

made the 9/11 Victim Compensation Fund permanent. This ensures that all those who responded to the terror attacks and their families have peace of mind and first-rate healthcare.

HEALTHCARE

Mr. President, I want to turn to the topic of the overall healthcare debate that we are having in this country. For the past several weeks, I have been home in Wyoming, as you have been home in North Dakota, and I listened to the people I am so privileged to represent, many of whom I have been privileged to treat as their doctor. Of course we discussed their healthcare. As a doctor, I want to make care better and more affordable.

Folks in Wyoming actually know me first as a doctor, so many of them call me Dr. BARRASSO or JOHN as opposed to Senator BARRASSO. People back home think of their doctors as members of the family, as friends, neighbors who live down the street, who go to the same church, whose kids go to the same schools. The local hospital in Casper is right in the center of town. People don't want that to change. They want the same people giving them care, but they want it at lower costs.

This holds true for the rest of the country. People are rightly concerned. Americans worry that they won't be able to pay for healthcare. Republicans are listening to these concerns, and we are focused on lowering the out-of-pocket costs for people's healthcare. That is why we ended the unfair Obamacare tax penalty. We ended that. We recently banned the costly drug price gag clauses so people could know what things actually cost and what the best deal was for them.

Now we are focused on ending something called surprise medical billing. It happens. You get huge medical bills that you don't expect and you can't easily pay. We are also moving more measures to lower drug prices that people actually have to pay.

Here is the problem: Democrats are rejecting all of our efforts. They are proposing costly healthcare—to me, schemes. The Washington Post reports that five of the seven Democratic Senators who are Members of this body and who are running for President have backed a one-size-fits-all approach. It is a government-run plan they call Medicare for All. The Washington Post reports that a majority of House Democrats also back it. They have actually cosponsored it. They want it to become the law.

The Democrats' proposal would take away on-the-job health insurance from 180 million working Americans. Let me repeat that. What the Democrats are proposing with their so-called Medicare for All—a one-size-fits-all proposal for healthcare in this country—would take away the healthcare that people get on the job that they earned on the job. There are 180 million people who get their insurance that way in America. The cost of their proposal is \$32 trillion—that is “trillion” with a “t.” It is

an astronomical amount of money. Of course, they have to pay for that, as Senator SANDERS has said, by raising taxes on the middle class.

These Democrats clearly aren't focused on helping to lower the costs of care. They are too busy, in my opinion, with plans to destroy health insurance, to destroy union workers' hard-fought insurance benefits, to destroy the current Medicare Program for 60 million seniors, and to destroy the health coverage that people have earned at work. For what? It is all so that government can have complete control over America's healthcare system. We can't afford for that to happen. The Democrats have admitted that their ObamaCare healthcare law has failed. The polling shows that the majority of Americans do not want a one-size-fits-all healthcare plan for them.

Now, remember, when it came to the vote on ObamaCare, congressional Democrats in the House and the Senate promised that the Obama healthcare law would control costs. They actually named it—I think completely misnamed it—the Affordable Care Act. It was the Unaffordable Care Act. What we have seen is that out-of-pocket costs soared and that insurance premiums soared all after the Obama healthcare law was signed. For many Americans, health insurance premiums have doubled since the signing of the Obama healthcare law. Monthly premiums are often more than mortgage payments. This can't stand. This simply can't continue. We cannot trust the Democrats to roll the dice again with the healthcare of the American people.

The Republicans are focused on real reforms—reforms that actually lower costs and reforms that protect patients with preexisting conditions. In July, the Senate's Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions approved a measure to end surprise medical billing. It also includes language to bring down the cost of drugs. As a doctor, I know patients shouldn't stress over forms. When you are sick, you should focus on getting well. Care from an out-of-network provider can result in a big bill—called a surprise medical bill—and it can easily blow an entire family's budget. Patients should really not be pawns in this high-stakes financial chess game, so we are working with President Trump to end this unfair practice of surprise medical billing. It is the right thing to do for patients and for their families.

The Republicans are also making progress on lowering drug costs. We passed a bill I cosponsored to end the drug price gag rule. As a result, patients can always find the lowest priced drug. We are continuing to work with the President on this and other issues.

Still, to make more progress, we need Democratic support and cooperation. The choice is clear—to work together to lower costs without lowering standards or to follow the Democratic Senators who are running for President

and follow the House Democrats who are pushing for a one-size-fits-all, government-run healthcare for America with the loss of choice and the loss of control—all of the concerns that come with a one-size-fits-all, government approach.

It doesn't seem like they are for lowering costs. It seems they are for raising your taxes and taking away your control and your choice. They are not for improving care. They are for increasing and growing the role of government. Remember, the Democrats want to take away health insurance from 180 million Americans—working Americans—people who go to work every day and have earned their health insurance at work.

