

done and get it done quickly. We can end the anguish of so many Americans and make sure that our economy continues to move forward so that it is not needlessly ripped apart.

There is other work that we have to do in healthcare to shore up the marketplaces, particularly by guaranteeing the cost reduction programs. Discussions in the HELP Committee between my good friend, Chairman ALEXANDER, and our great ranking member, PATTY MURRAY, are proceeding in a bipartisan way in, perhaps, the new spirit of the moment—maybe longer than a moment, we hope and pray. I am hopeful that the full Senate, this month, will be able to take up and consider bipartisan legislation that emerges from the committee in order to stabilize and improve our healthcare system.

In a similar vein, we must consider a multiyear reauthorization of CHIP, the Children's Health Insurance Program. Chairman HATCH and Ranking Member WYDEN—again, in a bipartisan action—are having a hearing on CHIP today in the Finance Committee, and that should be another matter of immediate priority for this Senate.

Of course, as the people of Florida brace for Hurricane Irma, and the people of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands have gone through it now, the Senate must be prepared to quickly respond to that storm just as we are doing with Harvey. We also have to take into account some of the other disasters that are occurring in States like Washington, Oregon, California, and Montana. Wildfires are raging out of control. They, too, will need disaster assistance. Because of the immediate and strong impact of Harvey and, it seems, Irma, we should not forget that our friends in the West will need disaster relief and will need it soon as well.

The deal we reached with Republican leaders and President Trump yesterday will allow Congress to work on all of these important items this month and in the following months without there being a looming specter of a shutdown or default on our debt. It should help to bring both sides together to, ultimately, get another deal on sequester relief, lower healthcare premiums, the Dreamers, and many other items in December. That is good for this Congress, and that is good for the American people—a ray of hope, as I said.

The majority leader has already filed cloture on this package. I hope that we can proceed quickly—hopefully, today—to ensure its passage.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

DACA

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I take this time to share with my colleagues a meeting that I had last Thursday in Montgomery County, MD, with CASA de Maryland. We put together a round-

table discussion to talk about immigration and the need for immigration reform and the concerns we had about the current status of people who are concerned about what is happening with immigration enforcement. That was before the President had made his announcement on terminating the DACA Program, which is the program that provides relief for the Dreamers—those who have been in this country for a long period of time and know only America as their home.

I must tell you that, at that discussion I had last Thursday in Montgomery County, MD, the fear of uncertainty was clear to me. I talked to many families who were concerned about how the Trump administration was enforcing our current laws, what would be the resolution of the temporary protective status, TPS, under which people are here legally, and I had a chance to see firsthand some of the Dreamers who are here under the protection of the DACA Program.

It was very clear to me that what the people in that meeting were looking for was leadership in Washington that recognized that it is in our national interest for us to provide the type of legal protection to these individuals who have made America their home—who took the risk to come here for a better life for their families.

These individuals came to this country—the Dreamers, who are the children, particularly—when they came with their parents. It was the parents' decision to try to find a better life for their children. They know only America as their country. They do not know the countries from which they have come. America is their own home. They have helped to build this great Nation. They have attended our schools. They have joined our military. They have joined our workforce. They are, truly, the future of America.

The DACA Program, which recently celebrated its fifth anniversary, provided protection for these Dreamers against their arbitrary removal. It applied only to those who had come to this country when they were younger than 16 years of age. They had to have been here before January 2007. They had to have gone through a background check to make sure that they had not violated any of our criminal statutes, and they had to have been enrolled in schools or our military. It was really dealing with young people who were innocent with regard to any of the violations of our immigration laws. It really dealt with individuals who had come to this country and had been part of America.

The DACA Program provided not only protection against their removal but gave them protection in the workforce. They were given documentation so that they could legally work here in the United States and get the protection of our labor laws and not be subjected to an underground economy or the abuses in the workforce that we sometimes see among immigrant fami-

lies. So 800,000 children have taken advantage of the DACA Program. In my State of Maryland, 10,000 are registered under the DACA Program.

