

not ecumenical, and they are not very much into self-examination. They are not interested in the debt now that Republicans are complicit.

But before we make this about Republicans, remember that there is not a Democrat in Washington who cares about the debt. The difference between the parties is that the Democrats are honest. They are very honest. They don't care about the debt. Look, they are all over the stage, falling all over themselves, trying to give free healthcare to illegal aliens. They are all on the stage trying to talk about giving Medicare for All when we can't even afford the Medicare for Some. So Democrats don't care. The country should know that Democrats do not care about the debt. But here is the problem: The only opposition party we have in the country is the Republican Party, and they don't care either. They just come home, and they are dishonest and tell you they care, and then they vote for a monstrosity.

Today's vote will be a vote for a monstrosity, an abomination, the ability to borrow money for over 2 years until guess what intervenes. Why are we going to wait 2 years with no limits on borrowing? There is this little thing called an election. They don't want to be in public voting to raise the debt ceiling an unlimited amount or a vast amount again, so they are putting it off to beyond the election. Both parties are complicit, though. Nobody wants to vote on this again.

People talk about draining the swamp. You can't drain the swamp unless you are willing to cut the size and scope of government. That is the swamp. The swamp is this morass that is millions of people up here organized to involve themselves in the economy. Most of them could disappear from government, and no one would notice. The only thing you would notice is less money coming to Washington and more money remaining in the States.

It is a little bit of what happened with the tax cut. But in addition to the tax cut returning to people their own money, we should also quit spending money we don't have up here. During the tax cut, I, for one, said: You have to cut spending. I offered amendments during the tax cut to cut spending. Do you know what happened? I got four votes. Four people in the Senate cared about the debt on that particular vote.

After we passed the tax cut, there is a provision that says there will be automatic spending cuts if the taxes were to bring in less revenue. Guess what. I forced a vote to keep that rule in place. I got nine votes because most people don't care.

No Democrat cares about the debt. The Republicans falsely tell you they care, and the vast majority will vote for this monstrosity today.

Today, I will offer an alternative. Some say: Well, you conservatives won't vote to raise the debt ceiling at all, and we will go bankrupt, there will be turmoil in the markets, and it will

be a disaster. So what I am offering for conservatives today is that we will raise the debt ceiling under a couple of conditions. We will raise the debt ceiling if you adopt, in advance, significant spending cuts, caps on spending, and a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution.

See, here is the road, and here is, I guess, the beginning and the end of the dishonesty around here. If we had a vote today, we would have some people saying: Why don't we vote on the balanced budget amendment?

We all love to vote for it. We don't really mean it. We don't really care about balancing the budget. We are not for it because we are Big Government Republicans. But we love to vote for the balanced budget amendment because I can go home and tell people: Yeah, I voted for the really crazy, monstrous budget deal to expand the debt, but I also voted for the balanced budget amendment.

Well, here is our deal. We don't want to vote on the balanced budget amendment; we want adoption of the balanced budget amendment. So if you will cut spending, if you will cap spending, and if you will pass a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution, I will vote to raise the debt ceiling—but only if those things are done.

People say: Well, if we don't raise the debt ceiling without any reform, the country—the markets will go into turmoil. Well, guess what. We bring in \$3 trillion, and we spend \$4 trillion. What does that mean? We can pay for \$3 trillion on a daily basis without borrowing. So if tomorrow we didn't raise the debt ceiling, what would happen? We would spend \$3 trillion. Every Social Security check could go out, every soldier could be paid, and everybody on Medicare could be taken care of. That is probably about it, to tell you the truth, because we spend too much damn money. We spend money we don't have. But you could provide the essentials to people—Social Security, Medicare, pay our soldiers, and maybe a few other things—if you just spent what came in.

Isn't that what we should do? Isn't that what responsible people do? Does any American family routinely spend a third—25 percent more than comes in? Does anybody spend \$4 for every \$3 that comes in? Nobody does that. Nobody in their right mind does that, but your government does it. And who is at fault? Both parties. They are complicit. They scratch each other's backs. They both are terrible on the deficit. Both parties are bad. Both parties are ruining our country.

My amendment is called cut, cap, and balance—cuts spending, puts caps back in place that they can't exceed, and says that if we vote now on a balanced budget amendment and if it passes and if it is sent to the States, then we would raise the debt ceiling.

