

Anne continues her message:

Additionally, childhood cancer patients must be assured of access to essential health benefits without the threat of lifetime or annual caps that would effectively price patients out of lifesaving treatments. Two-thirds of childhood cancer survivors will develop serious health conditions from the toxicity of treatment. My child's future is already uncertain enough. We should not have to worry about annual or lifetime caps on coverage.

I agree with Anne. What use is healthcare coverage that expires just when you need it the most? Why would anyone think it makes sense to sell a health insurance policy for thousands of dollars that doesn't actually cover anything—or nothing—when you need it? This is a step in the wrong direction, and I continue to urge my Republican colleagues to reverse course.

I would also like to talk about what this bill would do to those suffering from opioid addiction, a public health crisis that has taken a tremendous toll on our country and particularly on my home State of Rhode Island.

I, along with many of my Democratic colleagues, have been talking about how the Senate TrumpCare bill would pull the rug out from many of those who are suffering from substance use disorders, like opioid addiction, by decimating Medicaid, which is how many people suffering from the opioid crisis access treatment.

News reports suggest that Republicans are considering adding a fund for opioid addiction treatment as another so-called fix to the TrumpCare bill. While we absolutely need more Federal funding to expand access to drug treatment—in fact, I have been urging Republican leaders to do just that for years—what they are proposing cannot make up for the bill's nearly \$800 billion in cuts to Medicaid with a \$45 billion opioid fund. The math simply doesn't work.

Second, short-term drug treatment programs do not provide a full spectrum of healthcare coverage over the long term, like Medicaid or other health insurance coverage. The Medicaid expansion under the ACA has provided the security of reliable healthcare coverage and long-term stability to help people with chronic conditions such as substance use disorders seek treatment and turn their lives around. TrumpCare takes that away.

In addition, people with opioid addiction suffer from other mental health conditions at twice the rate of the general population and higher rates of physical health conditions as well, which would still go unaddressed in this so-called fix. We will be setting people up for failure if we provide immediate drug treatment services but cut access to the other mental and physical healthcare services they need.

An opioid fund alone will not solve this public health crisis and, in fact, would be a drop in the bucket compared to how the rest of this bill would worsen the crisis.

The cuts to Medicaid under the Senate TrumpCare bill are beyond repair.

The Senate TrumpCare bill fundamentally changes the structure of the Medicaid Program, making massive cuts, representing a 35-percent cut over the next two decades. Simply put, this will end the Medicaid Program as we know it, which will hurt not only those suffering from the opioid crisis but also seniors, children, and people with disabilities. We may see Republicans try to spread out this harm over more years to hide the damage, but do not be fooled. Whether they make massive cuts to Medicaid in 2021 or 2022 or even 2026, for that matter, the cuts will be devastating.

In short, no fix can undo the damage this bill will cause. This bill is a massive tax break for the wealthiest Americans at the expense of everyone else. No amendment or tweak to the bill will change that.

Sharon from Wakefield, RI, wrote to me just a couple of days ago and summed this up very well. She said:

I do not support the so-called American Health Care Act because it is not a health care plan, it is a tax cut for the rich. I am 67 years old, and I have a mild version of muscular dystrophy, and I have Medicaid. Since the GOP wants to end Medicaid, I am asking you to vote NO on the bill.

Republicans must abandon this effort and come to the table to work with Democrats on a new path forward. Let's have productive conversations about how we can improve access to care and bring down costs. Let's harness this interest in improving access to drug treatment and work together on those efforts. But, coupled with the TrumpCare bill, those efforts will not mitigate the damage this bill will inflict on my constituents and those across the country.

I hope those on the other side of the aisle who have expressed misgivings will oppose TrumpCare in all of its forms so that we can work together on a bipartisan solution and attempt to do something positive for our constituents.

With that, Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. 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. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 10 minutes as in morning business.

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

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, there was an interesting press conference earlier today in which I joined with Senator HEITKAMP, Senator CAPITO, and Senator BARRASSO on a common piece of legislation that will help address climate change. That does not happen often, so it was a good sign.

This is not a comprehensive solution. It may not even make much of a meas-

urable difference, but it will make some difference. It will help drive America's technological edge, and it will help, as it gets implemented, reduce our carbon emissions. It was very good to be working with those Senators.