Then came President Trump's decision this past week to terminate the program in 6 months—terminate it now, as far as new DACA registrations—but to terminate this program. That immediately created uncertainty and fear for 800,000 individuals in this country and their families.

President Trump's decision is tragic in three ways. First, it has the potential of ripping families apart—800,000 people here in the United States. It creates uncertainty for those who are currently in the DACA Program. It creates fear as to what tomorrow will bring, and it will drive many of these individuals into the shadows, into the underground, into protecting themselves against the enforcement of removal.

This decision by President Trump is tragic for a second reason. It will hurt our economy. The numbers in Maryland I think are somewhere around one-half of \$1 billion to our State GDP from the Dreamers alone.

The Dreamers are part of our economy. They are adding to our economy. I got a phone call from one of our major employers in Maryland expressing grave concern about President Trump's decision and the impact it will have on that company and on our economy. These are individuals who have been trained in our schools, who have gone to our colleges, who have served in our military, and who are now adding to the economic strength of America through their employment and their innovation. It makes no sense from the point of view of our economy.

The third reason the President's decision is tragic is one that speaks to the strength of America—what makes America the great Nation it is. Yes, we are proud of those who serve in our military. We know that we have the strongest military in the world, and we are very proud of the way our military protects this country and provides global leadership. Yes, we are very proud of our economy and what it produces and the economic growth it provides for the people in this country and its engagement in the global economy. But what really makes America the unique, strong Nation that it is are our values, including what we stand for, our democratic institutions, the fact that we are the beacon of hope for people all over the world for providing opportunity. People can come to this country with dreams, and those dreams can become reality. That is what America's values are about.

President Trump's decision to end the DACA Program runs afoul of the principles that have made America the great Nation it is—a safe haven for those who are seeking refuge from persecution, a nation that embraces diversity and recognizes diversity as our strength. President Trump's decision to end the DACA Program runs afoul of

America's core values. It weakens us as a nation and certainly weakens our ability to lead globally with our values as we present them to the global community.

So, as a result of that decision, what do we need to do? Each one of us needs to stand up and be counted, to speak out about America and what makes this Nation the great Nation it is. Then, collectively, we need to take action to show the American people that we will stand up not just for the Dreamers—and we need to stand up for the Dreamers—but we will also stand up for the values that have made America the great Nation it is.

I support S. 1615, a bipartisan bill that has been introduced by Senator DURBIN and Senator GRAHAM. I thank both of our colleagues for their leadership in bringing that bill forward. That bill will provide protection for the Dreamers and for the DACA Program so that Congress can say: No, Mr. President, we do not want to terminate this program. This program is in our national security interests. This program is why America is the strong Nation that it is. It is not only right for 800,000 people; it is right for all people in this country.

This body showed great leadership a few years ago when we passed comprehensive immigration reform. I am for passing comprehensive immigration reform. Let's take care of and protect the Dreamers, and then let's work together to pass comprehensive immigration reform that we did just a few years ago that was never taken up in the House of Representatives.

Let me close by telling a few stories about Dreamers in Maryland. One story appeared in the Baltimore Sun. It begins:

Jesus Perez doesn't remember much about his journey to the United States two decades ago, beyond his parents using a simple phrase that would change the course of his life: "We're leaving."

Perez was 5 when he left Mexico. He's never been back.

Perez [is] now a 25-year-old research assistant at the Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore.

For Perez, the DACA program was a "relief" that allowed him to come out of the shadows. It also allowed him to take the job at Hopkins, and to get a standard driver's license.

"To now have it in limbo means that you either lose it all, and restart all over again—" Perez said, trailing off. "I'm not going to let that happen. We will win in the end."

I want Mr. Perez to know that we are going to fight here in the U.S. Senate, not just for his ability to remain here in the United States but for what that means for the strength of our country.

