

struggling with addiction that her mother found her dead in the bedroom from an overdose.

Every age, every race—there are stories of incredibly successful people who received from the doctor or the dentist more pain medicine than they needed. It is not because that is what the doctor or the dentist intended to do. Doctors and dentists in the 1970s and 1980s were told: This is nonaddictive. There is no reason for people to have pain.

People could take these opioid-based painkillers and not have pain. That part was true. The part that wasn't true was the nonaddictive part. And the part that wasn't true was what you would do when the doctor was no longer giving you that medicine or you could no longer act like you were getting the medicine because of pain when, by then, you were getting it for some other reason.

The appropriations bill that our committee has voted out and that we are eager to get to the floor includes \$3.7 billion targeting the opioid epidemic. It is a 1,300-percent increase over where we were 4 years ago. Congress has become more aware of not only how widespread the epidemic is but also the incredible human cost of the epidemic.

The bill includes almost half of that money, \$1.5 billion, for State opioid response grants. One reason we are doing this with grants is we really don't know all of the options yet, and we haven't been able to evaluate the best ways to deal with this. We do feel in our committee and in Congress that it is unlikely that the best way to deal with this in one place is necessarily the best way to deal with it in other places.

My State of Missouri received \$10 million last year. We will receive \$28 million this year if this grant funding is approved, and other States will go up proportionately, exactly as we did.

What did we do with that money in our State of Missouri to see how we could deal with this epidemic? More than 1,700 people have received evidence-based medical treatment for opioid-use disorder; 1,700 people in the last 12 months or so have received that. More than 4,300 kits of naloxone, which is what you take when you overdose, have been distributed. That is less effective sometimes than it used to be because of fentanyl, and people don't have any idea, when they are trying to help you with what you put into your system—and you don't either—so, occasionally, you will get that shot to relieve you from the overdose and think that has helped, and then suddenly what you have put into your system overwhelms even that normal cure if you get it on time. “Cure” might be the wrong word because all it does is save you that one time.

Around 4,000 people have received training on what to do in the event of an overdose. About 10,000 people have received training in our State on topics from treatment to prevention to recovery.

For a State like ours, the rate of opioid deaths has increased; opioid overdose deaths have more than quadrupled in the past 15 years. That would not be an unusual number for States to see.

Senator CAPITO from West Virginia and I were here on the floor talking about this earlier this year. This is not necessarily an urban problem. In fact, in most cases, it is more of a rural problem per capita than an urban problem per capita. We have set aside money targeted for those rural communities. There is \$135 million set aside for rural communities based on different things that appear to be needed more in rural communities than in any other communities.

A couple of hundred million dollars goes into community health centers to support people who have behavioral health concerns and mental health concerns. If you don't have a mental health problem before you get addicted to opioids, you have one once you have gotten addicted to opioids. So those funds go there to try to deal with that.

Senator STABENOW and I introduced a bill a few years ago, the Excellence in Mental Health Act, and eight of our States now have a situation where they are treating, in that eight-State pilot, behavioral health problems like all other health problems. That particularly steps up if someone with an opioid addiction problem has a behavioral health problem they wouldn't have had otherwise. And there is no limit. Just as there would be no limit if you had kidney dialysis, there is also no limit in those eight States for your behavioral health problems. There is no limit where, if you haven't whipped this in 28 days, you are going to have to deal with this as a unique problem. Dealing with mental health and behavioral health in the same way matters in all cases, but it particularly seems to apply as people try to beat addiction.

The Department of Labor and Health and Human Services bill includes \$60 million for child abuse prevention and treatment programs to support what happens in families when someone in that family gets into a situation of abuse.

The number of people who become addicted needs to change, but also how we deal with pain needs to change. So there is some unique money available to the National Institutes of Health to try to develop a pain medicine that is nonaddictive; \$500 million went toward that effort.

In all of these cases, we feel as though we have produced a good bill out of our committee. It has about one-third of the money in it after defense is taken off the table. It is a big bill that covers a large jurisdiction.

Everyone in the Senate deserves a chance to be part of this debate. Everyone in the Senate deserves to look at how the appropriators—I think it was 33 to 1 that they voted for this bill—have decided to spend the money. It

may be the way everyone decides to spend the money, but everyone ought to have a chance on this floor to say “No, I think this money would be better spent here and here, better spent this way and that way.” Every single Senator ought to be able to be part of that discussion.

If we continue this process that we have been in for a few years—one big bill that nobody ever gets to vote on—that means the Senators who aren't on the Appropriations Committee will not have a say in establishing our national priorities. It is time to do that.

