

I applaud Mr. Azar for his seriousness about working with Democrats and Republicans to try to shift our payment system over to something that makes more sense, for his openness about how important the Obama-era reforms were, and for his decision, if he gets this job, to reverse some of the sabotaging of those alternative payment models that Secretary Price began.

Unfortunately, my enthusiasm for Mr. Azar's statements on alternative payment models through Medicare are outweighed by his inability to convince the HELP Committee or the Finance Committee that he is going to be a responsible steward of the Affordable Care Act. This is from where much of my worry comes, in part because Connecticut is a State that has efficiently, ably, and responsibly implemented the Affordable Care Act. We have hundreds of thousands of people in our State who now have insurance because of the expansion of Medicaid and because of the successful offering of plans to the uninsured through Connecticut's exchange.

It was perplexing to those of us on the HELP Committee that Mr. Azar seemed to defend the administration's decisions to sabotage and undermine the Affordable Care Act. He even went so far as to try to spin those changes as to be a strengthening of the law, which simply does not pass the straight face test. I get it. During a confirmation hearing, it is very hard for a nominee who may serve in the Cabinet to be critical of the Commander in Chief, the person who has chosen him for the job. Yet it is obvious for everybody to see what is happening by the canceling of payments to insurance companies that helped compensate them for the most expensive patients, by eliminating all of the funding for the marketing and advertising of the exchanges, by shortening the enrollment period in half, by constantly going on social media and telling all prospective enrollees of ObamaCare that the ACA is dead even though it is not dead—even though, as we found out, just as many people signed up this year as signed up last year despite the campaign to undermine it.

We all know that this is an obvious campaign of sabotage—that President Trump is trying to kill the Affordable Care Act administratively because he can't convince the American public to press Congress to do away with it. The Affordable Care Act has the support of the American public today, and that is the reason Congress could not repeal it.

It was very troubling to me that Mr. Azar didn't acknowledge this campaign of sabotage, which leads me to believe he is going to fulfill instructions from the administration, from the White House, to continue it. He went so far during the questioning with me to suggest that shortening the enrollment period actually would help consumers with something that the insurance companies were asking for. That is not true. The insurance companies were not asking for that in Connecticut.

That does not help consumers, certainly, when you are also withdrawing all of the money for marketing and advertising that would have been used to tell people that the enrollment period was being shortened.

At the same time that I am going to vote no on this nomination because I am deeply worried that as Secretary Mr. Azar is going to continue this campaign of ACA sabotage, I do look forward to working with him in a bipartisan way on payment reform—if he will allow it with those of us who will vote against his nomination.

As much time as we spend in the Senate talking about coverage, frankly, the more important, long-term reform is in the changing of how we pay for healthcare because if we fundamentally change the way we pay for healthcare and start rewarding good outcomes rather than just rewarding more medicine being practiced, then we will save enough money to insure everybody in this country through a means that both the Republicans and Democrats can support.

I am going to vote no. I encourage my colleagues who care about the effective administration of the Affordable Care Act to vote no. Remember, it is a remarkable success story that 20 million people have insurance. People know the strength of the Affordable Care Act. That is why they pressed Congress not to repeal it. Despite the undermining campaign, just as many people signed up this year as last year, which is, frankly, extraordinary. I would hope that those people here who believe in the Affordable Care Act, as the American people do, will oppose this nomination. At the same time, I hope that there are significant ways, if he is confirmed, that we can work together with Secretary Azar.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

ROHINGYA REFUGEE CRISIS

Mr. MERKLEY. Mr. President, on August 25, a minority group of Rohingya militants proceeded to attack a number of Burmese police outposts in northern Rakhine State, and they inflicted injuries and killed about 12 members of the country's security forces in the process. These attacks certainly must be condemned, but they have triggered a response by the Burmese Government and military that is beyond horrific—attacks by the Burmese Government and military that have inflicted a massive humanitarian crisis in that nation.

The Burmese military, aided by mobs of local vigilantes, carried out the violence against the Rohingya people in a systematic way. These are people who have been in Burma for generations, but they have been stripped of their citizenship under Burmese law. In the attacks that followed, Doctors Without Borders estimates that well over 6,000 men, women, and children were murdered in just the first month of this ongoing assault, and that included hun-

dreds of children—an estimated 700 children ages 5 and under.

