problem that is looming and will exacerbate these problems even more dramatically. According to the McKinsey Global Institute, up to 30 percent of the work done by 60 percent of occupations today is vulnerable to automation. By 2030, 75 million to 375 million—up to 14 percent—of the global workforce will need to change jobs. These advances in artificial intelligence could cause a huge erosion in human jobs.

What are families doing? What should we be doing? Frankly, we should be thinking of ways we can help people make the transition, and prepare them for what we know is coming. We know there is going to be a huge loss of jobs. We know that, when people drop out of the workforce, when companies get smaller, their pension obligations don't get that much smaller. We are also facing huge shortages in terms of pensions.

One of the ironies I suggest will happen—''irony'' is too gentle of a word—is that these corporations that are getting huge tax benefits are not going to raise wages. They are not going to turn it over to the people who work for them. They will buy back their stock, and some of these companies will buy back their stock even though their pension plans are not fully funded. That is not only an irony but an additional problem with the approach we are taking to this legislation.

The jobs in danger are not all entry-level positions. This is not about somebody who has a pick and a shovel and is displaced by a machine. We are talking about jobs, for example, in radiology. With computers and artificial intelligence today, doctors will admit they can read x-rays better than many technicians. They can do it in such a way that you don't need as many radiologists to review the records. They can be much more efficient. We are talking about jobs that are not core, entry-level jobs done by people who can easily do something else. We are talking about people who have master's degrees, who have years of training. This is going to come very quickly. What do they do? How do they compensate? Where do they get a job?

We know that this is going to happen, and we are weakening ourselves financially from being able to respond. Yet the legislation that is being proposed is oblivious to what we know is going to happen.

People will come here and say: ''We need more money for national defense.'' Why don't we do that now, instead of giving a big tax cut and raising the deficit?

In a few years or few months, people will say: ''This opioid crisis is out of control; it is even worse than it was when the President declared it an emergency.'' Let's do something.

We don't have the money. In a very few years, when people say, ''We are losing hundreds of thousands of good jobs; let's do something,'' the answer will be ''Sorry, we can't.''

By the way, we don't have much of a safety net for those people who are being displaced by these machines because we have eroded that too. We have huge challenges before us. The American people are watching us. They know these things. They are seeing in their workplace machines gradually replacing human beings. If you are a driver for UPS and you haven't figured out yet that these big companies are buying autonomous vehicles, they are using drones to deliver packages, et cetera—they understand what is coming. They see their children with huge debt living at home because they can't afford to buy a home, given their school loans. They sense the fragility of not only their own job but also the support for their parents on Medicare and Medicaid.

One of the things I thought was interesting when I heard we were going on to entitlement reform is the fact that the biggest amount of money spent in Medicaid go to nursing homes, and it goes to individuals who are not the poorest of poor. They are middle-class people, seniors, or people with long-term disabilities who have exhausted most of their funds. They have sold their house or mortgaged their house, et cetera, and they are the ones who are taking the bulk of the Medicaid money and funding. If we cut Medicaid, what we are going to do is tell a lot of middle-class people: You are out; you are out of this nursing home. Or we are going to tell their sons and daughters: You thought you had a problem paying off your children's tuition; you thought you had a problem at work because you haven't had a raise in several years. Guess what. Unless you come up with $1,000 extra a month, your mother is out of that nursing home.

That is the reality. That is what Americans around their kitchen tables and coffee shops are talking about. They are not talking about big tax cuts for the wealthiest corporations and individuals. It is no surprise that, if you look at any of the polling with respect to this tax bill, the American people are against it. My colleagues, particularly on the other side, are committed to getting something through that the American people don't want. They have said it. The polling has been extensive: We don't want this; we have real problems at home.

I am here to say that I believe this is a great mistake. I don't think any of us going forward should be in a position to say: Someone should have told me; someone should have told me that we need trillions of dollars to improve our defense above and beyond the current money we are spending. Somebody should have told me that hundreds of thousands—if not millions—of good jobs are going away because of artificial intelligence. Someone should have told me that young people are drowning under college debt, and we should fix that. Someone should have told me that we are in a situation where working conditions and the prospect of work is so fragile for so many people.

