

continue providing benefits to current beneficiaries, as well as those who may need these programs in the future. If we don't make changes to the way these programs currently operate, in the future, a lot of people will just be out of luck. In order to prevent that from happening, we have to work together, and we have to consider a wide variety of options to ensure their solvency in the long term.

While we may disagree on what the ideal solution might look like, I hope we can all agree on the need to put our mandatory spending programs and the broader Federal budget on a long-term, sustainable fiscal course. That means having the revenues match up with the costs. They don't now. There are deficits already, and the funds are being depleted.

I ask for everyone's help to solve this. It can only be done if both sides of the aisle agree to do something.

I thank you for your attention.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. President, as we begin the month of May, which we are just 2 days in now, and our Nation's observance of Older Americans' Month, I come to the floor to speak on a topic that is very close to my heart, and that is Alzheimer's disease.

Like so many Americans, I have felt the impact of this disease. I lost both of my parents to Alzheimer's disease pretty close to the same time. Our family—my brother and my sister and I—helped to care for them. I understand the difficulties that caregivers and families have as they are trying to figure out how to face this difficult challenge because this disease is devastating, especially to the patients and their loved ones.

My father passed away in January of 2015, just 1 day after I was sworn in as a U.S. Senator. My mother, Shelley, passed away just a few months beforehand, in September of 2014.

There is not a book that has yet been written that can tell you what to do when a loved one is diagnosed because each case is different, and there is no magic formula, but I feel strongly that we can do much more to help our caregivers, to ease the pain of those who suffer from this disease, and, most importantly, to find a cure.

The statistics surrounding Alzheimer's are staggering. Over 5 million Americans are living with the disease, and it is estimated that as many as 16 million will have the disease by 2050 if medical breakthroughs do not slow or, better yet, cure this disease.

In my home State of West Virginia, over 38,000 West Virginians are currently living with the disease, and these are just the ones we know about. A lot of these cases go undiagnosed or are unreported.

Across the country, nearly one in every three seniors who dies each year has Alzheimer's or another type of de-

mentia. The cost of caring—and this is not the emotional cost; this is the actual dollar cost—for those with Alzheimer's and other dementias is also notable—an estimated \$277 billion in 2018, increasing to \$1.1 trillion by the year 2050.

These numbers make it clear that we have much work we need to do for those living with the disease, for those caring for them, and for the many who face a future diagnosis.

Over the past few months, I have taken some first steps to address needs facing each of these groups. Fortunately, this is not a task I am working on alone—as I said, almost everybody is touched by this disease—and I have great bipartisan partners to work with.

Last month, I joined Senators STABENOW, WICKER, and MENENDEZ to introduce the CHANGE Act. This bipartisan legislation encourages early assessment and diagnosis of Alzheimer's. It seeks to better utilize the "Welcome to Medicare" initial exam and annual Medicare wellness visits to screen, detect, and diagnose Alzheimer's and related dementias in their earliest stages. It also establishes payment measures to incentivize detection, diagnosis, and discussion of appropriate care planning services, including the potential for clinical trial participation. Let's be honest. A conversation along these lines on this topic is very difficult.

Early assessment and diagnosis offer the important possibility for the patient to be able to be involved in decisions regarding their own care—involve the people before they can no longer make that decision for themselves. I wish I had been able to do that. I tried, but I wasn't able to kind of get that answer that I was hoping for.

That is a goal that Senators STABENOW, COLLINS, MARKEY, MENENDEZ, and I had when we championed the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act back in the 114th Congress. It is a goal we achieved in 2016, when the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services announced that Medicare would begin to pay for an individual care plan for newly diagnosed Alzheimer's patients, effectively implementing our legislation.

This new benefit went into effect in the year 2017. It encourages doctors to give a clear diagnosis to patients with Alzheimer's disease. That includes information about treatment options and what medical and community services are available.

Here is the rub. Unfortunately, in 2017, less than 1 percent of seniors living with Alzheimer's actually received the care planning benefit that was created in the HOPE for Alzheimer's Act. So our bipartisan team regathered—as I mentioned, these are not easy conversations. They are not easy for families, and they are not easy for medical professionals. In late March, we introduced the Improving HOPE Act.