The survivors have shared countless stories of women being raped, men murdered, children murdered in the most inhumane ways imaginable. Human Rights Watch has reported that the Burmese military and the associated vigilantes have burned 354 villages to the ground. The response of the Rohingya has been to flee the country, desperately fleeing as fast as they could the systematic violence inflicted upon them—systematic rape, systematic shooting, the murder of children. The result is that 650,000 people have fled to the adjoining country of Bangladesh, where they are now establishing refugee camps.

These camps are a big improvement from being attacked, shot, murdered, and raped inside Burma, but the camps themselves are just a jumble of split bamboo frames with plastic draped over the tops of them. You can see here in this photo that the ground has been cleared away and people have shoveled out relatively flat sections of the hillside, split bamboo into little pieces, tied them together with threads, and draped plastic over the top of them.

I wonder what will happen when the monsoons come or a severe windstorm comes. I don't think these shelters are going to hold up.

The overcrowded conditions and poor sanitation in these camps put them directly at risk for diseases like diphtheria and cholera, and these camps—full of displaced, disenfranchised, angry young men—are also recruiting grounds for violent extremist groups like ISIS. This is, in the words of the United Nations, the fastest growing refugee emergency in the world. It is unacceptable, and America needs to pay attention and respond.

The flow of refugees has continued, even until now. The numbers have dropped. There aren't that many Rohingya left inside of Burma. The Governments of Burma and Bangladesh are discussing a repatriation strategy on how these individuals may be able to return to Burma, and they have a framework for a plan. Burma says that they will welcome them and let them go home. They have even said that they can return to where their villages were burned and have assistance in rebuilding their homes and community structures.

In the first step, they say that they will house them in reception camps, and they also say that they may put them into model villages. These words "reception camps" and "model villages" are words for encampments that are based on what is already in much of Rakhine, central Rakhine State, which are long-term camps that are essentially prison camps—prison camps for the Rohingya.

If this is not going to unfold in this manner, the world has to be engaged. Right now, of course, the Rohingya who have fled this horrific violence are

not anxious to return immediately because they don't believe the government will protect them. If you had been subjected to a horrific rampage of slaughter and violence, why would you immediately go back to that unless the circumstances were dramatically modified? Can they depend upon the Burmese Government to protect them when they haven't protected them since August? Can they depend upon the Burmese military to protect them when the Burmese military perpetrated these crimes?

Repatriation is important. The ability to go back to the villages and rebuild them is important, and time is of the essence for it to happen in a way that is really going to work. The international community is going to have to be involved.

Let's understand that this assault, which went from August even until now, is not a one-time occurrence. It is the latest in a long line of atrocious assaults on the Rohingya people. In 1978, Burma's military launched Operation King Dragon, causing more than 200,000 Rohingya to flee to Bangladesh. There were similar campaigns of assault in 1992 and in 2012 and in 2015 and in 2016, none as horrific as what was witnessed just a few months ago, in August of 2017, but terrible assaults nonetheless.

Time and again, the Rohingya people have been subjected to abuse, persecution, and violence, and recognize this isn't just a tactic that the Burmese Government and Burmese military have used against the Rohingya. They have used it against other minorities—this systematic strategy of burning the village, shooting people as they flee, and raping the mothers and daughters. We have seen this with assaults on ethnic minorities in the Shan and Kachin States, where people have faced very similar persecution. In fact, in those States, over 100,000 people have been displaced by the military since 2011. So the United States and the world must not only stand up and say that this ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya is wrong, but also say that this strategy being used by the Burmese military against minorities is absolutely unacceptable under any code of moral conduct, under any religious vision, under any civilized understanding of the treatment of citizens.

Much of what took place over the last few decades was out of sight of the world because Burma was closed off to the world. But then Burma went through a diplomatic awakening, the budding of democratic institutions, and they have been more open to the world, so now we can see very vividly what is going on. They are not hidden, and there is no excuse for the world to turn away and not engage.

Neither the Burmese Government nor the military is ready for international cooperation. They have left the international community out of the process of trying to address these issues. They have rejected the United Nations High Commissioner on Refugees—no inter-

national monitoring allowed and freedom of the press curtailed.

