; finally, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session and resume consideration of the Rao nomination.

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

#### ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of our Democratic colleagues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. DAINES). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The Senator from Massachusetts.

#### HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, we have now reached a point where the Senate majority, the Republicans, and President Trump, have been unable to put together the package that allows them to take Medicaid and try to successfully turn it into a shadow of what it once was in our country, to turn it into a debt-soaked relic of what it is today by taking out \$770 billion that otherwise would have gone to the families of those in our country who need healthcare services, who need help in providing for those who need it the most within our country.

The same thing was true in the House of Representatives when they were moving through their bill over there. People said: Trump doesn't have the votes. The Republicans don't have the votes. They are not going to be able to be successful. However, this TrumpCare Hail Mary that they threw in the House, notwithstanding the remarkable defense put up by the American people—the millions of phone calls, protests, and rallies—they still were able to find the votes to ultimately pass this incredible attack upon the healthcare of tens of millions of Americans.

What they did in the House is what they are doing in the Senate. The GOP retreats; they wait for the defense to disperse, but then they plow through to get this bill over the finish line, hoping that a 2-week hiatus will be sufficient for the energy level of the defense against these cuts to so wane that then they can come back and finish off the job on their second try in the same way they did in the House of Representatives. Right now it is only halftime.

It is halftime. They are coming back. The ball is in their court. They will attempt again to destroy the healthcare system of our country as we know it today. We have not defeated this bill yet.

Now is the time for those who oppose this bill to redouble their energy, to play even tougher defense against this Republican attempt to undermine Medicaid, to undermine access to care to everyone in our country. Their bill is now down, so let's keep it down for the count. Let's make sure this bill cannot get up and come back and haunt us in the middle of July.

The Senate proposal right now has \$188 billion, which is now going to be within the hands of the Trump administration, in the hands of the Republican leadership as a slush fund to be used to get the votes they need in order to pass their bill. That \$188 billion is right now being divided up in a way that will help them to get the votes.

What is the ultimate goal of the GOP? The ultimate goal is to take a machete to Medicaid because they harbor an ancient animosity toward Medicaid, and I will throw in Medicare and ObamaCare—all of it. They see this as the best opportunity they have had in two generations to be able to leave these programs as debt-soaked relics of what they are today. When they say: Well, we are going to cap the funding and send it back to the States with more flexibility—when they say “cap” the funding, they are talking about decapitating the funding, to cut it in half, send it back to the States, and then say to the States: You figure it out. You try to help those people who are poorest in your State whom you were never able to figure out how to help in the first place, which is why we put the Federal programs on the books in order to help those who are most in need in all of those States.

What is their real goal? It is pretty simple: Slash these programs and then turn them into one huge tax break for the richest people in America. That is what this program will do. One little example of that \$770 billion—let's take \$33 billion of it. That \$33 billion gets divvied up by the 400 wealthiest families in America; 400 billionaires walk up and say: Can I please have my \$7 million that I get as part of taking away coverage for cancer, coverage for Alzheimer's, coverage for opioid treatment? Can I now get my payoff for the success in your wealth-income transfer program? Because that is what you have. You don't have a healthcare program; you have a wealth care program. The wealth of the wealthiest—please make them even wealthier; that is what their entire plan is about.

By the way, that \$33 billion would be enough to take care of the healthcare of 700,000 people in our country, but the Republican priority is to give all that money back to the wealthiest people in our country. That is immoral. That is inhumane. It is just plain wrong. The American public has to rise up and

fight against the greatest legislative injustice that has been perpetrated or attempted to be perpetrated on the American people in more than a generation.

This bill is “the bill” of my entire career in the U.S. Congress, which is now 41 years. This is the worst bill. It is the greatest attack upon the well-being of our Nation. This program is of the rich, for the rich, by the rich, and where are they going to take the money from? From the poor, from the sick, from the elderly, from the disabled. It is selfishness on stilts.

To think that there is a plan to take healthcare away from the poorest and sickest and most disabled people in our country in order to give a tax break to the wealthiest is the most indecent action that may have ever been perpetrated on the floor of the U.S. Congress.

