

pass a civil contempt citation—in other words, holding backpage.com in contempt and requiring them to supply these documents and come forward with this information or else face a lawsuit and potential criminal violations. Finally, last August, after going through the district court, the Circuit Court, all the way to the Supreme Court, we were able to get their request to appeal it rejected, and we were able to get the documents.

Over 1 million documents were eventually turned over, including emails and internal documents. We went through them all, and what we found was very troubling, to say the least. After reviewing the documents, the subcommittee published a staff report in January that conclusively showed that backpage is more deeply complicit in online, underage sex trafficking than anyone ever imagined. The report shows that backpage has knowingly covered up evidence by systematically deleting words and images suggestive of the illegal conduct, including child sex trafficking. The editing process sanitized the content of millions of advertisements in order to hide important evidence from law enforcement. I encourage people to take a look at this report. They can look at it on our website and other websites here from myself or Senator MCCASKILL.

Backpage CEO Carl Ferrer personally directed his employees to create an electronic filter to delete hundreds of words indicative of sex trafficking or prostitution from ads before they were published. In other words, they knew these ads were about selling girls, selling women online; yet they published them.

Again, this filter they used did not reject ads because of the obvious illegal activity. They edited the ads only to try to cover up the illegal activity. It didn't change what was advertised; it changed the way it was advertised. Backpage did nothing to stop this criminal activity. They facilitated it, knowingly.

What did they do? Well, afraid to erode their profits—they were afraid because, as Mr. Ferrer said, in his words, it would “piss off a lot” of customers. They began deleting words. Beginning in 2010, backpage automatically deleted words including “lolita,” referencing a 12-year-old girl in a book sold for sex, “teenage,” “rape,” “young,” “little girl,” “teen,” “fresh,” “innocent,” “school girl,” even “amber alert”—and then they published the edited versions of those ads on their website. They also systematically deleted dozens of words related to prostitution. This filter made these deletions before anyone at backpage even looked at the ad.

When law enforcement officials asked for more information about the suspicious ads, backpage had destroyed the original ad posted by the trafficker, so the evidence was gone. This notion that they were trying to help law enforcement flies in the face of the

fact that they actually destroyed the evidence that would have helped law enforcement.

We will never know for sure how many girls and women were victimized as a result of this activity. By backpage's own estimate, the company was editing 70 to 80 percent of the ads in their adult section by late 2010. Based on our best estimate, this means that backpage was editing more than one-half million ads a year—more than one-half million ads a year.

At a hearing on the report, the backpage CEO and other company officials pled the Fifth Amendment, invoking their right against self-incrimination rather than responding to questions we had about the report and its findings.

We also heard powerful testimony from parents whose children had been trafficked on backpage. One mother talked about seeing her missing daughter's photograph on backpage. She frantically called the company to tell them that it was her daughter—they finally found her—and to please take down the ad. Their response: Did you post the ad?

Her response: Of course I didn't post the ad. That's my daughter. Please take down the ad.

Their response: We can take it down only if you pay for the ad.

Talk about heartless.

Based on our report, it is clear that backpage actively facilitated sex trafficking taking place on its website in order to increase profits at the expense of vulnerable women and children. Then, after the fact, they covered up the evidence of these crimes.

What is happening to these kids is terrible. It is not just tragic. To me, it is evil.

No one is interested in shutting down legitimate commercial activity and speech. As I said earlier, the Communication Decency Act plays an important role, but we want to stop this criminal activity.

I see some of my colleagues are here to speak. I appreciate their allowing me to finish, but I urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in reforming these laws to be able to protect these innocent victims, these children.

I yield back my time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, before the chair of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations leaves, I also would like to put into the RECORD that, recently, in a raid that was performed in the Philippines, some very interesting documentation was seized about backpage, according to news reports, and the FBI was immediately called.

I think there is an opportunity to use that information to advance the investigation and to continue to expose the participation of backpage, not just as a billboard or as a want ad but as a knowing participant in the trafficking

of children—not just in our country but globally.

I thank the chairman.

