

that her cancer has not returned. Lindsey is worried that if the Affordable Care Act is repealed or overturned in court, she could lose her healthcare coverage because of a lifetime maximum, or she could be charged more because she has a preexisting condition.

Just recently, I met with Grace in Green Bay. Grace is 15 years old, and she has been living with type 1 diabetes since she was just 2 years old. In order to manage her disease, she needs insulin and various other medical supplies that cost \$1,500 per month. Right now those supplies are covered by her family's insurance, but Grace understands that, without the Affordable Care Act, her insurance company would again have the power to charge her more or deny her coverage because her diabetes is a preexisting condition, and she could also be at risk of reaching her lifetime limit.

Grace and her mom are worried about the Trump administration's lawsuit to ask the court to strike down the Affordable Care Act. She is worried—they are worried—about Republican attempts to eliminate protections for people with preexisting conditions, and they know that President Trump has no plan to protect people with preexisting conditions. He never has, and I suspect he never will.

The House recently passed a resolution that calls on the Trump administration to reverse its position on repealing the entire Affordable Care Act. Last year I heard several Senate Republicans promise to protect people with preexisting health conditions. More than one of my new Republican colleagues campaigned on it in 2018. Here is their chance to prove it. Let's vote on this resolution in the Senate so every Senator in this body can be on record protecting healthcare for people with preexisting conditions. It is time. It is time for Senate Republicans to take a stand against President Trump's sabotage so we can start working in a bipartisan way to expand coverage and lower healthcare costs.

As I have said in this Chamber many times before, the people of Wisconsin want both parties in Congress to work together and to make things better by making healthcare more affordable and taking on rising prescription drug costs. I heard from countless Wisconsinites who are struggling to afford the prescription medication that they need to live, and prices keep going up year after year.

Jackie from Muskego was diagnosed with an incurable blood cancer in August of 2015. She takes a drug called REVCLIMID for her cancer, and her medication costs her up to \$21,000 per year just to stay alive.

Since the beginning of 2017, Celgene has increased the price of REVCLIMID by nearly 25 percent.

President Trump campaigned on lowering the cost of prescription drugs, but so far we are not seeing any results. It has been all talk. Instead, with his tax bill, President Trump gave drug

companies a huge corporate tax break as they continued to increase the cost of prescription drugs.

Pfizer, for example, got an estimated 11 billion dollars in tax breaks. Then, they announced that they were raising the list price of 41 of their prescription drugs that they manufacture. You know, it is time to take action, to hold these drug companies accountable, and it is why this week I am introducing a bipartisan plan with Senator BRAUN of Indiana to require basic transparency and accountability for drug companies that increase their list prices.

Drug corporations are making prescription drugs more and more expensive with no systematic transparency for taxpayers. Meanwhile, American families, taxpayers, and our healthcare system are footing the bill for these price increases, and then are forced to pay more still at the pharmacy for the medications they need.

We need greater transparency. We need greater accountability for drug corporations that are jacking up the costs for families in need of affordable, lifesaving treatments.

I wanted to thank Senator BRAUN for working with me on this effort, as well as Senator MURKOWSKI for joining this effort, because both Democrats and Republicans agree that prescription drug costs are too high in this country. So let's work together to bring relief to American families.

I strongly believe that if both parties look past the partisan debate in Washington, we can find common ground on solutions that work for the American people, and I stand ready to work with any of my colleagues in the Senate on solutions that help to lower costs and expand healthcare coverage for our constituents.

I yield back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

#### MUELLER REPORT

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I want to address my colleagues with three different subjects. The first one is very, very short. It is things that are being talked about right now, particularly in the other body.

Many in the media seem very, very unhappy with the results of the Mueller report, or they might be embarrassed that the world knows that they sold a bunch of snake oil for the past 2 years, talking for 2 years about collusion with Russia, and now after the Mueller report has come out, they find out that the jig is up.

I hope the media will pursue the origins of the Russian collusion investigation with the very same vigor over the last 2 years that they pursued the collusion narrative. It will go a long way, then, to restore the media's damaged credibility, and knowing how all of this started will help us to prevent such a fiasco from ever happening again.