There are billions in tax breaks for those who don’t need them or deserve them, paid for by people who cannot afford it. It is healthcare heartlessness; that is what it is. If you kicked these people in the heart, you would break your toe. There is no heart. There is no sense of decency toward those families who are going to see their loved ones’ diseases get even worse or to see them ultimately die because of lack of coverage.

The Republicans say that their plan—at least they purport it as their plan—is to decrease the deficit by passing this bill, but what do they do with the money that they save? Ah, a tax break for the wealthy.

I thought that you were shedding tears about your concerns of subsequent generations having such huge deficits, but we know those are crocodile tears about future generations because you want to pay off this generation of billionaires and this generation of millionaires who need no additional wealth for their families today.

So there is no real concern about the deficit. This is, once again, just an attack on the programs that the Republicans have always opposed, and if they combine it as a tax break at the same time, all the better.

From my perspective, people are just going to wind up paying more for healthcare, and they are going to be getting less. They are going to be paying for a Cadillac but only getting a tricycle as the people go forward. For too many families, they will not be able to afford anything, and there will be no subsidy to help them get healthcare for their families. The anxiety of suffering from an illness will only be exacerbated by their families’ understanding that they cannot even afford the care for their loved ones because of the financial insecurity in their own families.

This is going to be a historic 2 weeks in which we must raise our voices as they have never been raised before—in which we stand on the ramparts and let those Republicans know that they are in for the fight of their lives. Cas-

sandra-like, we must warn of the dangers of complacency, of the misunderstanding of what is happening right now.

The Republicans have removed the healthcare bill from the Senate floor for consideration. They are not defeated. They are just at halftime. They are now trying to construct a plan that will bring it back as soon as we return and with the votes now secured, from their perspective, in order to pass this bill and send it over to the House of Representatives and then down to President Trump for his signature.

These next 2 weeks will be the most important 2 weeks for the healthcare of our Nation in two generations. This battle is the battle to ensure that they are not successful. From my perspective, this is a fight that each and every American has to be a part of because it is your families who are going to be harmed.

If we just take opioid addiction coverage in Massachusetts, 2,000 people died from opioid overdoses last year. We are only 2 percent of America’s population. If that number were to multiply across the whole country, that would be 100,000 people overdosing and dying. That would be two Vietnam wars of deaths in one year from one disease—a disease that we could begin to reverse if there were the treatment for families and if the prevention were put in place. Yet, if there is no treatment, if there is no prevention, if there is no access, then people, who otherwise would have been able to live normal lives with treatment, will now die.

If you have Alzheimer’s, if you are in a nursing home, there is a very high probability—since two-thirds of all grandmas and grandpas in nursing homes are on Medicaid, if you slash Medicaid, the care that loved one is now receiving in a nursing home is going to be slashed. Grandma and Grandpa in that nursing home are going to see the services that they otherwise would have been provided not being available to them. That is what this Republican plan is going to do.

It says to a kid—a family member—with opioid addiction problems, it says to Grandma and Grandpa in a nursing home, it says to a woman who has cancer, it says to a man who has diabetes: I am sorry. We no longer can afford in America to help you get the healthcare you need.

We are better than that. We are a better country than that, and we are definitely a better country than our saying that we are going to take away that healthcare from all of those people and then give it as a tax break to billionaires. We are better than that. That is just wrong. So this is the battle, the most important battle.

In 1967, Martin Luther King said that the most important civil right was access to healthcare because health is the first wealth. Without health, you have nothing. That is what we are fighting for right now. We are fighting for that fundamental civil right for everyone.

This slashes coverage for those who are disabled in our country. We have made progress over the last generation in reconfiguring how we view the disabled in our country. We have given them access to the help they need so that they can be fuller citizens in our society. This bill slashes the funding to help 20 million disabled in our country live fuller, more functioning lives in order to give a tax break to a billionaire.

It is wrong. It must be stopped. We must put up the defense against this bill’s ever becoming law. For the next 2 weeks, while they sit and plot to try to find a way of camouflaging what they are doing, the American people must rise up and say: No, America is better than that. We will not allow this to happen. God help us in 2017 in the United States of America.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Hawaii.