The Rohingya people are right to be wary of how they will be repatriated without significant international involvement, without strongly developed measures for their safety, without a changed attitude by the government.

That is why, yesterday in the Senate, I introduced a resolution calling for international pressure and oversight to be brought to bear on the repatriation process. It calls upon the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to play a central role in ensuring that any repatriation of the Rohingya people is safe, voluntary, and dignified.

The concern for the treatment of the Rohingya is bipartisan. I appreciate the 14 Senators who have already cosponsored my resolution. Particular thanks go to Senator JOHN MCCAIN and to Senator TODD YOUNG not only for supporting this resolution but also for being advocates for the Rohingya people and for global human rights.

I was profoundly shocked when the Burmese military started these massive assaults back in August. I knew it was important for our government to pay attention, for the people of the United States to pay attention, and for Members of this Senate to pay attention and to weigh in and try to create pressure to end the persecution and create a different path for the future.

In the month that followed, there was a lot of international outcry about how wrong this was, and First State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who is Burma's head of state, responded with a speech to the world through the United Nations. She invited the world "to go with us into the troubled areas. . . . See for yourself what is happening and think for yourself: what can we do to remove these problems?"

I applauded that attitude and that invitation to the world to be engaged and be involved and see what was happening. Senator DURBIN and I, along with three Members of the House—Congresswoman BETTY MCCOLLUM from Minnesota, Congresswoman JAN SCHAKOWSKY from Illinois, and Congressman DAVID CICILLINE from Rhode Island—came together and accepted her invitation. We accepted her offer, and we planned a trip for November to go see the troubled areas in Burma, just as Aung San Suu Kyi had suggested.

We intended to go to the afflicted areas. We intended to see for ourselves what was happening. We intended to talk to those left behind to get as full a story as possible. And we intended, as she indicated, to think of what we can do to reverse the situation.

The Burmese Government worked with us to plan this trip. It involved a tremendous amount of logistics on how we could get to northern Rakhine State. But at the very last moment, just as we were getting ready to leave Washington, DC, the government reversed course. The Government of Burma said: We invited you, but now we will block you from visiting these afflicted areas.

Clearly, the Burmese Government and military had a lot to hide. Their invitation to the world from the Nobel laureate, Aung San Suu Kyi, turned out not to be sincere. She did not stand behind her invitation. She did not ensure that the world could come and see what was going on.

We were not allowed to visit the villages that had been burned. We were not allowed to visit camps from the previous repatriation of individuals, called internally displaced persons camps, or IDP camps.

We were allowed to fly into the capital of Rakhine State, Sittwe. In the capital of Sittwe, there was something there that I didn't expect at all. In the capital, there is a section of the city that is referred to as the Muslim quarter, the Muslim neighborhood. It is called Aung Mingalar. We were told we could go visit the Muslim quarter, Aung Mingalar, and so we did. This is a street in Aung Mingalar. At the end of the street, you have a police station, and you have a fence. In fact, every route out of this neighborhood is blocked by police.

The people who live there are not currently trapped by high walls and extensive barbed wire, but it is illegal for them to leave this neighborhood—think of the early stages of the Warsaw ghetto in Poland. I had no idea this existed, and it is an indication of the situation the Rohingya live in, not just in this quarter, but there are 120,000 of them in camps that have been set up where they are not allowed to operate as a normal individual, in a normal economy, in a normal village. This neighborhood is functionally sealed off from the rest of the city. They cannot leave and go a short distance away to open their shops, so they have no means to support themselves. They are trapped in a neighborhood cage with the barriers, police station, and consequences if they leave without permission.

If they have a medical emergency, then what they have to do is get permission to leave to travel to an IDP camp—internally displaced persons camp—see a doctor at the IDP camp, get a referral to the hospital, return back to their neighborhood, and then go to the hospital that is just 5 minutes away. So it is a trip of many hours in order to go to the healthcare facility that is just minutes away. Can you imagine what that is like in a health emergency? Why? It is just a direct affliction on these Muslim residents in this Buddhist nation.

