

many other examples of how climate change is accelerating those types of conditions which have a major impact on human health.

The report then indicated that, yes, it directly affects the health of the people of our country and the globe, but it also has a direct economic impact. The damage affects, in a negative way, the rate of our economic growth.

I will give you many examples why. Take a look at infrastructure damage. We recognize that the bridges and the highways in this country—our infrastructure—were not designed and constructed with the realities of the weather conditions we are now experiencing. As a result of much heavier damage that we have to deal with, adaptations and changes, that affects the resources we have to devote to the new realities of our infrastructure.

Coastal communities have been put at direct risk. First of all, I have seen coastal communities shrink because of the loss of shoreline. We know the risk factor for coastal communities affects their economic growth. They have to deal with the cost of adaptation. That devotes revenues that could be used for other purposes.

In addition, we have seen the economic challenges to agriculture and the sustainability of agriculture. In many parts of the world, the realities of climate change have taken away their traditional livelihoods and sustainability of agricultural products.

We are also seeing a direct impact the climate is having on tourism, which, for many communities, is a large part of their economic activity.

The report estimates that the gross domestic product of this country could be adversely affected by as much as 10 percent. That is a major hit on our economic progress.

The United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change issued a report in October 2018. That report indicated that by 2030, the economic damage as a result of climate change could reach \$54 trillion—that is trillion with a “t.” This is an economic crisis we must address. We cannot ignore it. We must deal with it.

The good news is, mitigation and adaptation policies work. They work. We can mitigate the causes of climate change by our activities here on Earth. We can adapt to some of the realities of the new weather conditions, but we are not doing it at a scale necessary today to avoid substantial damage to human health and our economy. We have to step up our game dramatically.

It disproportionately impacts the poor. The poor don’t have the resources in order to adapt or move or to deal as other people have. They are trapped in more vulnerable communities, and they suffer more as a result of it.

We could talk about every one of our States that are impacted by this. In my State of Maryland, I have taken the floor to explain that Ellicott City—a wonderful community in Howard County, MD, that has what I call Main

Street, which reminds you of Main Street America—has had two 1,000-year floods in 20 months. These floods are unprecedented because normally the flooding conditions are as a result of the rising of the river next to Ellicott City, but these were floods caused by the increased amount of rainfall in a short period of time that could not be handled in its runoff, causing extreme damage. They have had two 1,000-year floods in 20 months.

We have flooding in Annapolis, which should be a concern to not only the people of Maryland but to our Nation because of the importance that Annapolis plays to our national security because of the Naval Academy. The same could be said in Virginia, where there is a significant challenge to our future military facilities as a result of their coastal locations. In Baltimore City, we have had 25 heat-related deaths in 2018. That is three times more than we saw in 2017.

There is no question that this affects Maryland, that it affects every State in this Nation. This is an American issue and a global issue.

There is a path forward. There is a path forward that is not terribly difficult for us to embrace because it will not only help us deal with climate change and the environment, but it will mean a better economic future for us, and it is using energy sources that are plentiful, meaning that there is a security advantage by doing the right thing for our environment and our economy.

Green energy, conservation efficiencies, all are activities that can help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and carbon emissions. It can mitigate the damage. It will create more jobs.

With green energy, there are more jobs than there are in the fossil fuel industry. It is less dependent. Fossil fuel is good for our national security, since there is an abundance of the green energy sources here in America and with our allies around the world.

In my own State, we have taken actions to reduce carbon emissions. We have been effective in doing that, and it has been a plus for our economy.

What we need is U.S. leadership. We saw that in 2015. I was proud to be part of a 10-Member Senate delegation that went to Paris as we entered into a global agreement to deal with our responsibilities to change the trajectory for climate change.

The U.S. role in Paris was critical to get all the nations of the world together with realistic strategies to reduce our carbon emissions. I say that knowing full well that COP24 is meeting, as we are meeting here, in Poland. This is a convention whose attention is going to be to finalize the Paris Agreement Work Program—a rule book of guidelines, procedures, and rules needed to turn the Paris Agreement into a working system. Every country made commitments in Paris. We now need to make sure that those commitments are carried out.