The fundamental problem we face with carbon capture and utilization and the reason so little of it now happens is economics. There is a flaw in the market economics related to carbon capture utilization and sequestration. Here is the flaw: There is no business proposition for stripping out the carbon dioxide, and in a market economy, if no one will pay for something, you don't get very much of it.

LINDSEY GRAHAM and I flew up to Saskatchewan to see Boundary Dam, a carbon capture plant at a coal-powered electric generating facility where they are removing the carbon dioxide by running the exhaust from the plant through, essentially, a cloud of aminos. They are able to sequester closing on 80 percent of the carbon, and they use it to pump out and into nearby oil fields to pressurize the oil to facilitate extraction. Up in Saskatchewan at Boundary Dam, they have proved that the technology works, and where they are, with a little financing help from the Province, the economics work also.

Unfortunately, not every coal-burning plant is on an oil field where the carbon dioxide can be used for extraction. Other than the facility in Saskatchewan, there is not a lot going on, on this continent. The Illinois facility collapsed, the facility in the South just collapsed, and there is one in Texas that is going on. But the bill the four of us got together on—which would be to create a tax credit paid for each ton of carbon that is captured and utilized or sequestered—could really make a difference. Knowing those credits are out there is the kind of reliance industry needs in order to invest in the technologies to make this happen.

Of course, a real market for carbon reduction technologies ultimately requires putting a price on carbon emissions. We can fiddle around with payments for reduced carbon, but ultimately a price on carbon is the sensible economic solution. I think that is pretty much universally agreed by economists. Everyone agrees that carbon dioxide emissions are not a good thing. Everyone also agrees that carbon dioxide emissions are free to emitters now, so we get a lot of them.

A harmful thing that is free to the emitter is called, in economic terms, an externality. It is an externality because the cost of the harm is external to the price of the product. A basic tenet of market economics is that the cost of a harm should be built into the price of the product that causes the harm.

It is basically an economic version of being polite. If you throw your trash over into your neighbor's yard instead of paying for your trash collection, well, your neighbor has to clean up

your mess and you are being really rude—a bad neighbor.

In essence, that is what the fossil fuel industry has been doing with their carbon dioxide emissions for years—not paying to clean them up, dumping them all into our common atmosphere and our common oceans, making their neighbors pay because they don't want to pay for their own waste.

Like that bad neighbor, they have come up with various excuses: Oh, it would be too expensive for us to pay for our trash collection. Or, our trash is actually good for your yard; it kind of composts it a bit. You will love it. It is better for you to clean it up.

Then there is my personal favorite: If you make us take care of our own waste, we will beat you up—politically, at least, which is why the fossil fuel industry spends so much money on politics, just to be able to make that threat credible. And around here, boy, is it credible. It explains virtually fully our failure as an institution to address this patently obvious problem that our own home State universities are telling us is real. From Utah to Rhode Island, the universities we support and root for know and teach climate science.

Anyway, I have a carbon price bill that would cause a technological boom in carbon capture and carbon utilization because, at last, there would be a reason to pay for it, and the free market could get to work. American ingenuity could get to work. With that market signal and with funding from revenues that the fee would generate, we could actually extend the life of existing coal plants being shuttered by competition from natural gas, by stripping their carbon dioxide emissions so that they actually didn't do the damage that they are doing now, they stopped throwing their trash into their neighbors' yard, and they paid for trash collection. The technology needs to be there and the economics need to be there, and then it can be done.

We really ought to pass the carbon fee bill. I would add that the carbon fee bill also creates a lot of revenue. We, I think, have agreed that revenue ought not go to fund the government—not to make Big Government—but there are other things we can do with it that would be very helpful. One would be to make coal country whole for the economic losses coal country has sustained.

Remember Huey Long's old slogan: "Every man a king." We could make every miner a king—with a solid pension, retirement at any time, full health benefits for life for the family, a cash account based on years worked, a voucher for a new vehicle, a college plan for their kids. It all becomes doable if we pass a carbon fee and use the revenues to help coal country. Otherwise, nothing will change.

Coal country will just keep suffering as natural gas keeps driving coal out of the energy market. There is no mechanism now to remedy that inevitability. People will suffer. There is a remedy

right there—a carbon fee—that can help fund and encourage the development of the technologies so that we can strip the carbon dioxide out of the emitting powerplants and so that we can go into these coal countries where pensions and benefits have been stripped by bankruptcy, by the collapse of this industry, and make those folks whole again.