They are dependent to survive on relatives who have found a path to other countries who can send money back to them so they can purchase goods, and they are also dependent upon the government. The government provides teachers for the higher high school-level classrooms, and those teachers disappeared after the August assaults and haven't returned. The children of this neighborhood are not allowed to go to the universities. So this may not

look so horrific unless you know the facts; that it is a zone that is essentially a prison inside the capital city for the Muslim residents.

In order to learn more, our delegation traveled to Bangladesh to the refugee camps. We went to a camp called Balukhali, and that visit brought home the breadth and horror of the human rights crisis that these men, women, and children have endured. Speak to any member of the delegation, and they will tell you that articles and reports written about what has happened are not the same as hearing firsthand and face-to-face the stories of the atrocities the Rohingya refugees have suffered. At Balukhali, Senator DURBIN and I went into a temporary classroom with tarp over the top where women had gathered to learn about sanitation and disease prevention, and I asked the interpreter who was with us: Would you ask these women if they have stories they would like to share? I wasn't sure these Muslim women, covered in traditional Muslim clothing, would be willing to share a story with an outsider, but they immediately responded. One woman jumped up, and she pulled the cloth off her arm to show the scars from the burns she had as her village hut came down around her as she tried to escape. Then other women jumped up to tell other stories—of a child being killed in front of her, of a husband being slaughtered, of the trials and tribulations of trying to escape the assault from the military. Every person in that room had tragic and horrifying stories to share—entire villages burned to the ground, entire villages fleeing for the border, being shot at by soldiers as they tried to cross the border into Bangladesh. They themselves did not share stories about the rapes, but they shared those stories with the doctors and others who shared the stories with us.

As you walk around the camp, you see a lot of young kids, a lot of children. Some are helping out with their families. Some are orphans. Some are kicking balls around. I watched one young man run with a little sheet of plastic that he had put split bamboo on to create a little tiny kite, and they could get that thing about 10 feet in the air. He had a smile on his face, and you could almost envision these were regular children growing up like others around the world.

Then I went and visited with a group of the children who were doing drawings, and when you saw their drawings, you realized what they had been through. Here I am talking to a young boy who is showing me his drawing of a helicopter and a military vehicle coming into the village. Here is one of the drawings that was held up. You see the helicopter shooting at the village and the drawing of the machineguns. The village house is under assault. Here is another child's drawings, and again there are helicopters. You see the houses built on stilts. Here is a military man on the ground shooting

at them as they are playing. These children have been through horrific, horrific trauma. Their families have been fractured, they may not have a mother or father, and somehow they are going forward in life.

I would like to say that the situation has improved since our trip, but the situation is still extremely bad. Take a look at this map from Human Rights Watch. These red dots are villages that have been burned—all of these, these two lines of villages. At last count, 354 villages burned, and it wasn't just in August and September but the burning continued. The Human Rights Watch said in October and November, another 40 villages were burned. In fact, one was burning on November 25 right after our delegation returned to the United States of America.

Is it any wonder the Burmese Government didn't want us going in to see any of these sites firsthand? We are not the only ones who were denied access. All of the U.N. organizations, including a factfinding mission and an investigator named Yanghee Lee, were stopped from visiting these afflicted areas. International aid groups like the Red Cross were denied access.

A mass grave containing the bodies of a group of Muslims was uncovered in Rakhine State's Inn Din village just north of Sittwe, the capital where we were. In a rather shocking first, the Burmese military actually accepted responsibility for the deaths, claiming that soldiers and villagers reacted to provocation from terrorists and that those who were involved would be punished. Do you think they are really going to be punished? I will tell you who gets punished. It is reporters, and these are the two reporters who reported it. Where are they? They are in prison—Wa Lone and Kyaw Soe Oo, two reporters for Reuters. Shouldn't the United States and the international community demand that they be set free and demand those who perpetrated these crimes against humanity be the ones in prison? These two young men have been charged with violating the country's Official Secrets Act and are facing 14 years in prison for “illegally” acquiring information and sharing it with foreign media. It sounds to me like these two reporters were doing exactly what Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel laureate, said: Come and see.

There is a continuing cycle of violence and radicalization. Burma justifies their actions as a response to attacks by ARSA, but let's recognize a very small group of attacks occurred, and then the response was hundreds of thousands of people had their villages burned to the ground and were driven out of the country.