Our university community in Maryland has strongly supported the DACA Program. Dr. Loh, president of the University of Maryland, College Park, called the decision "antithetical to the core values" of higher education. He vowed in a letter to students and staff to "continue to identify all avenues available for offering support."

Johns Hopkins University President Ron Daniels and Provost Sunil Kumar

reaffirmed the university's support for DACA, saying that Johns Hopkins University students directly impacted by the decision will be given the aid they need to complete their degrees. President Daniels and Provost Kumar said: "The decision on DACA will not deter us from working to ensure that all members of our community can participate fully in our mission—the pursuit of excellence in education, discovery and service to the world."

As President Loh and President Daniels fight on behalf of the DACA children, we need to also let the American people know that we are going to fight for what makes this Nation the great Nation that it is.

The Baltimore Sun also told the story of Monica Perez, who is one of dozens of Dreamers from Maryland who rallied near the White House on Tuesday to protest the decision. The 23-year-old Baltimore woman came to the United States from Mexico when she was 7 years old.

Ms. Perez said DACA "gave us the opportunity to feel safe. We've already been in the shadows for so long." Ms. Perez works for CASA de Maryland. "I'm just scared for my parents, for myself, and for my whole community."

Mr. President, let us do the right thing and immediately extend the DACA Program. These are not 800,000 faceless individuals. I urge all of my colleagues to get to know the Dreamers and to understand their life story. It is heart-wrenching—the courage that they have shown, the obstacles they have overcome. Let's not put obstacles in their way. Let's allow their dreams to be able to come true. Let's stand up and be counted and fight for the Dreamers. Let's work together to protect their status, and then let's work together to fix our broken immigration system. That is our responsibility. This is our opportunity. Let's work together to get this done.

With that, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

EXTENSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that morning business, for debate only, be extended until 11:30 a.m.

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

DACA

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise today as a proud Michigander, American, and the son of an immigrant. My mother Madeleine grew up in France and met my father Herb when he was serving overseas during World War II. They fell in love, were married, and she

had the opportunity to immigrate to the United States where she started a new life with my dad and was proud to become a new citizen of the United States of America.

She worked hard as a nurse's aide and a union steward, and she provided inspiration and opportunity for me and my sisters. And, because the Detroit Tigers don't have a game on TV at this moment, I hope that she is home in Rochester watching me speak right now.

My mother's American experience informs my views on the nearly 7,000 Michiganders who have benefited from the protection of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals Program, known as DACA.

Let's look at the facts. The young men and women known as Dreamers and who are helped by DACA are students, serve in the military, launch new businesses, create jobs, and boost economic growth. These Dreamers did not choose to come to this country; they were brought here by their parents. They have no meaningful connections to the foreign countries they left as children and often don't even speak the language. They know no home other than the United States of America, and they were raised as Americans.

They have passed extensive background checks, paid fines, and continue to pay taxes, which reduces our budget deficit. They pay into Social Security, which increases its solvency for all Americans.

According to the CATO Institute, deporting the more than 700,000 DACA participants would cost—yes, cost—the Federal Government over \$60 billion and reduce economic growth in this country by \$280 billion over the next decade.

Rescinding DACA is not just cruel and unfair, it is a terrible economic policy and a bad deal for the American taxpayer.

Numbers can only say so much, so I often tell the story of a fellow Michigander, Ola Kaso. Ola is pictured right here. Ola's family came to the United States legally but unsuccessfully seeking asylum in 1998. Ola was only 5 years old when she came to America. After 13 years in the country—13 years—the government attempted to deport her and her mother back to Albania, just weeks before she was set to graduate from high school. Backed by the support of fellow Michiganders, Ola's family was granted a stay of the deportation.

I am proud to report that Ola ultimately graduated as the valedictorian of her high school class. She recently graduated from the University of Michigan and plans to attend medical school. She is a beneficiary of the DACA Program.

Our Nation is facing a doctor shortage—especially in rural areas—and this young woman wants to dedicate her