Shortly before the convening of COP24 in Poland, the G20 met in our hemisphere, as I think everyone is familiar with—these are the economic powers of the world, all the major economies of the world—and they reaffirmed their commitment to Paris. The world economic powers did that.

Now, what is happening in Poland and what happened in G20—every country participated, except one. The G20 was actually G19 and their commitment to implement the powers agreement—the United States, through the Trump administration, did not join. Of course, in Poland right now, the United States is not an active participant, since President Trump announced that we would withdraw from the convention on climate change known as COP. That is not leadership. The world will always be better off with America in leadership, and we are missing that leadership.

So my plea is that we need to step up. This should not be a partisan issue. Climate change should not be a partisan issue. It is a human rights issue; it is a human issue; it is a health issue; it is an economic issue. We need to restore the U.S. leadership on this matter. We can do that through our Tax Code. We can do that through renewable energy legislation, by increasing the CAFE standards, by dealing with clean air standards. If U.S. leadership is not going to come from the White House, let the U.S. Senate exercise that leadership and show the international community that we understand our responsibility and the risk factors to our health and to the economy.

The National Climate Assessment and the activities of G20 and COP24 should motivate us to action on behalf of the health and welfare of the American community and our global neighbors. I urge our colleagues to get engaged in leadership on this issue.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Montana (Mr. SASSE).

TRIBUTE TO HANNAH NIESKENS

Mr. DAINES. Mr. President, this week, I have the honor of recognizing Hannah Nieskens of Jefferson County for her tremendous service to Montana veterans and her great impact on Montana’s educational system.

Hannah grew up spending time in Montana with her family and then was awarded the Presidential Scholarship to attend Montana State University in Bozeman. After graduating with honors from MSU, Hannah began her career of education in the Billings School District.

During her 4 years in Billings, she met her now-husband Kelly, who served in the Army, and they fell in love. Hannah and Kelly now have three children—two daughters, Charity and Hope, and their adopted son Joshua. Joshua is currently serving overseas in the Air Force.

Hannah has a distinguished career in education. She has served her community as a teacher in Billings, the dean

of Wolf Point High School, and the principal at Northside Elementary School. Now she is the 6-12 principal in Whitehall.

Last year, Hannah was named Montana Principal of the Year, and now Hannah is one of three finalists for the 2019 National Principal of the Year.

In addition to Hannah's career devoted to education, Hannah has a passion for serving Montana veterans. After Kelly was severely wounded while serving in Iraq, Hannah began volunteering to help other veterans in the community navigate the VA. Hannah even earned a law degree to be better prepared to assist Kelly and other veterans struggling with the VA.

Hannah currently serves as the Montana Dole Fellow, where she advocates on behalf of Montana's military families. She has great pride in calling Montana home, and we are lucky to have her.

She has made a lasting impact on her community and the entire State, both through her service to our veterans and by shaping our future generations in the school system.

I congratulate Hannah on all of her success and look forward to seeing all that she will accomplish for Montana in the future.

TANF

Mr. President, once widely viewed as successful, our Nation's primary welfare-to-work program is now broken. It will soon expire. I rise to highlight my efforts to get it working again.

The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Program—it is also called TANF—was created with bipartisan support back in 1996. In fact, at its core, it recognized that finding and maintaining a job is the most effective way for healthy, working-age parents to go from government dependency to self-sufficiency.

After TANF became law, welfare caseloads plummeted, child poverty declined, and employment among low-income, never-married parents went up.

As we debate modernizing the TANF Program, we should not forget the doom and the gloom predicted by some liberals when the original 1996 reforms were debated. Perhaps most famously, our former colleague, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, predicted that TANF would result "in children sleeping on grates, picked up in the morning frozen."

Let me tell you something: Those critics were wrong—very wrong.

Yet more than 20 years after the historic 1996 reforms, we should be clear-eyed that the TANF Program suffers from neglect and loopholes, both of which are undercutting its fundamental work requirements.

Today, very few States are meeting the work participation rate that is required by law. My State of Montana is one of the many that is falling short. The law calls for 50 percent of welfare enrollees to be engaged in work. In Montana, they are reaching only one-third.

