

required. American workers have waited too long for our country to crack down on abusive trade practices that rob our country of millions of good-paying jobs.

Today, I am proud to announce that the Democratic Party will be laying out our new policy on trade, which includes, among other things, an independent trade prosecutor to combat trade cheating, not one of these endless WTO processes that China takes advantage of over and over again; a new American jobs security council that will be able to review and stop foreign acquisitions of U.S. companies if they are likely to have a detrimental effect on U.S. jobs; penalties for Federal contractors that outsource jobs; stronger "Buy American" rules; and an outsourcing tax on companies that leave the United States.

On the issue of NAFTA negotiations, we are laying out a set of tough principles that must be a bottom line for any new NAFTA text. I voted against NAFTA in 1994. That was 23 years ago. We have seen how it has hurt us in so many ways. There have been some benefits, but overall the loss of jobs is painful. More jobs and higher wages have to be our guiding principle, and it needs full transparency with workers and the public at the table, not just corporations.

So I hope the administration—and I always said when I heard Donald Trump campaign that my views on trade are probably closer—I am closer to his views than I was to either President Obama's or President Bush's. I hope he will listen to us and work with us. These are good things to do. We can do them quickly. We can save jobs, create good-paying jobs. But I say to the President: We don't need another investigation, another study that languishes for months and maybe even years. We need strong, bold action on trade, and Democrats will offer those strong bold ideas later this morning.

Thank you.

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.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

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

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Marvin Kaplan,

of Kansas, to be a Member of the National Labor Relations Board for the term of five years expiring August 27, 2020.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The assistant Democratic leader.

DACA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, many times over the last 6 months, I have come to the Senate to speak out on issues and to disagree with President Trump. It is clear that we have very profound political differences when it comes to the issues that face us, but I come to the floor this morning in an unusual position to express my gratitude to President Trump for a position he has taken, which I think is the right position for America.

Let me explain. Five years ago, President Barack Obama created the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA. It enabled approximately 790,000 talented young people to contribute more fully to this country. They are teachers, nurses, engineers, small business owners, and more. DACA, which was an Executive action by President Obama, provides a temporary legal status to immigrant students who arrived in the United States as infants, toddlers, and children. They have to come forward under this Executive action and register with our government. They have to pay a substantial fee for processing. Then they have to submit themselves to a criminal and national security background check. If they are successful, they are given 2 years of temporary relief from deportation.

This program is based on the Dream Act, a bill that I first introduced in the U.S. Senate 16 years ago—in 2001. That bill would give undocumented students who grew up in this country a chance to become legal and to earn their way to citizenship.

These young people have come to be known as Dreamers. They came to the United States under the age of 16, some of them 1 or 2 years old. They grew up in the United States, going to our public schools, singing the "Star Spangled Banner," pledging allegiance to the only flag they have ever known, the American flag. They are American in every way except for their immigration status. We have already invested in them, as you can tell—invested in their education, bringing them up in American schools. I can't believe it makes any sense for the future of our country to squander their talents by deporting them to countries that many of them have never known.

A recent study by the Center for American Progress finds that ending DACA, President Obama's Executive action, would cost our economy at least \$433 billion in gross domestic product over the next 10 years. The Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy estimates that the 1.3 million young people eligible for DACA pay \$2

billion each year in State and local taxes.

As I said at the beginning, I have had many differences with President Trump, particularly on the issue of immigration in some of the speeches and statements he has made, but I do appreciate—personally appreciate—that this President has kept the DACA Program in place.

I have spoken directly to President Trump only two times—three times, perhaps. The first two times—one on Inauguration Day—I thanked him for the kind words he had said about Dreamers and the DACA students and those protected by the President's Executive action.

President Trump said to me: Don't worry about those kids.

Well, Mr. President, I continue to worry about those kids. I worry about them now more than ever, not because I have heard any change of heart or reversal from you but because of other circumstances that are bringing this issue to a head. The Texas attorney general, Ken Paxton, and nine other States have threatened to sue you, Mr. President, unless by September 5 you rescind the memorandum that established DACA by President Obama and announce that your administration will not renew or issue any new DACA permits. This direct, specific threat to the DACA Program has left hundreds of thousands of these Dreamers anxious, concerned, and worried about their future.

Last week I was joined by Senator CHUCK SCHUMER, our Democratic leader, and 40 other Senate Democratic colleagues in writing a letter to President Trump, asking him to order his Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, to use all legal options to defend DACA so that these young people can continue to contribute to a country they love.

Some of my friends on the other side of the aisle oppose the DACA Program. To them I say: If you don't support DACA, let's immediately pass the bipartisan Dream Act. If you think President Obama went beyond his Presidential authority with this Executive action, then let's take up this matter where it should be taken up, here in the legislative branch of the government in the U.S. Senate.

I recently reintroduced the Dream Act with my friend and colleague, LINDSEY GRAHAM of South Carolina. Now that I am in the mood of thanking Republican leaders, including President Trump, let me thank Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM, as well as Senator JEFF FLAKE and Senator LISA MURKOWSKI. They have stepped forward to join me in cosponsoring this Dream Act.

Our government should give these young people a chance to earn their way to citizenship. They were brought to this country as children. They didn't make the family decision to cross the border. They have been raised in this country. They have created no problems in terms of criminal background.

They have gone to our schools. All they are asking for is a chance.

When we introduced the Dream Act a week or so ago, Senator GRAHAM said that the young people who have received DACA should be treated fairly and not have the rug pulled out from under them. LINDSEY GRAHAM is right.

Over the years, I have come to the floor nearly 100 times to tell the stories of these Dreamers and to make it personal so that we come to know who they are and why I have taken the time to make this a major part of my service in the Senate. These stories put a human face on the DACA Program and on the Dream Act. They show what immigration actually means to our country in real terms.