#### MIDWEST FLOODING

Mr. President, for the third or fourth time, I want to visit with my colleagues about the flooding in the Mid-

west and particularly my State of Iowa. This is ongoing flooding in the Midwest and particularly Iowa, and it is not going to end for a while.

Flooding on the Mississippi has gotten worse, as flood protection has not been adequate in several areas of Scott County along the Mississippi to deal with historic water levels.

Parts of the downtown area in Davenport are now inundated with floodwaters. This picture is a perfect example of it. I think you probably have seen this on television quite a lot. This area includes many businesses and homes. It appears that this will be the most damaging flood in Davenport's history. Unfortunately, the National Weather Service reports that this week's forecast is filled with rain for the whole of our State of Iowa, which could cause additional flooding or re-flooding throughout the State.

The Missouri River could rise 2 to 4 feet, depending on location and tributary flows. As of right now, most of southwest Iowa is without even minimal flood protection due to the breached, overtopped, or compromised levees caused by the unique weather system that brought record flows down the lower Missouri River earlier this year. The Army Corps of Engineers is working to fix the large breaches, but communities are threatened by even minor rain.

This recovery will be long, and Federal resources will continue to be needed as the restoration and the rebuilding that are necessary take place. I am committed to continuing to work at the Federal level to help Iowa and our neighboring States through this whole process.

In April, the Environment and Public Works Committee held a field hearing on the Midwest floods chaired by Senator ERNST of Iowa, and she and I, along with other Senators, had a chance to question the Army Corps of Engineers on its management of the Missouri River.

For years, I have worked with several of my congressional colleagues to make flood control the No. 1 priority of the Corps in its management of the Missouri River. Protection of life and property should take precedence over recreation and experiments that may or may not help endangered species and the other purposes of the river identified in the Army Corps of Engineers' master manual.

From 1979 until the changes in that manual in 2004, the manual stated that the No. 1 priority was flood control; in other words, protecting life and property was more important than anything else. Changes to the manual made in the year 2004 made it so that the Corps must consider other purposes for the river. They have to balance these other purposes with flood control.

Since 2004, there has been a dramatic increase in flood frequency and flood-water levels. The river's flood-carrying capacity has greatly changed, and

there were no natural events before 2011 that could have caused these changes.

I reiterate—life safety and property should be the No. 1 priority of the Corps in its management of the Missouri River.

My colleagues and I have also heard complaints about the unresponsive Corps and the lack of communication with local residents about the floods. After the 2011 floods, some communications were enhanced; however, a lack of updated data and communication was still one of the most common complaints.

As a direct result of meetings with local levee sponsors, homeowners, small businesses, farmers, and other stakeholders, a group of 10 Senators requested that the Corps begin sending email updates to all local sponsors on a weekly basis starting within 30 days. These updates should include snowpack levels, available flood control storage in the Missouri River Mainstem Reservoir System, cubic feet per second release rates at the system's dams, and flow rates to key tributaries, as well as current National Weather Service precipitation forecasts and the spring flood outlook.

Today, the Environment and Public Works Committee held a hearing on oversight of the Public Works Program. My colleagues on the committee are asking Corps leadership about flood control on the Missouri River and what emergency resources are necessary to help the Corps with the recovery process.

With over 100 miles of levees needing repair, we know that additional resources will be needed. We also know that the State of Iowa, Iowa communities, and individual Iowans will need assistance from programs such as the community development block grant and Economic Development Administration disaster accounts.

I have been working with my colleagues on the Senate Appropriations Committee to ensure that critical funding for Iowa is provided through the emergency supplemental appropriations. I filed an amendment to the disaster bill, along with my colleagues from the Midwest, to help farmers who have lost an estimated \$17.3 million to \$34 million of their on-farm stored corn and soybeans. My amendment would allow impacted midwestern farmers to address agricultural losses not covered by crop insurance or other programs. I will continue to provide the Appropriations Committee with damage and need assessments for recovery in Iowa as we get further clarity on the actual numbers.

Furthermore, several Midwest Senators and I introduced the Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2019. This bill includes a series of disaster tax relief provisions that will help American families and businesses recover from the terrible disasters that have occurred so far in 2019, including the Midwest flooding.