Well, there is going to be perpetuation of a cycle of violence unless the mindset of the Government of Burma changes dramatically. Right now, we need to be engaged in the possibility of repatriation because it is urgent that these refugees get a chance to return to their villages and rebuild them, but

it will not happen unless we insist on deep involvement by the United Nations.

Reflecting on the Rwandan genocide 4 years afterward, President Clinton said:

We owe to those who died and to those who survived who loved them, our every effort to increase our vigilance and strengthen our stand against those who would commit such atrocities in the future here or elsewhere.

Indeed, we owe it to all the peoples of the world who are at risk because each blood-letting hastens the next as the value of human life is degraded and violence becomes tolerated, the unimaginable becomes more conceivable.

For the thousands of Rohingya slaughtered and the hundreds of thousands more who survived and fled, the unimaginable has become all too conceivable. Five months after these atrocities began, 5 months tomorrow, in fact, the world has not heard from our President about this horrific ethnic cleansing.

I encourage President Trump to weigh in on this, to speak with moral clarity, to condemn the Burmese Government for executing this horrific case of ethnic cleansing, to praise and support Bangladesh for opening its doors, to call on the world to provide Bangladesh with international resources to help address the plight of the refugees, to demand the safe and internationally monitored opportunity for the Rohingya refugees to return to their villages, rebuild their homes, and rebuild their lives.

We in the Senate must not be silenced. Thank you, again, to my 14 colleagues who have already signed on to this resolution. Our repatriation resolution calls on Nobel laureate and head of state Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's other civilian leaders and military leaders to recognize that longstanding prejudices haunt Burma and commit to implementing all the recommendations of Kofi Annan's Advisory Commission on Rakhine State, which seeks to end the discrimination against the Rohingya and reduce the tension with other minorities.

The Burmese Government could begin doing so immediately by lifting restrictions on the IDP camps and the Aung Mingalar, while planning to shut down the IDP camps entirely and restoring the opportunity for full participation in society.

We call upon Burma to work with Bangladesh and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure the voluntary and safe repatriation of refugees. Safety must be assured for these refugees. There must be no forcible repatriation. It must be voluntary, it must be safe, and it must be monitored by an international organization. We can make sure they get assistance in returning to rebuild their homes and their lives.

We must call on Burma and Aung San Suu Kyi to embrace transparency, to grant humanitarian aid groups access, to release the two journalists in prison for doing their jobs. Finally, we

must call on the international community to invest in the future of the Rohingya people. Everyone has a part to play in the economic development of the Rakhine State—the poorest state in Burma—for the benefit of all.

In closing, anyone who looks at the events that have occurred since last August can plainly see the massive scale of human catastrophe. Let it not continue. The world that cried out “never again” so passionately decades ago, that rallied against the war crimes of Kosovo, that condemned the Rwandan genocide has an obligation to stand up once again—this time in Burma—for the universal right of every human to live in peace, free from fear and free from persecution.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

NOMINATION OF R.D. JAMES

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I rise in support of the nomination of R.D. James to serve as Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works. The Assistant Secretary establishes policy direction and provides leadership for the Civil Works programs at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

In this position, Mr. James will play a central role ensuring the navigability of America's ports and inland waterways. He will oversee the Army Corps' flood and storm risk management and responses to emergencies like the hurricanes we saw in Florida and Texas this past fall.

Mr. James will also play a central role in modernizing America's aging water infrastructure. This month, the Committee on Environment and Public Works, which I chair, has held two hearings on the needs and challenges facing America's water infrastructure. These hearings are important steps as the committee works toward a new Water Resources Development Act, which will be reauthorized this year.

It is critical to have Mr. James confirmed so he can partner with us in this important process. I look forward to working with Mr. James on projects and issues that are important to my home State of Wyoming. He has already committed to me that he will work to find a permanent solution to preventing ice-jam floods, like those that caused the Big Horn River to flood the city of Worland, WY.

There is no reason this confirmation should be delayed any further. His nomination was unanimously approved by voice vote in both the Senate Armed Services Committee and the Environment and Public Works Committee. Mr. James is well qualified for this position.

He has served as a civil engineer member of the Mississippi River Commission since 1981. That is 37 years. He was appointed to that position by both Democratic and Republican Presidents. Mr. James is also an accomplished farmer and businessman. He is experienced, qualified, and ready to start.