These bills are all out of committee and have been for almost a month now. We have had three of them on the floor already. I think we plan to have four of them on the floor next week, and maybe Defense, Labor, and HHS not too long after that.

These are big issues that every Senator should have a say in, and the only way that will happen is if these issues are decided right here on the floor. Hopefully we will set some records, at least, of having these bills on the floor and debated.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. TOOMEY. Mr. President, I want to reflect on some of the data that has been coming in on our economy in response to our tax reform and deregulatory push.

Before I do, I want to commend my colleague from Missouri and thank him for his leadership and work on the incredible crisis of opioids we are dealing with. It is not a uniformly national crisis; it is more concentrated regionally, and my State of Pennsylvania is affected as badly as any place in the country.

I am pleased we have been able to take a number of constructive measures, but we have a lot of work yet to do as we try to deal with this scourge. I want to thank him for that.

TAX REFORM

Mr. President, on tax reform, before I get into some of the macro and statistics that are really, really incredibly encouraging, I just want to touch on a couple of constituent companies and their employees and how our tax reform is affecting them.

One is a company called Glass & Sons Collision Repair. They are located in Reading, PA, which is in the eastern part of our State. They recently announced that they will be paying \$1,000 tax reform bonuses to all of their employees—\$1,000. This is a small business. It is a father-and-son business. The owners, Charles and Trevor Glass, made the decision to pay the bonuses right after they met with their accountants and learned how much they are going to save as a result of tax reform. The first thing they did is say: We are going to share this with our employees. It is a terrific development for everyone involved.

There is another company on the other side of the State, in Somerset,

the southwestern part of the State. It is a company called Guy Chemical. They recently announced that not only are they increasing wages and bonuses, but they are also making all new investments, including buying a new forklift, updated computer equipment, new software, and they are building a new lab for research and development that will be five times the size of their old lab. They are doing this because of tax reform and the confidence they have in the economic growth that is occurring in this reformed environment.

It is not only individuals who work for companies that have been able to pay higher wages and bonuses who benefit from tax reform; it is just about everyone. About 93 percent of all of the folks I represent and all of the folks we all represent—when they file their tax return for this year's income, they are going to pay less in Federal income taxes.

According to the Tax Foundation, the direct savings for a Pennsylvania family with an income in the \$50,000 to \$70,000 range—it will be about \$1,400 in savings.

In addition to the direct savings from a lower Federal tax bill, because of the savings that Pennsylvania utilities have on their Federal tax bill, they are required to pass that on to their customers, and that is exactly what they are doing. So far it is a combined \$320 million in annual savings to Pennsylvania consumers in the form of lower utility bills as a result of our tax reform.

There is no question that there are tremendous, direct personal and individual benefits across the board. Related to that is the fact that the economy is just taking off. The economy has been on fire. This year it has been tremendous.

Nothing reflects the strong economic data better than the employment picture. It is fair to say that the employment picture in America may never have been this good. I know that is making a very bold statement, but stay with me here as we go through some of this data.

In the month of May, we had the lowest unemployment rate since 2000—the lowest unemployment rate in 18 years. The African-American unemployment rate hit an all-time record low. It has never been measured as low as it was in May, at 5.9 percent. Likewise, the Hispanic unemployment rate hit an all-time record low, at 4.6 percent in June. Small business optimism was at the second highest level on record ever, this past month of May.

Dividends paid from overseas subsidiaries of U.S. multinationals, dividends paid back home—money that is sitting overseas and invested back in America—reached an all-time record high in the first quarter because we changed the rules to diminish the penalties we used to have when an American company brought income that was earned overseas back home.

Well, one of the things we wanted to have happen as a result of our tax reform was that we wanted to see more capital expenditures—more companies putting money to work buying plants, plant equipment, technology, and tools. Guess what. For the first quarter of this year, there was tremendous growth in capital expenditures by American businesses. It is up over 7 percent, well above even the ambitious estimate that came out from the Congressional Budget Office late last year.

I think one of the most amazing statistics about this whole employment picture is what happened in March. We saw that in the month of March—again, the first time ever that I am aware of—the number of job openings in America, meaning the number of available jobs that need to be filled, was greater than the number of people looking for jobs. Think about that. There are more jobs available in America than there are people looking for jobs in America. That is terrific for people who need work. The jobs are out there.

The National Federation of Independent Business, which is America's largest network of small businesses, were surveyed in June. Sixty-three percent—almost two-thirds—of these small business owners reported that they were hiring or trying to hire. That is the highest level we have seen since 1999. And 87 percent of those who are trying to hire, or are actually hiring people, are concerned that there are just too few people out there available to be hired.