FUTURE ACT

Mr. President, today I am joined by my colleagues from West Virginia and Rhode Island. We are kind of a motley group. We are talking about something that has brought us together with a level of excitement and bipartisanship. I would like to say that it is not just bipartisanship but really coming across the ideological barriers we frequently experience here to try and talk about an issue that is near and dear to our hearts, which is maintaining an opportunity for our coal miners and our coal industry to continue to do what they have done for generations—and that is to produce electricity that fuels this economy in the United States of America—but also recognizing that regulatory certainty is one of the key values we need to establish. In order to provide that certainty, we need to address concerns of other Members of our caucus who have in no small measure a lot of concern about what is happening with CO₂ emissions and what those emissions are doing environmentally.

I want to just kind of introduce this concept. Back in 2008, we passed something called 45Q, which was a provision that would allow for tax credits similar to what we have for wind and solar. Wind credits are production tax credits, and solar credits are investment tax credits. To provide for tax credits, \$10 and \$20—\$10 if you are injecting into a formation or you are enhancing oil recovery, \$20 if you are injecting into a geographic formation to store the carbons as CO₂—those credits have proved to be, albeit used, but somewhat anemic to jump-start the technology, to jump-start the opportunity to see wholesale carbon sequestration.

We also know that since 2008, we have seen new technologies coming. I know my colleague from Rhode Island will talk about carbon utilization. We are expanding beyond just carbon sequestration—carbon capture and sequestration—to carbon utilization. It is a hugely important part of this puzzle. We believe that if we provide these tax incentives to our industries, if we provide these tax incentives to our innovators, it will drive technology that will have the benefit of guaranteeing that we will see a diverse fuel source in America that includes coal and includes natural gas. We always want to point that out, wherever we represent coal States. I know West Virginia is in proximity to huge natural gas fields. We know that we may be faced with a carbon challenge in natural gas, and the ability to capture CO₂ behind natural gas-fired power may be an essential ingredient for regulatory certainty into the future.

We are excited about this bill. We have 25 cosponsors who will advance and continue to talk about it and continue to grow colleague support. We hope this show of bipartisanship, this ability to work across the aisle, this

ability to come together—maybe not with the same motivations but certainly with the same goal—will prove that on one of the most contentious issues here, which is climate and coal, we can come together and actually get something done that we can all agree on.

With that, I yield the floor, and I defer to my colleague from West Virginia.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from North Dakota. She has been a champion of building this bipartisan coalition. When we announced this yesterday, we had a very large board that showed quite a broad array of groups from around the country that are very much in support of this concept. So, I thank Senator HEITKAMP for her great leadership.

It is terrific to be on the floor with Senator WHITEHOUSE. We both serve on the EPW Committee together, and many times we are totally opposite. Sometimes we feel as if we are on opposite planets, I think, but definitely on different sides of this issue. It is great to be on the same side of an issue such as this, which really helps fortify not just our country but our regions and our beliefs as well.

As Senator HEITKAMP said, we have 25 cosponsors. Some of them are utilities, environmental groups, oil and gas companies, Governors, labor unions, so it is a great array of the country interested in carbon capture utilization and storage. We have done a lot of research in this area, but we haven't been able to scale it up to a point where it is economically viable, and that is where I think the tax credits will be not just welcomed and used, but it will be very important to see that scalability—which we have seen coming in small bits and pieces—maybe come in much greater amounts.

We obviously have a very robust coal industry in the State of West Virginia. We have lost thousands of jobs. Senator WHITEHOUSE and I have talked about his stay in West Virginia. He has great empathy for the coal miner and for those families that have lost jobs, but he is very concerned, as I think we all are, about what it is doing to our environment and how can we improve this.

That is what this legislation, I think, will help do. It will spur domestic investment in the technologies. It will also help us, I think, bring energy security because it goes to the baseload fuels, whether it is coal or natural gas, that we have to have.

I mean, in Washington, DC, today, it is hot out there, and I can guarantee you there are a lot of air-conditioners that are running at maximum speed. If we do not have this baseload power, which is coal and natural gas in areas—and I see my fellow Senator from West Virginia. We know, in coal country, how important that is and also what smiles on people's faces these air-con-

ditioners can bring, as these hot days go, because we are running at full capacity.

We want to make sure that by capturing the carbon stream, we prevent any waste emissions and we provide a possible valuable resource for industry. I remarked yesterday for industry to extract oil, which is very important, obviously, to the Senator from North Dakota and also in our Marcellus shale region.