Give them their dignity. Let them retire now. It is not their fault that the coal industry has collapsed. They worked hard. They did dangerous work. They went down in the mines. They worked big equipment. It is a dangerous occupation to be a coal miner, and it is entitled to respect. Retire any time, full health benefits for you and the family, a cash account to help, a new vehicle voucher, a college plan for the kids, to make sure they are well-educated—you could do a lot of those things. You could help those people pass a carbon fee and make every coal miner a king.

In the meantime, I am willing to find funding to flip the social cost of carbon—the way we did in our bill, announced today—and create a positive fee, a tax credit for carbon capture and carbon utilization. I am willing to work with Republican colleagues to find a way to pay our nuclear fleet for the carbon-free nature of its nuclear power.

It is crazy to be closing safely operating nuclear power facilities just because they get zero economic value for the carbon-free nature of their power. The carbon-free nature of their power has value. The carbon-free nature of power has significant value. That is why we are offering in our legislation a tax credit of \$30 to \$50 per avoided ton of carbon dioxide emissions. That implies that an avoided ton of carbon dioxide emissions is worth \$30 to \$50.

If nuclear power avoids that, I am willing to work with my Republican colleagues to figure out a way so that our nuclear fleet can enjoy the actual economic advantage of the carbon-free power they produce.

We close a nuclear plant so we can open a natural gas plant which pollutes more than the nuclear plant because the economics are so fouled up that the nuclear plant gets no value for carbon-free power and the natural gas plant pays no costs for the harm of its carbon emissions. It is economic madness.

We know that carbon-free nature has value. We know that the carbon-free nature of nuclear power has value. We just will not pay for it, and plants close due to that market failure, and jobs are lost, and power is lost, and new investments have to be stood up in polluting plants to make the difference. It is crazy.

In closing, the Heitkamp-Whitehouse-Capito-Barrasso bill, the Future bill, to provide a tax credit for carbon capture utilization and sequestration in powerplants, in factories, and in a variety of applications, is small. It is in some respects a gesture,

but everything begins with small steps and small gestures. I am proud to be a part of it, but I want to remind my colleagues that there are also big win-win ways that we can solve the larger problem. I look forward to working together to accomplish just that.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

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

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

CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF LIU XIAOBO

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I stand here today on behalf of a hero of freedom and democracy in the People's Republic of China. Liu Xiaobo and his wife Liu Xia are the faces of liberty in China. They have sacrificed comfort and normalcy to chart a path toward political liberalization. For that, they have been detained, imprisoned, and abused.

In 2008, Liu Xiaobo coauthored "Charter 08," a manifesto that shined a light on the Communist Party of China and its totalitarian abuse of power. Though many brave souls signed their names and their fates to that document, Dr. Liu's name was at the very top. For this reason, he received the Nobel Peace Prize. He also received charges of "inciting subversion of state power" and an 11-year prison sentence. It is impossible to neglect the stark irony: a man dedicated to nonviolence, imprisoned for promoting peace.

Motivating Dr. Liu's tremendous courage and self-sacrifice was a determination to remember what the People's Republic of China desperately wants the world to forget: Tiananmen Square. A poet, author, and political scientist, Dr. Liu was, in 1989, a visiting scholar at Columbia University, but when the pro-democracy protests broke out in Beijing in June of that year, he raced back to China to support them. He staged a hunger strike in Tiananmen Square in the midst of the historic student protests and insisted that they would remain nonviolent in the faces of the tanks, which the Chinese military deployed to smash them.

In 1996, the party subjected him to 3 years of "reeducation through labor" for continuing to question China's one-party system.

In 2008, on the eve of the 100-year anniversary of China's first Constitution and the 30-year anniversary of Beijing's Democracy Wall movement, Dr. Liu dedicated his work on "Charter 08" to the martyrs at Tiananmen Square.

Today, 8 years into his unjust imprisonment, Dr. Liu needs our help more than ever. Last month, it was revealed that Dr. Liu has contracted an aggressive, late stage form of liver cancer. Although PRC authorities "released" him "on medical parole," both Liu Xiaobo and Liu Xia linger without freedom. Even worse, Liu Xiaobo is dying.