So, in a way, the economy is growing so robustly and the job opportunities are expanding so quickly that we have a shortage of workers. We have too few people available to meet the demand for all of these jobs. It is the right problem to have.

So what happens as a result of that? It is exactly what we predicted. People who have decided to leave the workforce, to give up on work—people who are of working age and are healthy but decided, for whatever reason, not to work—are coming back into the workforce. They are coming back in big numbers. In the month of June, over 600,000 Americans who had worked in the past but then had stepped out of the workforce for whatever reason came back into the workforce. The biggest proportion of these folks are people who have never gone to college, but they have a renewed confidence and optimism about the economy. They have confidence in opportunities available to them, despite the fact that they don't have a college income. They have decided that they are going to reenter the workforce and, in the process, start to improve their standard of living.

By the way, the labor force participation rate rose really across, I think, all ethnic groups, including women, men, African Americans, and Hispanics. It is up across the board.

So far this year, over 1 million workers who had left the workforce are back

in it. That compares to about half a million workers in the first half of last year and about 600,000 in 2016. So there was a big surge in the number of workers coming back into the workforce, and they are finding jobs. It has improved our overall population, our overall percentage of working-age people who are, in fact, working. As I say, it is across all demographic groups and contributing enormously, first and foremost, to improving the quality of their lives and their family's lives but also our overall economic growth.

What else did we get from the June jobs report? In June—in the month of June alone—there were 213,000 jobs added. That is a very, very rapid pace. Oh, by the way, these numbers are always provided subsequently. So in June we got the revision for April and May, months that had good job growth. It turns out that it was even better than we thought. All together, there were 37,000 more jobs when we revised the April and May numbers than we had originally figured.

There was a modest uptick in the unemployment rate, but don't be fooled by that. That is because with so many additional people entering the workforce, we are counting far more people now in how we determine that.

One of the truly exciting things about this is that for many, many years, we have had stagnant wages. Wages just weren't rising very rapidly. It is because productivity wasn't growing. That, I think, was being driven by the fact that there wasn't considerable growth in capital expenditures. Now that we have changed that dynamic and capital expenditure is growing, productivity is growing and wages are starting to grow. I am not satisfied with the growth yet, but it is very encouraging that the direction is positive.

Based on the employment cost index, wages grew about 2.9 percent in the first quarter. That is the fastest pace in a decade—the fastest pace in 10 years. Average hourly earnings for nonmanagers rose at their fastest pace in 9 years.

In June, interestingly, pay for workers who switched jobs rose at 3.8 percent, which is a clear indication that employers are forced to bid up wages because they need to hire workers, and they are having trouble finding the workers.

This whole dynamic is very, very encouraging. It means wages are growing and are likely to grow more.

I should also point out that there is a feature in the arithmetic that suggests that it could mask the extent to which wages are growing. What I am referring to is when I say that average wages are growing by 2.7 percent. That is true, but let's keep in mind that when we get a surge of new people into the workforce, most of those people are coming in at the lower end of the wage spectrum. Maybe it is their first job or maybe they have been out of work for a long time, or maybe, as I pointed out,

they don't have the same level of education and skills of people already in the workforce. So they are starting at a lower-than-average wage. So all else being equal, that would tend to bring the average down. So despite that, when you have growth, that tells us that people who have been continuously employed are getting an even bigger growth in their wages.

So this is very, very encouraging. I think it is likely to continue. It is exactly what we were hoping would happen as a result of our tax reform.

But there is another whole development that is not directly about wages, but when you think about it, it makes a lot of sense. With all of these people finding work, with all of these opportunities for work and people coming back into the workforce, guess what. There is a reduction in dependency on government programs because people are able to earn the income to support their families.

So, for instance, in the 4-week average of unemployment benefits claims, one of the things we monitor closely, the number of people who are collecting unemployment hit a 45-year low of 213,000 in May—45 years. You have to go back 45 years to find so few people who required unemployment for an extended period of time. It is really amazing, when we consider how much bigger a country we are today, that we have gotten down to a number that was matched only 45 years ago—amazing.

We can look at the disability benefits. According to the Social Security Administration, fewer Americans applied for disability benefits last year than at any time since 2002, 16 years since we have had a number this low.

We can also look at the food stamp program. Two million people have come off of food stamps because they are working and they are earning enough that they either don't need it or they don't qualify anymore.

So these are very, very encouraging trends. As I say, because the driver is a new set of incentives that is encouraging capital expenditure and, therefore, productivity growth, I think this is really likely to continue.

The macro GDP numbers reflect this as well. The Congressional Budget Office last year estimated that growth for 2018 would be about 2 percent. As a result of tax reform, they revised that up to 3.3 percent.