I believe that with this research and with the spurring of this technology, CO₂ is going to have another use out there. There are all kinds of utilization possibilities, but if we just turn our backs on it or try to shut it down and make it unviable financially to invest in these technologies, we are never going to find that next best use of CO₂.

So we tweaked the bill a little bit. The Senators have had this bill out for at least a couple of years. There is a companion bill in the House with a lot of cosponsors as well. I think it has, with 25 cosponsors on the Senate floor, bipartisan but very different philosophical beliefs, maybe. Maybe that is not the best way to put it. There are very different regional approaches to this, I guess would be a better way to state that.

We have our universities, such as West Virginia University and Marshall University, that are working on this. We have the National Energy Technology Lab in Morgantown, where Secretary Perry joined both Senator MANCHIN and me to talk about the technologies that are in front of us and the challenge for researchers.

I feel like financing and the economic model is where we are trying to go, in order to spur investment, to provide the regulatory certainty but also the investment certainty in that this is a keeper; that this is something that is here to stay, that it is doable, that it is economically feasible, that it is scalable, and it provides us with a lot of energy security at the same time. I think its greatest benefit of all is to keep our air clean and get it cleaner and meet the challenges of the next several decades.

With that, I turn it over to the Senator from Rhode Island.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, it is a great pleasure for me to be here with Senator HEITKAMP. We knew each other as attorneys general so I have admired the Senator from North Dakota for a long time. From my time in West Virginia, I remember Senator CAPITO's father who is a very formidable and renowned political personality in West Virginia. To be here with the two of them is a personal pleasure. Senator MANCHIN is also joining us, so I am very happy to be here.

I thank Senator HEITKAMP, Senator CAPITO, Chairman BARRASSO, and my friend Senator GRAHAM for leading this bipartisan effort, and I thank Senator MANCHIN for joining us on the floor.

We have more than 20 other cosponsors so this is a bill that has broad bipartisan support and has a great coalition behind it. It has everything from my great friends at the Natural Resources Defense Council, many of our friends in the AFL-CIO, to nonprofits like the Clean Air Task Force, to moderating groups like Third Way and the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, which are trying to pick their way through the divide, industry groups like Wyoming's Cloud Peak Energy coal company and West Virginia's Peabody, a coal company, and the ethanol industry. So we have really good, broad support. It is an unusual coalition, and I am excited by it.

There are ways to remove carbon dioxide from the air and from emissions, and we are seeing a lot of it. I went with LINDSEY GRAHAM up to Saskatchewan to see the Boundary Dam facility, where they basically put the output of the coal-burning powerplant through a cloud of amino droplets that strip out the carbon dioxide and pump it to a nearby oilfield where they can use the carbon dioxide to pressurize the oilfield and facilitate the extraction of oil. That is made possible because they have an oilfield nearby that will pay for that carbon dioxide to use in order to extract the oil. If I remember correctly, they were getting close to \$30 per ton. That is a pretty real revenue stream, but a lot of our American coal facilities do not have the luxury of being next to an oilfield that will pay for the carbon so you have to look elsewhere for revenues to make it worth your while. What we have in America is a market failure in which there is nobody who will pay you for removing carbon pollution. The way our market is structured it just does not work.

The simplest approach, of course, would be to put a proper price on carbon and let the whole economy go to work in solving the problem of carbon pollution. Short of that, this bill takes an important step by putting a value on reducing carbon emissions by paying facilities with a tax credit for every ton of carbon emissions they can keep out of the atmosphere. If we can get this passed and if we can get this into the Tax Code so it is lasting, then investors can look at it and say: Hey, we can finally put some money behind these technologies, and we can get them going, not just in the power sector.

This reaches into industrial carbon capture, into technologies like carbon utilization, and into really exciting new technologies like direct air capture. Now, most of these are happening elsewhere. To look for the models, you have to go to Saskatchewan, like I did and like Senator HEITKAMP has done, or you have to go to Iceland, where they are pumping carbon dioxide down into geological structures where it reacts and becomes stone, or you have to go to Switzerland, where they are taking direct air carbon capture technologies, because, there, their market

is not broken so there actually is a return on this.