It is time for the Senate to confirm his nomination.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. COTTON). The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I wish to thank Senator BARRASSO and Senator CARPER for their bipartisan work to get this nomination to the floor.

I have known R.D. James for a long time. He understands the projects involved, the work involved, and the challenges involved. He is a civil engineer and brings a lot of experience to this job.

The work of Senator CARPER and Senator BARRASSO is deeply appreciated. I think it will be appreciated by the Corps and the Department of Defense.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the Senate has been running a bit behind. I wanted to accommodate my Republican colleagues.

I ask unanimous consent that the vote be moved to 2:20 p.m., rather than 2:15 p.m., on Mr. Azar.

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

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, a year ago, the President stormed into office promising better, cheaper healthcare for everyone. He said he would bring prescription drug prices down because, in his words, drug companies were “getting away with murder.”

So as we move to this vote, as the senior Democrat on the Finance Committee, I wanted to make sure we took stock after year 1. The Trump record on healthcare is worse than your garden variety case of a President failing to live up to his campaign promises. This President has surely hurt the people he promised to help. Very shortly, the Senate will vote on the nomination of Alex Azar to be the Secretary of Health and Human Services. In this position, he would be the captain of the President's healthcare team. So in my view, this debate is about a lot more than Mr. Azar's resume. It is a referendum on a year of healthcare failure, particularly on prescription drug costs, and it is a referendum on what I consider to be a healthcare agenda of discrimination.

I am going to begin with the skyrocketing prescription drug prices because they are a gut punch for millions of Americans each time they step up to the pharmacy window. Few promises the President made with respect to healthcare resonated more than his promise to bring down prescription drug prices, but now, a year later, he has chosen Alex Azar, a drug company executive with a documented history of raising drug prices.

From 2012 until last year, he was the head of Eli Lilly's American subsidiary, Lilly USA. He chaired its U.S. pricing, reimbursement, and access steering committee, which gave him a major role over drug price increases for every product Lilly marketed in America. On Mr. Azar's watch, Lilly more than doubled the prices of drugs used

to treat diabetes, osteoporosis, heart disease, and ADHD. And these are only some of the drugs under his purview.

He told the Finance Committee staff that he had never once approved a decrease in the price of a drug at Lilly. Mr. Azar said: That is just how the system works. Prices always go up. I would say that Mr. Azar may have had his facts straight about the system, but that doesn't make it right. Mr. Azar was a part of this broken system, and despite the cheerful overtures that he has made to Senators on both sides of the aisle over the last few weeks about how he wants to work on the issue, he has not offered even a single concrete example of how he would actually change the system he said is broken. He will not give us an example of how he would change it to make it better.

Members of this body, Democrats and Republicans, have come forward with specifics about what they would do to help those Americans getting clobbered at the prescription drug windows across the land. We have colleagues who are for drug importation. We have colleagues who are for more negotiating power for Medicare. We have colleagues who understand the challenge with the pharmaceutical benefit managers, where there is so little transparency. We asked Mr. Azar repeatedly for examples, but all he had to say about this system that was so broken is that he would be “open” to ideas.

As important as that is, there is a whole lot more for Senators to reflect on as they think about this vote. After a year in office, the Trump administration is steadily and relentlessly enacting a healthcare agenda of discrimination—discrimination against those with preexisting conditions, discrimination against women, discrimination against LGBTQ Americans, discrimination against those struggling to get ahead. The question up for debate today ought to be whether or not this nominee to head this critical office of healthcare policy is going to end that discrimination.

Colleagues, as you think about this vote, all I can tell you is that when you review the record—in the face of an administration moving relentlessly to promote discrimination in healthcare—there is not a shred of evidence that Mr. Azar is going to try to stop it, reform it, or in any way try to make sure that those Americans—all of them—get a fair shake.

From day one, in addition to this pattern of discrimination, the administration has been on a campaign of sabotage against the Affordable Care Act and the private health insurance markets. They cut the open enrollment period in half. They slashed the advertising budgets. They made it harder for people to sign up in person. That is the major reason why the number of Americans without insurance coverage increased by more than 3 million last year. Our friends and our neighbors are one sudden illness or injury away from the nightmare of personal bankruptcy