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, this is the beginning, not the end. Today, we claim an important victory because of thousands of people across the country. There are not enough Senators who support this Republican healthcare plan, so there will not be a vote this week. Because of all of the people who spoke up, the realities of this bill are delayed—the tens of millions of people without insurance, a decimated Medicaid Program, the closure of health clinics and hospitals. Yet that is the key word here—that this bill is delayed. This bill is not dead.

Everyone who spoke up about this bill should take a victory lap. Pat yourselves on the back tonight. It is an extraordinary moment in terms of what grassroots democracy can accomplish. You did what you had to do with what you could, and you succeeded but only for tonight. Tomorrow morning, we have to get ready because the minute that the Senate comes back from the July 4 recess, they will have 3 weeks to ram through a bill. They are not done.

I heard the Vice President say today that they are going to keep working until they get it done. They are not giving up, so we cannot rest either.

Most importantly, we cannot let them forget that we are watching, that we are waiting, and we will still be here when they try to come back and jam this bill through.

I really hope that the Republicans take another course. In setting aside the policy disagreements that we are having, there is really a better way. There is a way for the Senate to be a Senate, which is to empower two of the best Republican Senators whom we have seen in generations. They are LAMAR ALEXANDER and ORRIN HATCH—two people whose conservative credentials nobody doubts. They are the chairmen of two of the biggest committees in the U.S. Senate—the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee and the Finance Committee. They have done bipartisan work—

ORRIN HATCH for decades and LAMAR ALEXANDER for decades. Both of them, relatively recently, have done bipartisan work on tax extenders and on repealing No Child Left Behind. These are not easy issues. For these two chairmen, because they understand the committee hearing process and because they earned those gavels, I can only imagine their frustration.

Look, I am a Progressive, and I support the Affordable Care Act, but if I were sitting there as a Republican member of the HELP Committee or the Finance Committee and if these bills were going through and taking the country in a direction to which I objected and if I were the ranking member or were, maybe, a couple off from being the ranking member, I would be thinking to myself that I cannot wait until I get that gavel back.

I can tell you that I can have my own hearings, and I can listen to expert testimony, and I can craft a bill. That is what I want to do. The point of being a legislator is to actually work together on a bipartisan basis. Everybody knows that the chairman or the chairwoman has the lion's share of the authority, but it is still a collaborative process. It is politics. You try to accommodate people on both sides of the aisle, and you have quite an ideological spectrum, both on the D side and the R side, but that is the fun of it. That is the way the Senate is supposed to work.

You have a hearing, and the thing that we should remember about a hearing is that, generally speaking, if you have four testifiers—I do not know if it is a rule or just kind of an operating assumption—the majority party gets to pick three out of the four testifiers. So you are going to get three Republican witnesses and one Democratic witness if you have a normal hearing in HELP or Finance about the Affordable Care Act or what ought to happen with the American Health Care Act or whatever it may be. So it is not as if you cannot control the message, and it is not as if you cannot, in the end, do whatever bill you want to do. Isn't that the fun of being in the Senate?

Forget the Democrats for the moment. I mean, the Democrats were totally in the dark, and the public was totally in the dark. Even for the Republican Members, I mean, this has to irritate them that 13 people were sort of kept in the loop—some more than others, some less than others—but it was like these consecutive conversations: What will it take to get you to yes? OK. We will consider that. We will let you know what we are able to do.

Why not just have a public hearing?

That is, literally, what we do for everything—for the Defense authorization, for appropriations bills. Of the 12 subcommittees, we have several hearings. Whether it is telecommunications or railroads or education or even other healthcare issues, we have public hearings, and we do so on a bipartisan basis.

As tough as we are on each other in the election context and as tough as we are sometimes with each other on the floor, the committee hearing process is rarely as partisan. The committee hearing process allows you to kind of get to the work of legislating.

All I am suggesting is that I understand what Leader MCCONNELL is going to try to do. He is going to try to peel off votes. Senator MARKEY is exactly right in that he is going to try to peel off votes. Yet there is another way to go here, and that is to legislate. Let me just make the political argument for this on behalf of Republicans.