We are seeing good work at our National Labs, I will say, which is funded by Congress and people like Dr. Julio Friedmann, whom Senator HEITKAMP and I know and work with. We are doing exciting stuff. Yet to take it to a marketable level, there has to be a business strategy. You have to be able to make a business case to investors if you are going to put money behind building what could be a multi-hundred-million-dollar carbon capture plant. This will begin to do that, and it makes me very excited.

In particular, I thank my cosponsors for making sure we are not talking about CCS any longer and that we are talking about CCUS. It is not carbon capture and storage. It is carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration.

I have also been to Shenandoah, IA. Shenandoah, IA, has a big ethanol plant, and there is a company, called bioprocessH₂O, that is in the exhaust stream of that ethanol plant. They pipe out their waste heat, their waste energy, their waste CO₂, their wastewater all into a plant that grows algae, and the algae eats up the CO₂. They take about 15 percent of it out of the stream, and it turns it into a product. They use it for feed, for cattle, for fish. They use it for makeup and other products. They use it for a whole variety of purposes. It is a new form of agriculture that is going to be very valuable, and the fact that you can make it efficient to strip carbon dioxide out of a plant's exhaust is a great thing.

This is a good way we can work together. It may be the first time I can think of that Senator McCONNELL and I have ever been on a bill together. He is not on it now in this particular iteration because neither he nor the Speaker want to get onto a bill that is a tax bill while they are looking at tax reform. Yet, clearly, we know where their hearts are from the fact that they were on it the last time. So there is a lot of welcomed political news around this, and I think it has the chance of really revving up American industry so it is not the Canadians and the Icelanders and the Swiss who are cleaning our clocks because we have not bothered to get our economic structure in order to make this a profitable undertaking. It is a great first step, and I am proud to be a part of it.

I yield to my friend, the Senator from West Virginia, JOE MANCHIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I thank my good friend from Rhode Island. I have been to his State, and we have gone to the algae farms. It has a lot of potential. I agree with the Senator 100 percent.

I applaud Senator HEITKAMP and Senator CAPITO for leading the effort to update and improve this tax credit for carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration. We have the support of 25 Democrats and Republicans—totally

bipartisan—and when you have Senator WHITEHOUSE and Senator BARRASSO on a bill, you know you have a real bill. It can happen. So that is very encouraging.

Senator CAPITO and I come from West Virginia, and Senator HEITKAMP comes from the energy-producing State of North Dakota. Coal was one of the most abundant energy sources in the world. It is lying on most continents, and most countries have it, and they are going to use it. It is a very efficient way of producing energy because it is plentiful.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Will the Senator yield for a question?

Mr. MANCHIN. Yes, sir.

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Does the Senator know that, in Cumberland, RI, there used to be coal mining? In fact, there are still coal mines underground in New Cumberland, WV. Every once in a while, one collapses, so we have been there.

Mr. MANCHIN. I am so encouraged that you remember the history of your great State in not forgetting those coal mines.

We have to face the facts and the realization that there are 8 billion tons of coal being burned in the world on an annual basis. We burn less than 1 billion in the United States of America, and we are the country that has done more to clean up the environment than any other country. They all talk about doing different things, but we have taken the SO_x and the NO_x and the mercury out and the particulates. We have done more in the last two decades than has ever been done, and there is more that can be done.

I have to be very honest with you. The last 8 years was very challenging and difficult for us. No one wanted to make the effort. They talked a good game, but no one would put the investment into the technology that was needed. Now we have this bill—it is bipartisan that everybody is working hard on—that has a chance to really put us in the forefront of how we utilize this carbon capture and sequestration.

West Virginia has one of the first powerplants, the Mountaineer Power Plant, that shows it can be done commercially. We did a commercial test there. We know it can be done. We know it is expensive. At the time, President Obama said to go ahead and build a coal plant, and we will break you. He knew it was not financially feasible, and that is where that statement came from.

First of all, coal was a baseload fuel. There are only two baseload fuels in the world today. Baseload is 24/7 uninterrupted power. That is coal and nuclear. Gas has now replaced coal in the United States of America in its being more plentiful for the production of energy, which we depend on, but it still can be interruptible because the gas pipelines could be sabotaged. They could break, and weather conditions could change that.