This bill would require the Department of Health and Human Services to conduct outreach, to make sure our

healthcare providers are aware of this important benefit, and to report back on rates of utilization and barriers we need to know about. Hopefully, this will help ensure more Alzheimer's patients and their families actually receive this benefit, as well as the information it is intended to provide.

It is also important to remember that while many living with Alzheimer's are in their later years, like my parents were, there are also more than 200,000 Americans under the age of 65 who are living with Alzheimer's. I have met several who are in their early stages. It is a difficult disease at any time, but for a younger person, it is tremendously sad.

These individuals and their families also need access to support services that most their age don't require and don't need. To make sure they have access, I recently joined Senators COLLINS, CASEY, and JONES to introduce the Younger-Onset Alzheimer's Disease Act. This bill will amend the Older Americans Act to allow individuals under the age of 60, who are diagnosed with younger onset Alzheimer's disease, to access its support programs. Under current law, only those over the age of 60 are eligible for Older Americans Act programs, leaving Americans with younger onset Alzheimer's without access to vital programs and services. The Younger-Onset Alzheimer's Disease Act would address this disparity, and it would ensure that these individuals have access to things like nutritional services, supportive services, and respite care through the National Family Caregiver Support Program.

Of course, it is also essential that we continue to work toward a cure for this heartbreaking disease. As a member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I have worked with Labor, Health and Human Services Subcommittee Chairman BLUNT and others to provide resources for crucial Alzheimer's research.

In fact, with the passage of the Labor-H bill last year, we surpassed the \$2 billion milestone when it comes to Alzheimer's research. That means we are making sure NIH has the funding it needs to continue its work and to help to support the work of others.

I was recently very proud to welcome to West Virginia Dr. Marie Bernard. She is the Deputy Director of the National Institute on Aging at NIH. She came to West Virginia University, where we visited the Rockefeller Neuroscience Institute, which will be opening soon—actually, I think in about 10 days.

We spent the day learning more about the innovative and groundbreaking work being done there. Dr. Bernard shared with the Institutes' faculty students and staff the opportunities this increased funding can offer to this field of research at West Virginia University.

It is easy to get discouraged when you hear about a once-promising clinical trial not moving forward—which

was the news just 2 weeks ago. They were moving forward with the clinical trial medication, and they had to stop the trial because they weren't getting satisfactory results—or when we learn that another person we know was diagnosed with the disease or when a cure really does seem so far away.

Hearing the passion in Dr. Bernard's voice for the work she has dedicated her life to and seeing the excitement and hope in the eyes of the students who listened to her, the young researchers, well, that was proof to me that we are making progress and an illustration of the will and determination that exists to continue making process.

I share that will and determination, and I will continue to work for the day when a patient and their families can more easily receive an early assessment and diagnosis, for the day when, following such a diagnosis, they routinely receive an individual care plan to help guide them, for the day when Alzheimer's patients of all ages are able to access the Older Americans Act support services but best yet, of course, the day when we can celebrate the first person cured of Alzheimer's disease.

I think this is a mission for me in loving memory of both of my parents who fought hard through the diagnosis, but in the end, for those of you who have been exposed to this through your own families, it is a losing battle, a sad battle, a tough battle, and an emotionally and financially draining battle.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to make all of this and so much more a reality of those living with Alzheimer's and those who care and love them.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

MUELLER REPORT

Mr. CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. President. I rise today to discuss Special Counsel Robert Mueller's recent report, which is titled "The Report on the Investigation into Russia's Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election."

The Mueller investigation was authorized to ensure a full and thorough investigation of the Russian Government's efforts to interfere in the 2016 Presidential election, as well as any links and/or coordination between the Russian Government and individuals associated with the campaign of Donald Trump.

Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein said, when appointing the special counsel:

[T]he public interest requires me to place this investigation under the authority of a person who exercises a degree of independence from the normal chain of command. . . . I am confident that [Special Counsel Mueller] will follow the facts, apply the law, and reach a just result.