Most people around here don't want any linkage. It is not that they will just complain that my budgetary re-

forms are too harsh; they will complain that they don't want any. So there won't be any alternative. There won't be someone saying: Well, those are too much, and we would rather have just a little bit. No, they don't want any restraint. The budget monstrosity, the deal, the abomination we will vote on today will have no limits—no dollar limits.

I was arguing this last week on another particular issue, and from across the country, I got reamed by the left-wing mob who says: Why are you doing is this? Why couldn't you do it on another matter?

We do it on every matter. Those of us who are fiscally conservative are saying that we shouldn't spend money we don't have. I am doing it again this week, saying that we should not spend money we don't have, that it is irresponsible, and that we are eroding the very foundation that has made America great.

I will vote against this budget deal. I will present cut, cap, and balance. Cut, cap, and balance is a responsible way to raise the debt ceiling by cutting spending, capping spending, and also passing a balanced budget amendment to the Constitution. I hope my colleagues will consider that.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. LANKFORD). The Senator from South Dakota.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I love the month of August, and I think I have always loved the month of August going back to the time when I was a kid because, obviously, growing up in South Dakota, August is a great month of the year. It is hot. There are a lot of activities. Of course, it is the month before or, in some cases, it is the month of returning to school, but it is a time in which there are lots of things going on in my home State of South Dakota, and especially since becoming a Member of Congress, I really love August.

I head back home to South Dakota almost every weekend to meet with South Dakotans, but August is wonderful and different for two reasons. One reason is, August gives us an extended work period, a time when we get a chance to visit the farthest corners of our State, places that might be hard to visit on just a weekend—places such as Bison, Milbank, Clear Lake, Huron, and Mobridge. I get to talk to people who make their living in production agriculture in some of the most rural parts of South Dakota. There is nothing more valuable than getting to talk to these South Dakotans firsthand and to hear the challenges they face and what we can do here in Washington to help out—not to mention how wonderful it is to spend time in these beautiful parts of our State. If you haven't taken in the rugged beauty of the Badlands or the rivers and prairies of Central South Dakota, then you are missing out.

The other thing I like about heading back to South Dakota in August is

that it is fair season—the Sioux Empire Fair, the Turner County Fair, the Brown County Fair, Central States Fair, Yankton Riverboat Days, and powwows in Tribal communities around the State. The list literally goes on. You would be hard-pressed to find better events, better people, or better food. I often joke that in the month of August, I am basically eating my way across South Dakota: ice cream at the fair in Parker, pork sandwiches with the pork producers, milkshakes at Dakotafest, cheese curds at the State fair, and I can go on.

I vividly remember the year I had a Tubby Burger plus a big fries, plus to go with it a malt at the Brown County Fair, and got up early the next morning to run the 5K at Riverboat Days in Yankton. Needless to say, it was not my best run time, but it was worth it for the Tubby Burger.

There is really nothing better than a South Dakota road trip. Our State has so much to offer, an incredible range of scenery, from rolling prairies to the heights of Black Elk Peak, and hundreds of miles of wide-open country. There is nothing better than a summer afternoon driving down a South Dakota highway. You feel like you can see, literally, forever.

We have an incredible number of outdoor opportunities, from fishing and hunting to hiking, biking, rock climbing, water sports. You name it; in South Dakota, we have it.

South Dakota is an affordable place for families to visit as well. You are not going to break the bank on meals or lodging. Of course, we have unforgettable road trip stops like the Corn Palace in Mitchell or Wall Drug. Make sure, if you get to Wall Drug, that you grab a homemade doughnut or a glass of free ice water and take a picture on Instagram with the giant jackalope outside.

As for South Dakotans, well, they are the nicest people you are ever going to meet. A South Dakota road trip is worth it for the people alone. In addition to the wonderful memories I made traveling across the State as an adult, I cherish my memories of the trips to the Black Hills as a child with my parents and siblings. We used to go out there for Labor Day, stay in this little non-air-conditioned cabin, and enjoy the outdoors. We would hike and visit the caves, go to Mount Rushmore, or visit the lake.