In addition, many States are using TANF dollars for purposes unrelated to work, and the program lacks the transparency and the accountability metrics that are critical to its success. Because of these shortfalls, too many low-income parents are not finding sustainable jobs, and too many children are at high risk of suffering the hardships of poverty.

Part of the problem is that TANF has been significantly reformed only once since President Clinton signed it into law. In 2006, Congress reauthorized and strengthened the program, thanks to the hard work of then-Finance Committee Chairman CHUCK GRASSLEY and his Republican counterparts in the House. Since its expiration in 2010, however, TANF has received a whopping—this is so DC—24 short-term re-authorizations. Talk about kicking the can down the road. Efforts to address the persisting concerns about the program have not crossed the finish line. This must change.

For starters, revitalizing TANF is important to sustaining our most robust economy. Right now, there are 7 million job openings that remain unfilled—7 million job openings that are unfilled. The good news is that employers across our country are clearly looking to hire, jobs are being created, and the economy is strong. But as my good friend, House Ways and Means Committee Chairman KEVIN BRADY, has said: "We have gone from a country asking, 'Where are the jobs?' to one asking, 'Where are the workers?'"

A big part of the answer is that millions of able-bodied, working-age Americans are completely on the sidelines. A strong, revitalized TANF Program is urgently needed to close this jobs gap and empower more Americans to find work. This is exactly what my bill, the JOBS Act, would do.

Building on legislation that passed the Ways and Means Committee earlier this year in the House, the JOBS Act demands positive work outcomes rather than simply meeting ineffective participation rules. It requires States to engage with every work-eligible individual and establish a plan that will result in a sustainable job. It holds States accountable for their work outcomes, not activities—we are talking about outcomes, about results—and it bolsters the transparency of every State's performance.

It doesn't just demand work; it enables work. It substantially increases funding for childcare services that would be essential to holding a job. It provides struggling beneficiaries with additional time to get the mental health or substance abuse treatment they need before holding a job and making that a realistic goal. It adds apprenticeship as a permissible work activity, alongside job training, getting more education, and building job readiness skills.

My bill targets funds to truly needy families by capping participation to families with incomes below 200 percent of the Federal poverty level.

The JOBS Act is built on the recognition that there is dignity in work. A job can start low-income parents down the path toward achieving lifelong dreams. A job can create opportunities that are simply out of reach without one. A job can be the springboard to higher wages and upward mobility. A job can rescue young children from the challenges of poverty and despair. In short, finding sustainable work can create better lives for low-income parents and children alike.

Last, my bill extends marriage promotion and fatherhood initiatives because healthy, intact families are also part of the solution.

There are approximately 4,000 families in Montana who are currently on TANF. Over 90 percent of them are from single-parent or zero-parent homes.

I cannot speak more highly of the single families and the extended family members who are tirelessly taking care of their children on TANF. But we should continue to encourage voluntary participation in local marriage support programs; we should continue to encourage fathers to step forward and be the men that their children strongly need. The reason is simple: Healthy families remain the bedrock to strong communities and a flourishing society.

The JOBS Act equips and empowers low-income families toward a better future.

I urge my colleagues to reclaim the bipartisanship that created historic reforms a generation ago and support this important legislation to make our largest welfare-to-work program actually work again.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

RIGHT REBATE ACT OF 2018

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, today I raise an important issue for my colleagues that impacts many families in Iowa but also throughout the country. You hear it everywhere. It is about high prescription drug costs. I am not going to address that issue across the board, but I am going to do it in a narrow way for one part of it.

One contributing factor that has played a part in how much money the government and taxpayers pay for some drugs is a government program called the Medicaid Drug Rebate Program.

On Tuesday I introduced bipartisan legislation with Senator WYDEN of Oregon. The bill, called the Right Rebate Act of 2018, would close a loophole in that program that causes the problem I am addressing.

As a condition for participation in the Medicaid Program, drug companies must pay a rebate—or some people might call it a discount—to the Federal Government and to the various States for the drugs they offer. Generally speaking, the rebate dollar amount is less for a generic drug than for a brand-name drug.