As for estimates for the second quarter—the quarter that just ended—we don't have the numbers yet. It is still a couple of weeks away, but the estimates are that growth was probably equal, maybe even more than 4 percent.

So we have had tremendous growth. We already had a great first quarter relative to other first quarters, and the second quarter is probably very, very big.

All of this, of course, means that if this growth is sustained, which I think it is likely to be, not only will we continue to have good employment numbers like we have had, but we are also going to have good budget numbers.

The Federal Government budget is driven more than anything else by how strong our economy is and how many people are working. Everybody working is paying taxes. Every company that is making money is paying taxes. So revenue coming into the Federal Government is likely to be very strong.

So I am very optimistic. I think it is very clear that the combination of pushing back on excessive regulation and a tremendously pro-growth tax reform has led to this growth.

I should warn that I think there is a bit of a cloud on the horizon. I hope it doesn't develop into a big storm. Right now it is just a cloud, but that cloud is trade policy that could really start to hinder economic growth.

It is interesting. We had testimony at the Banking Committee just yesterday from Fed Chairman Powell. I pointed out that the minutes for the June meeting of the Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee had a disturbing reference. I will quote briefly: The FOMC minutes for June stated: "Some Districts indicated"—they refer to the various districts around the country—"that plans for capital spending had been scaled back or postponed as a result of uncertainty over trade policy."

That is a warning. That is a warning to us. If we spiral down into a full-blown trade war—and we certainly have a lot of skirmishes going on—and if this spirals out of control, business will start to pull back. They will lose the confidence they have had, and that could lead to diminished capital expenditures, which will start to really diminish the tremendous growth that we have seen.

So far for this year the economic picture has been extremely encouraging. Benefits are very broad-based. Economic growth is broad and strong. There are employment numbers that we haven't seen in decades. I believe this can continue. It is much more likely to continue if we avoid a damaging trade war.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, I am grateful today to be joined by Senator KING, from the great State of Maine, to speak about the troubling changes that we are seeing in the oceans and how climate change is reshaping our States' fisheries.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations recognizes that "climate change imperils the structure and function of already stressed coastal aquatic ecosystems." For the record, Maine and Rhode Island are indeed aquatic.

The oceans have absorbed approximately 30 percent of the excess carbon dioxide that we have pumped into the atmosphere since the Industrial Revolution began. That is changing the ocean's chemistry. The oceans have also absorbed roughly 90 percent of the

excess heat trapped in the atmosphere by those greenhouse gases. As a result of that excess carbon dioxide and that excess heat, our oceans are warming, and they are rising. They are losing oxygen, and they are growing more acidic. This puts marine life, coastal communities, and the global ocean economy all in jeopardy.

Commercial fishing is an important economy in the United States, and both Maine and Rhode Island celebrate our longstanding fishing traditions. According to the National Marine Fisheries Service, over 9.6 billion pounds of wild seafood, valued at \$5.3 billion, was commercially landed in the United States in 2016.

Across New England, American lobster was our most valuable fishery. We had lobstermen bringing around \$663 million—two-thirds of \$1 billion—worth of lobster to shore. Sadly, Rhode Island's lobster fishery is badly knocked down by warming ocean waters. NOAA notes: "The lobster industry in New York and southern New England has nearly collapsed." Maine dominated the catch, bringing in nearly 85 percent of the lobster landed in the region.

According to NOAA, from "1994 to 2014, Maine's landings surged 219 percent to more than 124 million pounds." The lobster population is shifting north, away from Rhode Island, New York, and Connecticut, as waters warm, leaving Rhode Island and other southern New England lobster traps empty. But Mainers are taking notice, too, as warming waters are driving lobster even farther north along their rocky coast. A recent study of 700 North American marine species predicted that lobster populations could move 200 miles northward by the end of the century as waters continue to warm. Senator KING can report what 200 miles does to the coast of Maine.

Lobster is not the only fishery feeling the heat in New England. A 2017 study of global warming found that the greater Northeast region is anticipated to warm faster than other regions of the world. According to the "Climate Science Special Report," a Federal report that will form the scientific basis of the Fourth National Climate Assessment, "the Northeast has warmed faster than 99% of the global ocean since 2004." We have a global ocean hotspot off our coast. The Northeast is also expected to see higher than global average sea level rise, putting our ports, fishing docks, and coastal infrastructure all at risk.

Fishermen have noticed. They are keenly aware of the myriad ways climate change is altering the waters that generations of their families have fished, and they see the difference. Fishermen in Rhode Island have told me: "Sheldon, things are getting weird out there."

"Sheldon, it's not my grandfather's ocean."

They share anecdotes of catching increasing numbers of tropical fish early in the summer season and seeing fish