The disaster tax relief provisions we have worked on will reduce penalties

and make it easier for people to access retirement funds so that individuals and families can get back on their feet faster and rebuild their lives. They also make it easier for disaster victims to claim personal casualty losses, and they suspend certain limitations on charitable contributions to encourage more donations for disaster relief. For businesses affected by the disasters, this tax relief is available to help them retain employees while the businesses get back up and running.

Iowa Governor Reynolds and her administration are working closely with FEMA on adding Scott County to the existing disaster declaration and on other key needs, such as housing assistance for communities in southwest Iowa that have very few existing options for people to return to or stay in those communities.

I have talked to Acting Administrator Gaynor of FEMA about this matter and urged him to promptly work on getting this much needed assistance to those in need.

Governor Reynolds has also established a flood recovery advisory board to coordinate flood recovery and rebuilding efforts across Federal, State, and local levels of government. As an ex-officio member, I am looking forward to participating in these meetings to ensure that the Federal Government is offering needed assistance to Iowans affected by the flooding.

This isn't a case of our doing something new through the Federal Government for people hurt by natural disasters; this is a case of following policy that has been part of the Federal Government for several decades that the Federal Government is an insurer of last resort for natural disasters that can't be anticipated and appropriate insurance provided in advance.

So I expect that the Federal Government will do exactly what we have done for decades and do it in a non-partisan way, almost in a consensus way, as we have in the past, and replenish these funds that provide the money for this disaster.

I happen to appreciate the stamina and determination of Iowans in fighting these natural disasters. Many of these people I am referring to have a long recovery ahead of them. This Iowa spirit will help us pull through these difficult times stronger and better, just as we have in the past.

#### PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Madam President, on another matter—relatively shorter compared to what I just said about flooding—millions of Americans rely on lifesaving prescription medicine.

I am here to report to my colleagues what Secretary Azar announced earlier today about making available information on the price of drugs on television advertising that you see so often about drugs—all kinds of information but not much information about what a drug costs, and the public ought to know that.

Americans across the country expect and depend upon breakthrough drugs

to live longer, healthier lives; however, these miracle medicines won't save lives if people can't afford to take them.

As chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, I have been taking a close look at the drug supply chain in the United States. I am working to lower drug prices.

By the way, this is being handled in not only a bipartisan way in our committee, but I believe this will also end up being very bicameral. The Finance Committee has held a series of hearings on this issue. So far, we have heard from economists, executives from the pharmaceutical industry, and pharmacy benefit managers. I have also introduced a handful of bipartisan bills to increase competition. These bills are bipartisan, and now we are finding they are even bicameral. In fact, the House of Representatives tends to be ahead of us here in the Senate on these issues, so there is bipartisan momentum going to help us accomplish our goals.

Perhaps more importantly—and I don't think he gets enough credit for this—we also have President Trump leading the battle from the White House, based on a speech he made in June last year and based on several steps Secretary Azar has taken to carry out the edict from President Trump to lower the prices of prescription drugs. What was announced today is the most recent step in that direction. I am going to get to that in just a minute.

There is one common denominator contributing to the high prices Americans pay for prescription drugs. It boils down to one word—secrecy. What Secretary Azar did today is attacking that secrecy. There is zero price transparency in the U.S. healthcare system.

In our system of free enterprise, competition and transparency drives innovation. It drives higher quality, and it lowers costs. Americans have to hunt for a good bargain. You can bet your bottom dollar, Iowans know where to fill up their gasoline tanks, and they do it, in most instances, I will bet, at the most affordable place. When there is no transparency, there is no price comparison. That is a big reason there is sticker shock at the pharmacy counter, and American consumers and taxpayers are of course paying the price.

The pharmaceutical industry spends a boatload on direct-to-consumer advertising, which is to the tune of \$6 billion a year. That is probably why the average American today sees nine prescription drug ads every day. The Food and Drug Administration regulates these ads for truthfulness and requires the disclosure of side effects, but the industry however is not required to disclose to consumers how much drugs cost. Now that is about to change, and that happened this morning.

I am glad Secretary Azar is making good on President Trump's commitment to lower drug prices for Americans that he announced in a speech last