This is Juan Martinez. When he was less than 2 years old, Juan was brought to America from Mexico. He grew up in Dallas, TX, with his parents and brothers. He was an honor student in high school. He graduated and was valedictorian of his class with a 3.9 GPA, a member of the National Honor Society, an active member of the debate team, and in student government.

He was an accomplished student, but he was also a very active community volunteer. Juan helped organize food drives at the local food banks, he cared for children at recreation centers while their parents worked, and he volunteered in soup kitchens.

In his senior year of high school, he applied to his dream school—once my dream school—Georgetown University, and he was accepted. As a college student, Juan has studied international politics, concentrating on security, minoring in the Arabic language. In his first year of college, Juan was elected as a student senator.

In his spare time here in Washington, he mentors disadvantaged high school students so that they can apply successfully for college. His dream one day is to work for our government, to help our country—the country that he calls home—and to make the world a safer place.

Juan sent me a letter, and this is what he said:

Thanks to DACA I can focus on my studies without worrying that it may all be taken away from me any second. I have always thought of myself as an American, but it is thanks to DACA that I can begin to truly feel like one, too. And that feeling is something I am thankful for every single day.

Juan and other Dreamers have so much to contribute to this country. But without DACA, without a similar protection, Juan could be deported back to Mexico, a country where he hasn't been since he was 2 years old.

Would we be a stronger nation if we lost Juan Martinez—if he were deported? I don't think so. I think the answer is clearly no.

When we introduced the Dream Act last week, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM said: "The moment of reckoning is coming."

I would say to the President first: Again, thank you. Thank you for al-

lowing DACA to continue under your administration. Thank you for keeping your word to me and so many others when you said that these young people don't have to worry. But we are reaching a moment, Mr. President, when we have to come together and do something. We need you and you need us so that we can pass important legislation and you can sign it—legislation that will give these young people the protection they deserve, the opportunity they seek, the chance to make America a greater nation.

I know the reality of this issue. I know it from both political sides. I witnessed it for over a decade. I know it is not popular, Mr. President, that you have taken this position, to stand behind the Dreamers and those protected by DACA, but you told me that you thought it was the right thing to do, and I am sure you still feel that way.

Your new Chief of Staff, General Kelly, and I have had many conversations about this, and I believe that he, too, thinks that legislation is necessary to protect these young people. I hope we can come together. I stand ready. Senator GRAHAM stands ready. We have a bipartisan coalition prepared to work with you.

Let's not let this decision be made in a courtroom somewhere far from Washington. Let's take on our responsibility, yours as President and ours in the Senate, to address this critical issue that really cries out for justice. This is the time to do it. The concern, anxiety, and stress is higher than ever among these populations of people affected by DACA and the Dream Act and, of course, their families as well. I hope you will join us in creating a legal option that will defend the DACA Program and will work with us in Congress to make the Dream Act the law of the land so that we can say to young people like Juan Martinez and hundreds of thousands of others: Yes, we will give you your chance—give you your chance to prove that you can become a valuable part of America's future, give you a chance to make America a stronger nation. That is all they have asked for, and that is something we, on a bipartisan basis with the President, should give them.

I yield the floor.

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

HEALTHCARE

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I note in this morning's news that insurance companies that provide health insurance policies on the ObamaCare exchanges are projecting that insurance premiums will go up about 30 percent next year.

Since 2013, we have seen the nationwide average of premiums go up 105 percent. That was before this latest announcement. We know that in 2017, the national average increase in premiums was 25 percent, and in Arizona, for example, it was 145 percent.

So why did all of the Senate Democrats vote against making progress on

a solution toward these runaway premiums I have talked about ad nauseam on the Senate floor?

We have almost become numb to the pain people across this country are experiencing because of the skyrocketing rate of their insurance premiums, and we know that 28 million, roughly, have dropped out and are uninsured. In my State alone, because of the individual mandate, which is the penalty the government imposes for one's failing to buy a government-approved health insurance plan—as the Presiding Officer knows because I got the figures from him—more than 400,000 Texans who earn less than \$25,000 a year paid the penalty because they could not afford to buy the insurance. All in all, about a million Texans paid the penalty because of the individual mandate.

When we tried to do something about that last week, in working with our House colleagues, what was the response from the other side? It was crickets—silence. Unfortunately, the people who were hurt by ObamaCare are still being hurt by ObamaCare.

Now, here is the narrative. I have already seen it on social media and have read about it in the paper and elsewhere. Some people are saying: Well, the reason insurance companies are saying that premiums are going to go up 30 percent next year is that President Trump will not commit to the subsidies for insurance companies, the so-called CSRs.

That is utterly false. How do they explain the 105-percent increase from 2013 to currently? How do they explain last year's increase in insurance premiums, 25 percent, on average, and 145 percent in places like Arizona before President Trump even took office? It is a demonstrably false narrative, and I cannot tell you how disappointed I am that we were not able to make some progress toward a solution on behalf of the people whom I represent in my State but also on behalf of the people whom we all represent across the United States.

I dare say, as we search for a path forward, we ought to get our facts straight, and the idea that premiums are going to go up 30 percent next year, unless something changes, is a product of the failure of ObamaCare. It is nothing that this administration has done or will do that has caused that. So let's get our facts straight because starting with the correct facts is absolutely essential to coming up with real solutions.

WORK BEFORE THE SENATE

Mr. President, we sometimes are our own worst enemy in the U.S. Senate. We do something really important, really good, and really bipartisan, and then we do not tell anybody about it. We leave it to them to discover it for themselves. Last night, for example, we passed major, bipartisan, bicameral legislation to continue the Veterans Choice Program. At a time when so much is polarized here in Washington and people are hungry for bipartisan and solution-oriented leadership,