So you have to make sure everything is working for the people of the United States of America who have always been used to and been dependent upon turning the switch on or their heat and their power or opening their fridge, and everything is working. It comes because you have baseload that is dependable, reliable, and affordable. You are going to have that.

I think, maybe in my grandchildren's lifetimes, they are going to see, maybe, commercial hydrogen, which will be water vapor. I think that is coming. It is just not here yet. So we are going to use what we have and what we need and make sure we do it in the cleanest fashion. The United States should be and will be the leader of this. This is what helps us do it, and it gives us incentive to move forward on it.

When we were doing scrubbers back in the eighties, the Clean Air Act, I will never forget, at the time, to do scrubbers that take sulfur out, you have to inject, basically, limestone. This crushed limestone, basically, clings to the sulfur, and the sulfur drops out in the form of the ash. What are you going to do with all of this by-product of this ash? Can it be detrimental? Is it hazardous? Guess what. A lot of the drywall you are using today is made out of the ash that came out of the new scrubbers from which we did not know we were going to have a by-product.

So there is value. I still believe in my heart, with this piece of legislation, that we are going to find a valuable use of this waste. Can it be solidified? We know we can take clear stream CO₂ off. Can we solidify this CO₂? It would not just be sequestering it. We are doing it in liquid form now and pressuring it into the ground. If you have oil or some other energy that is valuable to return back, then you can offset the cost, but in a lot of parts of the country, we do not have that oil so we are not able to have a value returned. It is pure cost, and the cost is about one-third of the production. A perfect example: If you have a 900-megawatt powerplant and you have carbon capture sequestration, but you have no value in return, you lose 300 megawatts by pushing it into the ground. It makes it nonfeasible financially, and that is when the statement came, "You build it, and we will break it." That is how they break it. You cannot do it. So if we don't have to sequester it and pressure it in the ground when we solidify this clear stream carbon from liquids to solids, can we use the spent fuel of a solid carbon, CO₂?

This is what we should be working on. These are the things we should be doing. We missed 8 years. We had a hiatus for 8 years. Let's catch up. This piece of legislation puts us on the path to make something happen, to truly make us unique in the world of what we do and how we do it. The rest of the world counts on us. All the other countries are talking about all the things they are doing in climate; trust me,

they are not. They are talking about it; they are not doing it. Even our NATO allies aren't using what we have already developed and perfected. They are not using scrubbers, and they are not using baghouses for mercury.

It is not CO₂ killing people in Beijing; it is basically particulates. It is particulates that we have taken out of the air. We can do this, but we need to work together. We can't be fighting each other. There is not a West Virginian I know who wants to breathe dirty air or drink dirty water—or an American—and they are not going to. We have improved and will continue to improve. But we can't be pitting one environmental group against another manufacturing or production group, and that is what we have done. We are just tearing each other apart because we are picking sides: Are you for the environment or are you for the economy? I am for both. I am for the environment, and I am for the economy, and I think there is a balance between the two.

If we do the technology and the manufacturers or the producers of electricity refuse to use the technology that is proven, then they should be shut down. They get a certain period of time to retrofit. If they will not do it, then shut them down.

We haven't gotten there yet on this, and that is why this piece of legislation is so important. All of the working groups and environmental groups—everybody should be behind this. We have an array of Senators who have come together, unlike most bills. We don't often have this happen. I am proud of what the Presiding Officer has done. I am proud of my good friend from North Dakota. I am proud of my friend from Rhode Island. I am proud of my friend from Wyoming. I am proud of everyone coming together and saying: If we are going to use it, let's do it better.

With that I say thank you—thank you to all of us for working together on this and for continuing to move the United States of America forward. West Virginia will do its part, I can assure my colleagues of that.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. CAPITO). The Senator from North Dakota.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Madam President, one thing I want to talk about, as we are talking about carbon utilization—and Joe did a great job of talking about new technologies. Frequently when I talk about this topic people say: There is no such thing as clean coal. Coal cannot be a clean energy source. And I say: That is not true. I tell them about my personal experience with the largest carbon sequestration storage program in the country, up until some of the new developments, and that was Dakota Gas. I served on the board of directors of Dakota Gas, and, ironically, the carbon capture and transmission into an oil field was not done to respond to concerns globally about carbon; it was done to produce a sal-

able and lucrative byproduct—CO₂—which can be used in the oil fields.

