

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

spending; they certainly don't want to have to pay \$32 trillion in additional taxes to pay for it; and they certainly don't want Washington bureaucrats dictating their families' healthcare choices.

In a speech last week, the Administrator of the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, Seema Verma, spoke about these radical healthcare ideas. She said: "These proposals are the largest threats to the American healthcare system."

Let me say that again. Seema Verma, head of CMS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, called these proposals "the largest threats" to America's healthcare system. So you better believe we will keep fighting to resist this socialist agenda and this evermore liberal wish list.

BIPARTISAN BUDGET ACT OF 2019

Mr. President, on another matter, we will soon be able to vote on a bipartisan, 2-year budget agreement to provide some certainty and stability to the Federal Government and Federal spending. The President and Speaker PELOSI have reached this deal in order to avoid the possibility of another government shutdown and instead leave time and space for a wide-ranging debate on our government spending habits.

I know the Presiding Officer believes as I do; that it is past time to have a genuine, far-ranging debate about government spending habits that is not just focused on discretionary spending, which is what this budget caps deal does, but on all the money the Federal Government spends, which includes the 70 percent of spending which is on autopilot, which this deal does not discuss or deal with.

I will be the first to admit this budget agreement isn't perfect. It never is. Anything negotiated means both sides have to give up a little bit in order to find common ground. As I indicated, I certainly wish it were more aggressive. I wish it did something to deal with our entitlement programs as we continue to face growing deficits, but I am glad to see that the agreement offsets roughly a 1-year increase for non-defense discretionary spending above current law and allows our government to be funded on time and on budget.

It also avoids 30 poison pill policy riders on everything from taxpayer funding for abortion to immigration law, keeping them from reaching the President's desk.

Above all, this agreement delivers on our most fundamental responsibility, which is to provide for our common defense. When our friend, the senior Senator from Oklahoma, first came here, he said: I am a conservative, which means there are really two things that take priority when it comes to the Federal Government. One is national defense, and the other is infrastructure. He said everything else comes below that on the priority list. I found a lot of wisdom in those words. Providing for the common defense is the most impor-

tant thing Congress does, along with the administration.

We know under the previous administration, the Pentagon and our national defense were underfunded dramatically. It operated without any kind of stability or predictability, and this took a serious toll on our military readiness.

After nearly a decade of neglect, President Trump and Senate Republicans are working to rebuild our military and rebuild that readiness and modernize our force.

Let's look at the Army Future Vertical Lift—or FVL—as an example of why this investment is so very important. FVL is a cross-functional team within Army Futures Command headquarters in Austin, TX, that aims to develop two new helicopters for the Army in the 2020s. These next-generation aircraft will replace aging military helicopters and provide our servicemembers with the capabilities they need today and tomorrow.

But right now, these programs are progressing without timely funding. It is hard to make plans when you don't know how the money is going to flow. Without a budget deal and on-time appropriations, the Army has no choice but to significantly delay these programs for years to come, meaning that the Army will continue to operate helicopters built in the seventies and eighties.

The same goes with our artillery. Those years of underfunding have allowed Russia and China to surpass our capabilities in a number of areas, including long-range precision fire. In this and other areas, the military must develop longer range weapons to provide an advantage over our adversaries and maintain our qualitative edge.

As a newer program, the Army would not be able to continue research, development, and testing under a continuing resolution or without a budget deal, putting us another year behind in modernizing our force in an era of great power competition. That means China and Russia continue apace while we are slow to try to catch up.

That is why this deal is so important. It provides stable and reliable funding so that our military leaders can plan for the future and provide for the common defense.

Our newly confirmed Defense Secretary, Mark Esper, talked about this at length when testifying before the Armed Services Committee a couple of weeks ago. He talked about the Department of Defense receiving funding on time last year and said that it really allowed us to accelerate the readiness gains we have made to advance our modernization efforts and to do all of the things the national defense strategy tells us we need to do.

You would think there would be broad bipartisan support for providing America's military with the necessary resources to keep the American people safe. Somehow, though, some of our Members believe that this critical national security mission is optional.

Unfortunately, there are some in our midst who look to reduce military funding at every possible turn. Fortunately, we have a President who shares our commitment to national security. Thanks to the Trump administration's tough negotiating, this deal provides the stability the Pentagon needs, including critical investments in military readiness. Compared to current law, it provides a larger increase in discretionary funding for defense than nondefense discretionary programs and would allow us to regain the ground lost under the Obama administration.

I appreciate the President's work, along with that of the House and the Senate, to deliver a budget deal that supports America's military, and I look forward to supporting this agreement later today and certainly later this week.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes.

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

AMENDING SECTION 327 OF THE ROBERT T. STAFFORD DISASTER RELIEF AND EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE ACT TO CLARIFY THAT NATIONAL URBAN SEARCH AND RESCUE RESPONSE SYSTEM TASK FORCES MAY INCLUDE FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 639 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

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

The clerk will report the bill by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (HR. 639) to amend section 327 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act to clarify that National Urban Search and Rescue Response System task forces may include Federal employees.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the bill.

Mr. CORNYN. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed and the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

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

The bill (H.R. 639) was ordered to a third reading, was read the third time, and passed.