

that people in Puerto Rico—our fellow Americans—still endure. The lack of Federal commitment and response is shameful and disgraceful.

There are steps that we must take immediately. In the short-term relief package that is coming to us from the House of Representatives, we must make sure that some of that aid—a significant proportion—is specifically targeted to Puerto Rico. The number requested by the Governor is \$94 billion. It is a number that is fully and amply supported by fact. The total package coming from the House is only \$81 billion, and it is supposed to cover expenses in Florida and Texas as well as Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. So that number has to be vastly increased. Longer term, there must be a change in the Tax Code to eliminate that 12.5 or 13 percent tax that discriminates against Puerto Rico as if it were a foreign country and as if the residents in Puerto Rico were citizens of another country. They are Americans.

The Medicaid formula must be changed so that it is fair to Puerto Rico. The 20 percent commitment that now goes to Puerto Rico, unlike other States, must be increased so as to treat Puerto Rico, in fact, as if it were a State and so that it is given an adequate match.

These kinds of commonsense steps must be the beginning of more than just repair and more than just rebuilding. It must be a full recovery with a vision for the future.

I have proposed, with Senator SANDERS and others of our colleagues, a Marshall Plan for Puerto Rico. That is the kind of commitment that is necessary. The \$150 billion includes not only the \$94 billion that is necessary to repair and recover right away but a longer term plan to enable the island to be back on its feet financially, to recover from the near bankruptcy that it is enduring, to able its institutions to function fully, and to permit its healthcare system to rely on electricity from plants that are powered in an economic and environmentally friendly way.

There is, sadly, the hint also of potential corruption in the Whitefish contract that now has been withdrawn and in the Bronze Star contract for tarps that is under review. Investigations must be concluded quickly and thoroughly so that we are assured that Federal dollars are being used honestly and effectively.

We must make a commitment to use the island's natural advantages. Electricity is essential. It is not a luxury, not a convenience. It is vital. It is the lifeblood of that island economically and humanly. One of the island's great advantages is its sunlight. Solar has to be used more effectively and widely as a source of power.

My hope is that we can make this disaster relief program a Marshall Plan-like program for the island in the long term with bipartisan support.

There is nothing political about a neighborhood in darkness, about chil-

dren unable to go to school, about health facilities closed, electricity lacking, and water undrinkable. These are basic needs that we have an obligation to come together on both sides of the aisle and meet.

I hope that we will do so and that we will match the resilience and resolve that I saw in meeting with Governor Rosselló and all of his team. The island's residents and FEMA and other Federal workers were also there.

Governor Rosselló has provided the kind of courage and commitment that are necessary to lead his people in this time of challenge. We must match the courage and strength of the residents on the island with equal resolve here that we will meet the needs of our fellow Americans and that we will keep our commitment, as we do always in times of crisis, to rebuild and to recommit and make sure that we leave no one there behind.

I am proud that we are working with Governor Rosselló. After meeting with him yesterday and after meeting with him in the wake of the hurricane when I first visited—I had the privilege of flying over the island, and I saw the devastation, with whole villages destroyed, houses and community centers completely razed—progress has been made. Governor Rosselló is to be commended for his continuing perseverance, as well as the people of Puerto Rico in their resolve and resilience, but we must now do our part and match that resilience and resolve with a true commitment that we will leave no American behind and keep faith with the people of Puerto Rico.

I am proud that many in the Puerto Rican community in Connecticut have shared their stories with me, and I look forward to returning to them this weekend and sharing my stories with them of their families and their friends on that island.

It is a beautiful island that has such great promise and so embodies the future of our Nation in its patriotism and its dedication to the ideals of America.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Wyoming.

TAX REFORM BILL AND HEALTHCARE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, when we were debating the tax relief law—the tax reduction law, the tax cut law—Republicans predicted that it would be very good for the people of our country. Democrats like NANCY PELOSI predicted that it would be “Armageddon.” She said it would be the “end of the world.” Well, that was just last month, and it is already very clear to me that we have won the argument. People across the country are seeing the benefits. Thanks to this Republican tax relief law, NANCY PELOSI is seeing that hard-working Americans have actually won as a result of this law being passed.