I think this is a great mistake. I hope my colleagues will reflect on what we are about to do and reject it.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at 1:45 p.m. today, all postcloture time be yielded back and the Senate vote on the confirmation of the Ho nomination and that, if confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

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

NAFTA

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I rise today because I believe that some here in Washington are under the illusion about what would happen if we were to withdraw from the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA.

Some people still, inexplicably, believe that this would be a good thing. They believe the relationship between the United States and Mexico and Canada is somehow a raw deal for Americans. Let's talk about Mexico for a while.

In reality, Mexico spends 26 percent of its GDP in its purchasing of goods from the United States, while we spend less than 1 percent of our GDP—I think it is 0.2 percent—in our purchasing of goods from them. Again, for those who obsess over trade deficits with Mexico, Mexico spends 26 percent of its GDP in its purchasing of goods from the United States while we spend less than 1 percent of our GDP in our purchasing of goods from them. Prior to NAFTA, our total trade with Mexico was under $80 billion. Now that trade approaches $600 billion. That is a good thing. That is good for us, and it is good for Mexico. Trade is not a zero-sum game.

These folks also seem to think that terminating NAFTA will have no lasting impact on this Nation or its economy. In reality, pulling out of NAFTA would have sweeping negative consequences for Americans all over the country. Let me briefly describe what America would look like without NAFTA.

It would be an America with fewer jobs and higher unemployment. Some of these jobs that would be lost would not return for decades, maybe even for a generation. Other jobs would never return. It would be a poorer America without NAFTA. The gross domestic product would drop. Much of the positive growth that we have seen recently may be erased. In the last year, we have seen impressive GDP numbers. We have achieved great growth through strong, conservative policies—in our having a better regulatory environment, in particular. I hope the days of 1-percent growth are behind us, but if we scrap NAFTA, that may not be the case. An America without NAFTA would be one crippled by subsidies.

I agree with my colleague from Kansas and the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee chairman, Senator ROBERTS. He recently explained that the withdrawal from NAFTA would add to farmers' demands for increased farm subsidies at a time when Congress simply cannot afford that. These farmers would prefer to sell their crops at reasonable prices, but in our exiting NAFTA, they will certainly ask for economic protection through increased farm subsidies. I believe that many of these subsidies are automatically added and that these subsidies would substantially grow the national debt and dramatically curtail any ability to rein in government spending.

Without NAFTA, we will likely find ourselves in a less secure America. The withdrawal from NAFTA will destabilize the Mexican economy and create a crisis on our southern border. Terminating this agreement will seriously undercut the important progress that has been made over the past several decades—that of improving drug enforcement and stabilizing the Mexican economy. Efforts toward privatization, criminal justice reform, and modernization have been good for the Mexican economy. In turn, it has been good for our economy as well.

According to the Department of Homeland Security, the number of people trying to cross illegally into the United States from Mexico has fallen to the lowest level in 46 years. That is largely due to there being a better economy in Mexico. If we pull out of NAFTA and allow Mexico to plunge into economic chaos and uncertainty, it will, certainly, drive up the number of those who want to come to the United States.

These are the real ramifications of terminating NAFTA—an America with higher unemployment, a lower GDP, more Federal subsidies, particularly for agriculture, and increased illegal immigration.

All of this—exiting NAFTA—would come before we would face the ultimate challenge of negotiating a new trade agreement to replace NAFTA. Anyone who suggests that this process is quick or easy is sadly mistaken. In today's global economy, people and nations have more choices than ever.

For evidence of this, look no further than to the disastrous decision to withdraw from the Trans-Pacific Partnership. Canada and Mexico, like other TPP nations, could decide to move ahead without the United States. These countries have more choices than ever. It used to be that we were the only game in town. That is not the case anymore. These countries have and will move on without us. They could simply refocus their efforts on alternative markets and explore new trade partners. It is a dangerous game when we in America are no longer seen as a reliable trade partner. We will have countries that will be reluctant to enter into agreements with us and that will simply not want to renegotiate.