I encourage all Americans to read the redacted version of the Mueller report and draw their own conclusions. The report lays out in stark detail Russia's

attack on our country before and during our 2016 elections.

The special counsel rightly concluded that the Russian Government interfered in the 2016 Presidential election in a sweeping and systematic fashion.

In January 2018, I issued a report on behalf of the Democrats on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee titled "Putin's Asymmetric Assault on Democracy in Russia, and Europe: Its Implications on U.S. National Security." That report outlines some of the same tactics used by Russia and Europe that the Mueller report identifies were used in our 2016 elections. Mr. Putin has waged war against democracy.

The Mueller report concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 Presidential election principally through two operations. First, a Russian entity carried out a social media campaign that favored Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump and disparaged Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton; second, a Russian intelligence service conducted computer intrusion operations against entities, employees, and volunteers working on the Clinton campaign and then released stolen documents.

The investigation also identified numerous links between the Russian Government and the Trump campaign. When discussing the Mueller report, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein recently said: "There was overwhelming evidence that Russian operatives hacked American computers and defrauded American citizens, and that is only the tip of the iceberg of a comprehensive Russian strategy to influence elections, promote social discord, and undermine America, just like they do in many other countries."

The Director of National Intelligence testified before the Senate in January that "even as Russia faces a weakening economy, the Kremlin is stepping up its campaign to divide Western political and security institutions and undermine the post-WWII international order. We expect Russia will continue to wage its information war against democracies and to use social media to attempt to divide our societies." We expect that Russia will continue to wage its information war against democracies and to use social media to attempt to divide our societies.

The special counsel fulfilled his mandate to fully investigate both criminal acts surrounding the 2016 elections, as well as efforts to obstruct this critical investigation. Let me be clear that President Trump has consistently taken steps to deny Russia's involvement in tampering in our elections, resisted efforts to hold Russia accountable, besmirched the reputation of the special counsel while trying to dismiss him or willfully impeding his investigation, and repeatedly attacked the integrity of our intelligence and law enforcement Agencies. Despite the President's egregious behavior, the special counsel's work has resulted in dozens of indictments and numerous convictions and guilty pleas.

Several legal cases and investigations are still ongoing. Let me remind my colleagues that while the special counsel has delivered its final report, there are several ongoing Federal investigations and criminal trials, including those publicly known in the Southern District of New York and in Washington, DC.

Congress must now fulfill its oversight obligations under the Constitution. In order to prevent future attacks on our country and stem abuses of power, we must review a complete copy of the report as soon as possible and hear direct testimony from Special Counsel Mueller.

The Mueller report laid out numerous disturbing episodes where behavior by President Trump may have constituted obstruction of justice. The report stated:

"If we had confidence after a thorough investigation of the facts that the President clearly did not commit obstruction of justice, we would so state. Based on the facts and the applicable legal standards, however, we are unable to reach that judgment. The evidence we obtained about the President's actions and intent presents difficult issues that prevent us from conclusively determining that no criminal conduct occurred."

Indeed, the report stated that "the President's efforts to influence the investigation were mostly unsuccessful, but that is largely because the persons who surrounded the President declined to carry out orders or accede to his requests."

Congress should therefore closely examine the President's behavior, keeping in mind the President's obligations to fully execute the laws and preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution. Members of Congress took an oath as well to support the Constitution before taking office. The American public now deserves to hear directly from Special Counsel Robert Mueller through the relevant House and Senate committees.

Congress still has the ability to make a judgment on the obstruction of justice. Congress must now fulfill its oversight function under the Constitution and do all we can to prevent future attacks on our country and to stem abuses of power and corruption.

Congress has an obligation to understand the report fully and respond in such a way to prevent such attacks from happening in the future. This should involve prompt and thorough hearings in both the House and Senate.

Here are some areas where the Senate should consider legislative action.

First, if an American is approached by a foreign entity about involvement in an American election, that American should have certain responsibilities to immediately notify appropriate law enforcement agencies. I think many of us thought that was probably already the law.

Second, legislation should be considered to protect our elections from foreign interference by imposing appropriate responsibility on social media platforms and amending our election