Businesses around the country have begun turning those tax cuts into higher wages for many workers. Almost

every day there is another business announcement about bonuses of more than \$1,000 for workers. We are seeing it for hundreds of thousands of workers at businesses all across the country. They are raising wages and also investing millions of dollars back into the workers who make the companies so productive for our country.

Democrats are just wrong about tax reform. I am hearing it at home as I visit with people and stop in the drugstore and the grocery store around the State of Wyoming. They are saying: Look, anybody who does the math sees that it is a good deal for them. It doubled the standard deduction, lowered the rates, and raised the child tax credit. All of these things have been very, very helpful, certainly, to people in my State of Wyoming.

It is interesting listening to Democrats because they think they have great ideas, and they are just proven wrong about the facts. One of the ones I want to talk about today is something that the Senator from Vermont has been talking about with regard to healthcare. He has essentially wanted to scrap the U.S. healthcare system and replace it with a government-run system.

As he said, the current system under ObamaCare is the most bureaucratic, inefficient, and expensive system in the world. He often points to a single-payer system—sort of what they have right now in Great Britain. Of course, who would be paying for that? That would be the American taxpayers dealing with the incredible expenses of a program like that.

I want to point out what is actually happening today in Great Britain, in the system that the Senator from Vermont—the father of an American single-payer plan, one that a number of Democrats have signed on to—where the authorities in Great Britain just told hospitals to cancel 50,000 operations in January and to put them off until next month because they are just too busy doing other things. So scheduled operations were canceled. Now, these are surgeries for things like cataracts, knee replacements, and hip replacements.

Facilities are turning away all but the most urgent cases in need of care. They are closing outpatient clinics. Why? Because it is winter, and it is flu season, and the British healthcare system, based on a single-payer, taxpayer-run system, is not prepared to deal with the needs of the people of that country.

So hospitals across the country of Great Britain have canceled surgeries that have been planned and for which people had decided to take off time from work to have done according to their schedules. Forget it; they have been delayed.

One doctor in England actually said that they are seeing, in his words, “third-world conditions”—third world conditions, describing the British healthcare system today. This was an

Army doctor who did three tours at a field hospital in Afghanistan, somebody who knows what third-world conditions are truly like.

An article in the British newspaper the *Guardian*, out yesterday, said: "Hospitals are reporting growing chaos"—growing chaos—"with a spike in winter flu leaving frail patients facing 12-hour waits, and some units are running out of corridor space"—corridor space.

Now, that is what the situation is like in British hospitals right now, today. It turns out it happened before in Great Britain. Last winter, they had a similar problem with too many sick people and not enough options for care. Back then, the British Red Cross called the situation a "humanitarian crisis."

In today's *New York Times*—this morning's edition, page 9—talking about the British healthcare system and the problems with it, the chief executive of the National Health Service in England, Simon Stevens, in a speech to Parliament, recently said: "The N.H.S. waiting list will grow to five million people" coming down the line—grow to 5 million people. How would the American people like to be one of 5 million people waiting to get an appointment, waiting for an operation, in the waiting line? That is what Senator SANDERS and the Democrats who propose this government-run system are talking about for our country.

The scenes unfolding across hospitals in Britain—and I will describe one that is outline and written about today in the *New York Times*. It says:

Tuesday night, the emergency ward at Kingston Hospital in southwestern London looked more like an airport lounge than a hospital, with patients sprawled out in the waiting room.

"There's no real system or order; it's a jungle in here," said Nancy Harper, who had accompanied her 87-year-old grandmother, who was lying down and complaining of excruciating pain in her lower back.

"It's been more than five hours," Ms. Harper said. "We get to the front of the queue and then someone more ill comes in and we get pushed back. It's outrageous."

That is the healthcare system our Democratic colleagues are promoting for the United States—government-run, the government deciding, government rationing care.