The problem with being the majority party and trashing the healthcare system by not properly funding the exchanges right now and by creating all of this uncertainty is that prices go up, and everybody understands this. Barack Obama is not the President. He was river rafting when all of this was happening, and he deserves it. I am happy for him. He is not the President. So the idea is that you are going to sort of say: Well, we are going to cut Medicaid, cut opioid funding, and we are going to turn this into a big tax cut for people who are already doing well financially because that last bill was called ObamaCare. It had the word "Obama" in it.

Listen, Republicans and Democrats across the country may not be politically sophisticated like we pretend to be, but they are smart. They are thinking to themselves, I am a Republican, I am a conservative, but I don't care about Barack Obama anymore. He is gone. He is not the President. So if you sit there and tell me we need to slash funding for mental health services or slash funding for my community health center in a rural neighborhood, I don't care—your argument cannot be: Because ObamaCare, right? You can't be: Because ObamaCare.

Now you have a majority in the House, a majority in the Senate, you have the Presidency. So now Republicans own the healthcare system. So here we are trying to figure out a way where we can both own the healthcare system. We are acting like this is impossible to discover. We are acting like: Gosh, what way would we work where we can each sort of shoulder some of the political and policy responsibility, the personal responsibility for the American healthcare system?

There is a very simple answer to that. We just do this through the regular order. If you do this through the regular order—what that means is—it is interesting to me that the difference between now and, say, 6 months ago is people actually know what reconciliation is. They know there is a threshold for regular legislation of 60 votes to overcome a filibuster, but it is a really important point. The moment the Republicans decided to do this via reconciliation, that was tactical, and that was kind of technical, but what that meant was, they said: We have 52. We only need 51. We don't need to talk to you.

I understand that kind of rationale. You have 52 votes. You can give up actually two and have Vice President PENCE break the tie. That may be a judgment they made; I am not sure if they regret it or not.

So here we are. The way to take this off the table as a political liability for the Republicans is to get a bill that could get 60 votes because once it becomes a bipartisan enterprise, it cannot be a cudgel. We cannot beat each other up over it.

When the Affordable Care Act passed originally, one of the challenges we had as a political matter is that we had not a single, solitary Republican vote. I will take everybody at their word that they just couldn't vote for it because it was against their political ideology and their principles, but it also had the side benefit of, the moment a bill doesn't have the patina of bipartisanship—the moment only one party participates in a process—boy, do you own it.

So the question I have is, Do you really want to own the American healthcare system, whatever happens, good or bad? You become like the utility company. Nobody likes their utility company. The best thing that can happen, if you are a utility company, is the lights stay on and the rate of increase slightly slows. You are never going to have cheaper rates, right? And when you flip your light switch on and your lights go on, you don't say: Gosh, I am so pleased with my utility company. You ignore it.

The best thing that can happen is, you come up with a brilliant bill, without any Democratic support, and then everybody shrugs their shoulders and moves on. More likely you are going to own all the problems you are creating, and you are creating myriad problems. I just want to say, there are a lot of Democrats who are on the level about wanting to legislate here, and we will do it the moment repeal is taken off the table, the moment there is a commitment to public hearings, the moment there is a commitment to doing things through the regular order.

Now, those were not my prepared remarks, but that really matters to me. I really believe in the Senate. For all of our flaws, we are still the place that has to solve the problems. We are still the world's greatest deliberative body because we must be, because these are Federal problems and we are the Federal legislature so we have to fix this ourselves. There are only two paths; one is the partisan path, which is great peril for people across the country and great political peril, and then there is the path of statesmanship and stateswomanship—the path of us working together and being a Senate again. We can do that, but we have to decide that is what we want to do.

I am hoping we go home, we participate in our parades, we hang out with our families, we cook some burgers, we cook some hot dogs, and we think: You know what, I want to legislate again. That was the battle, that was tough, I

am angry, I am disappointed, I am relieved—it depends on who you are—but I would like to start legislating again, and I would like to do so in the regular order.

I am hoping that is what happens over the next week. If it doesn't, then

we will be ready to fight again, and I know there are literally millions of Americans who are not going to let up until this bill is dead.

I yield the floor.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL TOMORROW

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands adjourned until 12 noon tomorrow.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 7:20 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, June 28, 2017, at 12 noon.