Let's not be swayed by those who would have us believe that the impact of exiting this trade agreement would somehow be minor or short-lived. There are some who say that we have to exit the agreement in order to negotiate a better agreement. As I have explained, just exiting the agreement will have real ramifications—canceled contracts, particularly for those in agriculture when you are dealing with commodities. Let's not be misled by those who are under the illusion that negotiating an entirely new trade agreement, as I have said, will be simple or painless. It will not be.

In closing, we have seen the limits to the philosophy of ethno-nationalism and economic nationalism. We have seen those limits politically, gratefully, this week in Alabama. Let's not follow those who believe in that philosophy or who are advocating an ethnocentric, or an extreme, nationalistic trade policy. That would be disastrous for the economy of the United States in its moving forward.

I yield the floor.

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.

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

TAX REFORM BILL

Mrs. CAPITO. Madam President, I come here today to again speak in support of comprehensive tax reform. For weeks, I have worked to highlight the enormous benefits that our tax reform efforts will have for the economy. I am very excited about the point where I think we are now because I know this will help our middle-income families, workers, and businesses of all sizes.

I think it should not be lost that the tax reform bill doubles the standard deduction. In my small State of West Virginia, 83 percent of the people living there don't itemize. They are going to use the standard deduction, and that is going to be doubled. It also significantly increases the child tax credit, which is great for families and great for young families with children trying to make ends meet.

It will make America's businesses more competitive around the world, which I think will lead to higher wages and more opportunities for our workers.

I encouraged my colleagues to join these efforts as the Senate proposal worked its way through the Senate Finance Committee and again as it came to the Senate floor for debate. Next week, we hope to see the conference committee report on the Senate floor.

Last week, I explained why I was proud to cast my vote for this critical legislation. I expressed my optimism that the Senate and the House would come together, reconcile the differences between the two bills, and settle on an agreement that would provide real relief and real opportunity for the American people.

Today, we are closer than ever to getting comprehensive, pro-growth tax reform across the finish line, and that is why I am standing here to explain why it is so important that we move it all the way through this process and pass these reforms.

I asked you to take my word, and I have for the last several weeks and months, but now, today, I ask you to not simply take my word on this. Throughout the process, when I have been back at home in West Virginia, I have heard from constituents, friends, and even strangers who are really rooting for this effort. They are rooting for it because they understand what a difference it will make in their lives. Whether I am at a roundtable discussion or at the grocery store, so many West Virginians have shared with me what tax reform would mean for them and their families. They have encouraged me and they have encouraged us to get this done because they know what tax reform would do for our State in terms of jump-starting the economy.

One West Virginian I recently heard from, Donald from Beckley, recently wrote to me on behalf of his sons and grandchildren, who he said will ''reap the rewards'' of the tax reform bill. He wrote:

> There are too many minimum wage jobs in West Virginia and not enough higher-paying jobs for advancement. There is no ladder for the young people to climb anymore.

Donald added that he would be very surprised if the tax bill doesn't help solve this problem. If we don't see higher wages, which we believe we will, Donald said that he would be surprised. I know we are going to see higher wages. He said: ''I really hope that the Senate and House get this bill to the President's desk before Christmas so he can sign it.''

This week, similar support was echoed by a number of groups and organizations in West Virginia. The National Federation of Independent Business said that both the House- and Senate-passed tax reform proposals ''recognize the need for small business tax relief, which means businesses could reinvest in their businesses and employees, create local jobs in rural and urban areas of West Virginia.''

I had to kind of laugh when they said ''urban'' areas in West Virginia. I am not sure we truly have urban areas. We have many rural areas. But we have great towns in West Virginia.

The NFIB went on to say: ''We can't afford to miss this once-in-a-generation opportunity to help Main Street businesses grow and create jobs.''

The West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, which represents businesses small and large in the State, also expressed support for the tax reform effort this week by calling it a ''real win-win'' and noting that ''by making tax rates more competitive, small businesses will be able to reinvest in growing their operations and creating more