The system in Great Britain is strained under normal conditions, even when it is not flu season. There is no margin for error. When something as routine as winter hits, the healthcare system goes completely off the rails. Is that the kind of chaos Democrats in Washington want for the United States of America? Do they want third-world conditions in hospitals; frail and elderly patients waiting 12 hours in a hallway just to get care; people getting a call telling them that the surgery they have been planning for—and maybe they have family members coming to take care of other things around the home or to take care of Grandmom—has to be put off, that they will have to wait until next month? Fifty thousand

people will be receiving that call in Britain this month.

When the government controls healthcare, it always ends up rationing care. When the bills start adding up, so do the delays. That is what happens everywhere in the world when they try a single-payer scheme. They get long lines of people waiting for care and care being denied.

Senator SANDERS put out the same plan a couple of years ago. It is interesting because one of the most liberal columnists at the *New York Times*—the newspaper that ran this story today about the British healthcare system—said that this single-payer plan would lead to rationing. Well, it does. The article went on to say that in order to keep the costs down, Washington would have to "say no to patients, telling them that they can't always have the treatment they want." That is the side of the story the Democrats will not talk about. The author of that editorial, the columnist at the *New York Times*, said that Senator SANDERS "isn't coming clean on that." The Democrats aren't coming clean on that. That is what happens in a single-payer system. Democrats who are pushing for a Washington takeover of Americans' healthcare are still not coming clean about the rationing of care that it would cause.

Republicans think patients and doctors should be the ones making those decisions, not government bureaucrats. Democrats who want to pass this new litmus test—and it is a litmus test for the liberal left—say Washington should make decisions for us. I disagree. They say that you are going to get what the government gives you. To me and to the American people, that is not what the American people want.

As a doctor who has taken care of patients for 25 years in Wyoming, patients want the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs. That is the goal—not single-payer, government-run healthcare. Parents need to be able to be involved with the doctor, hospital, and their child in terms of what is best for that child, not the government coming in and making the decisions. Seniors ought to be able to decide, along with their doctor, whether it is time for a new hip or a new knee, not the government saying: We are only going to pay this many this year and that is it. And if you are not done this year, get in line for next year. And when next year comes in January, 50,000 operations push them back another month.

It is unfortunate, what we see is happening with the British healthcare system for the patients there, the doctors, the nurses, the shortages, all of the issues they have there. The issue is, do we want that for our country? We do not.

I started this by talking about NANCY PELOSI calling the tax relief reduction bill Armageddon and the worst thing in the world. She was wrong on that. Senator SANDERS is wrong about his claims

that a one-size-fits-all, government-paid, national healthcare plan that all of the American people would be under, government control, no individual choice, no patient control, not working with their doctors in their communities—I believe that would be wrong for America, and I believe that the Democrats who are supporting that and proposing that have a different view of America than certainly the people of Wyoming.

I think what is happening in England is a mistake and would be a mistake for the United States. It is not something the American people want or will, I believe, ever tolerate.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

REMEMBERING THOMAS S. MONSON

Mr. FLAKE. Madam President, I rise today to honor the selfless and dedicated life of Thomas S. Monson, the 16th president of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

After nearly seven decades of church leadership and service, President Monson passed away on Tuesday evening. Millions of members of the LDS Church around the globe mourn his passing as we celebrate his life.

There is much that can be said about what President Monson taught us from the pulpit. There is much more to be learned about what he did when he wasn't speaking—the sick whom he visited, the weary he sustained, the jobless he aided, and the homeless he sheltered.

A reoccurring theme throughout his life and his ministry was "the rescue." He spoke movingly of a painting he had seen in a gallery in England that featured, as he described it, "heavy-laden black clouds and the fury of a turbulent sea portending danger and death. A life from a stranded vessel gleaming far off. In the foreground, tossed high by incoming waves of foaming water, a large lifeboat, men pulling mightily on the oars plunging into the tempest. On the shore stands a wife and two children, wet with rain and whipped by wind. They gaze anxiously seaward."

"In my mind," President Monson said, "I abbreviated the name of the painting. To me, it became 'To the Rescue.'"

Throughout his life, President Monson went to the rescue of those in need. He possessed a genuine love for those who were sad, downtrodden, and less fortunate.

He was quoted as saying:

I firmly believe that the sweetest experience in mortality is to know that our Heavenly Father has worked through us to accomplish an objective in the life of another person.