The one point I want to make is that a lot of the new development in exploration and in production of oil is done in tight formations, shale formations. This is not a technology, CO₂ flooding isn't a technology that has been widely used in tight formations because we haven't figured out how to do it.

I want to acknowledge one of those great American corporations, Occidental Petroleum, for doing something they call huff and puff, where they inject the CO₂. They basically let that sit in the well and then eventually recharge the well. They are seeing excellent results in using this as an enhanced oil recovery method.

We are very excited about the bipartisan group. We are very excited that we can take one of the most contentious issues—one of the most contentious issues here on the floor—an issue for which, time after time, no one could find a path forward, and we have met with great success in getting good people to come together.

Finally, I want to say that it has been a joy to work with the junior Senator from West Virginia. I spend a lot of time with the senior Senator from West Virginia. The junior Senator from West Virginia, from my experience, is always looking for solutions to problems—not adding to the rancor, but looking for solutions to real problems. We have had a great partnership, and I look forward to our continued partnership in promoting and moving this issue forward.

With that, I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont.

HEALTHCARE LEGISLATION

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I wanted to say a few words about the new Republican healthcare plan that was just announced a few hours ago. While there are some modest changes in it, the truth of the matter is that this plan remains a disaster. It remains an embarrassment. I think the indication that it is an embarrassment is that with legislation that would impact about one-sixth of the American economy of over \$3 trillion a year—legislation that, because it is healthcare, impacts virtually everybody—there has not been one public hearing on this legislation. It has all been done behind closed doors. Honestly, no matter what one's view may be on where we as a Nation should go with healthcare, whether you like this bill or you don't like this bill, I just don't know how someone can seriously say that we don't have to hear from physicians about the impact of this legislation on their ability to treat their patients. I just don't know how you do that—or that we don't have to hear from hospitals.

I come from a rural State. What will the impact of this legislation and the massive \$800 billion cuts on Medicaid do to rural hospitals all over the United States? There is some belief that many rural hospitals in areas

where they are desperately needed will be forced to shut down. Is that the truth? That is what I hear, but I can't tell you definitively because there hasn't been a hearing on that issue. So I don't know how we go forward with legislation without having administrators from rural hospitals coming before the committee—I am on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee—or the Finance Committee to answer that question.

The Presiding Officer comes from a State and I come from a State where we have a major opioid crisis. It is devastating the entire country. What will this bill do to our ability to prevent and treat the opioid crisis, which is decimating this country from one end of America to the other? What happens if you cut \$800 billion in Medicaid? How will people get the treatment they need today—which is inadequate? In my State, it is inadequate. I don't think there is a State in the country that today is providing the necessary treatment or prevention capabilities to deal with this opioid and heroin crisis, which is ravaging America. What impact will an \$800 billion cut have on that? I understand there is some additional money going into opioid treatment, but how do you do that without the framework of allowing people the access to get healthcare? If you get thrown off of healthcare, what will the additional opioid money mean? I think not a whole lot.

In this bill, there are still hundreds of billions of dollars—several hundred billion dollars—in tax breaks to large health insurance companies, to drug companies, to medical device companies, and to tanning salons. As a nation, are we really interested in giving significant tax breaks to large insurance companies and then throwing children who have disabilities off of the Medicaid they currently receive? Is that what the American people want? I don't think they do.

I have to tell my colleagues that this Republican legislation, as the Presiding Officer knows, has been opposed by almost every major national healthcare organization in the country, including the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association, the AARP, which is the largest senior group in America, the American Psychiatric Association, the American pediatrics association. Virtually all of the major healthcare groups are saying that this legislation would be a disaster for the people they serve.

Just last night we had a teleconference townhall in Vermont and we had some 15,000, 16,000 people on the phone. The calls that were coming in were very painful calls. I almost didn't want to be honest in answering the calls. A woman calls up and she says: My son has a very serious medical illness, and we spend a fortune on prescription drugs. What is going to happen if this bill passes? What was I going to tell her, that perhaps her son would die? It is just not something I feel comfortable even talking about.