I still love visiting Sylvan Lake in the Black Hills. I loved being there with my parents and siblings, and I love taking my daughters there on trips like the ones I took growing up. Nobody who visits South Dakota should miss the Black Hills. I am not sure there is a more beautiful place on Earth—the interplay of light, shadow on the trees and rocks late on a summer afternoon, the endless South Dakota sky reflected in the clear blue of Sylvan Lake. People in Washington, DC, don't know what the Milky Way looks like on a clear night in the Black

Hills or on the prairies of South Dakota. It is as if the sky had been carpeted with millions of diamonds.

I am lucky to be a son of South Dakota. I am looking forward to getting out of Washington, DC, this week and heading back to my home State of South Dakota for some of the best weeks of the year.

Brown County, if you are listening to this, please save me a Tubby Burger.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

MEDICARE FOR ALL

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, over the past several months, we have heard a lot of talk about Medicare for All. Its Democratic supporters claim this is the panacea that will solve all of America's healthcare woes. They say it will guarantee every person's access to healthcare and simplify our healthcare system, but it doesn't take much effort to see the flaws in their proposal and in their argument—something we are obligated to do, to examine these proposals to see whether they will work or not.

Our Democratic friends proudly own the fact that Medicare for All would completely end employer-based health insurance as we know it. We heard that a lot last night during the debates of the Democratic candidates running for President. It would literally force every American into one government-run plan modeled after our current Medicare system.

Part of the problem is, seniors have paid into the Medicare system for many years, and we know it is on a path to insolvency unless Congress does something. Medicare for All would only make that worse, expanding it to every eligible American.

According to a Kaiser poll released yesterday, more than three-quarters of Americans favor employer-sponsored health insurance, and 86 percent of people with employer coverage rate their insurance positively. That would include, again, as we heard last night, many union members who have been part of the collective bargaining agreement with their employers, with management, to negotiate outstanding, quality private health insurance. That would go away under Medicare for All.

We know that about 83-percent of the people polled support our current Medicare system for our seniors, and a whopping 95 percent of people with Medicare coverage are happy with it, but if Medicare for All becomes the law of the land, those numbers would plummet because Medicare would be unrecognizable to the seniors who paid into the fund and who have earned that coverage.

Families would lose all freedom when it comes to making their own healthcare choices. You see a government-selected doctor at a government-selected facility. We know what that looks like in the United Kingdom and in Canada, where people have to wait in long lines just to get seen by their doctor, much less elective surgery. You get the coverage the government says you deserve at the time, when the government says you can have it. It would completely hollow out the existing Medicare Program and inject unfathomable instability into America's healthcare system.

If you get past all of that, which is hard to do, you certainly will not be able to stomach the price. Medicare for All, it is estimated, would cost taxpayers \$32 trillion over the first 10 years alone. Now, credit BERNIE SANDERS, our colleague from Vermont. He is honest enough to acknowledge that he is going to have to raise taxes on the middle class to pay for that, but \$32 trillion is a lot of money, especially when our current debt exceeds \$20 trillion already and is growing. When it comes to how they would pay for it, the only answer we hear from everybody other than BERNIE SANDERS is, "Let's just tax the rich."

This is part of their usual talking points and part of the Democratic Party's incredible sprint to the left and their shocking embrace of a socialist agenda.

We saw the start of their move toward socialized medicine in 2009 with ObamaCare. We famously recall President Obama trying to reassure people that if you like your healthcare plan, you can keep it, and if you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor—none of which proved to be true.

Now Democrats want to make these extravagant promises about Medicare for All, which we know they cannot keep. It is clear ObamaCare was just the beginning. Medicare for All, or the public option, so to speak, which some people try to tout as an alternative, is nothing but a government competition for private health insurance, and you can't beat the Federal Government, especially when it is paid for by Federal tax dollars. That is a march toward the elimination of private health insurance, including that provided through your employer, which now benefits about 180 million Americans.

Last night, we saw candidates defend these radical policies during the Democratic debate. Two of our Senate colleagues who are running for President sparred over what another candidate called "fairytale" promises. They fought to defend their plan to remove all choice from Americans' healthcare. They tried to convince their fellow Democrats and the American people that they are writing a check that, if elected, they can cash.

We know that is not true. The American people are not going to be fooled. They don't want socialized medicine; they don't want to run up government