At the same time, the Democrats who are running for President are promising free healthcare. I was astonished when I heard this from the Democrats. They are promising free healthcare for illegal immigrants. They want to take insurance away from hard-working Americans and give insurance—free—to illegal immigrants.

What kind of proposal is that? Who is being represented with this proposal by these Democratic Senators and other Democrats who are running for President? Who do you think is going to pay for all of this? Why should we pay more to wait longer for worse care?

It is not something Americans want or will tolerate. Instead, let's give patients the care they need from the doctors they choose and at lower costs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I start my remarks tonight by thanking my colleague from Wyoming for his remarks concerning the anniversary of the horror that was September 11, 2001. I join him and all of my colleagues here in recognizing that in the midst of that horror, the American people came together, and we demonstrated the strength, kindness, bravery, and resilience that we have throughout our history.

I, too, remember the victims, their loved ones, as well as all of the brave first responders. I thank all of the men and women of our military who continue to fight against terrorism and who keep us safe, and I remember the lives lost on the battlefield.

OPIOID EPIDEMIC

Mr. President, I also want to take a minute tonight to talk about the importance of there being the continued funding to address our Nation's opioid crisis. As the Senate Appropriations Committee prepares its markup of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, and Related Agencies' fiscal year 2020 budget, I rise to discuss the urgent need for additional funding to combat the fentanyl, heroin, and opioid crisis.

The substance misuse crisis continues to ravage communities in my home State of New Hampshire and all

across our country. People in New Hampshire are doing vital work to address this crisis and get those who are struggling the support they need to get and stay healthy.

Just last month, I visited Moms in Recovery in Lebanon, which is an addiction services program through Dartmouth-Hitchcock that is providing comprehensive care to get pregnant and parenting women the services they need to address substance misuse. In Lebanon, NH, Moms in Recovery offers everything from medication-assisted treatment to group therapy, counseling, outpatient therapy, parenting classes, and more. Providers said that what started as a program for 5 women is now serving 60. It has transformed from a program that just served pregnant women to one that is now serving women after they give birth. It works to help them stabilize their lives and to reengage in our workforce and in our communities.

People in my State are implementing innovative approaches to help their friends and neighbors, and Congress needs to give them the support they need to help save lives.

I have been proud to work with Senator SHAHEEN and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to strengthen support for treatment, recovery, prevention, and law enforcement efforts. This includes having worked to secure more than \$6 billion in the 2018 budget agreement for governmentwide efforts to combat this crisis and to ensure that as the appropriations process progressed, hardest hit States, including the Granite State, were prioritized.

Last year, we also passed the SUPPORT for Patients and Communities Act, which the President signed into law. It included, among many critical priorities, the following: establishing comprehensive opioid recovery centers, expanding access to medication-assisted treatment, and supporting law enforcement in its efforts to curb the shipment of fentanyl through the Postal Service.

Yet nobody in this body should think that our work is anywhere near complete. As the Appropriations Committee considers funding bills for the next fiscal year, I urge my colleagues on the committee to ensure that State opioid response grants, which have been a vital tool in increasing access to treatment, recovery, and prevention, are fully funded. While these grants should be increased, they must, at the very least, be fully funded at the fiscal year 2019 levels.

It is also imperative to continue prioritizing hardest hit States and to give communities additional flexibility to use this funding to address other substances that are being used in conjunction with or instead of opioids. While the vast majority of overdose deaths in New Hampshire still involve opioids, specifically fentanyl, we are seeing substances like crystal methamphetamine emerge as a growing issue. Additional flexibility in funding

can help communities respond to this challenge in realtime.

This crisis didn't begin overnight, and it will not be solved overnight. What we need at the Federal level is a long-term solution and additional certainty so States and communities know they will have stable and consistent Federal funding as they implement strategies and treatment programs that will help save lives.

One important next step would be to pass Senator SHAHEEN's Turn the Tide Act, which is legislation I have cosponsored that would invest \$63 billion in flexible funding over 10 years, support treatment and prevention efforts, and address workforce challenges in the treatment field. This is the kind of long-term, comprehensive approach we should be taking, and I will continue to join with Senator SHAHEEN to push for this bill.

The fentanyl, heroin, and opioid crisis remains the most pressing public health and public safety challenge facing New Hampshire and many other communities across our country, and the biggest mistake anyone could make is in thinking our efforts to address this crisis are close to being done.

I am going to continue to push to ensure that those on the frontlines of this crisis have the support they need. I urge my colleagues to join me so we can make our families, communities, and country healthier and safer so we can help save lives.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

REMEMBERING SEPTEMBER 11TH

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. President, I so enjoy listening to my colleagues as they talk about the issues that are important to them and to the States they represent. It is, indeed, one of those privileges that we in this body enjoy, and many times we take it for granted. Yet today is a day of remembrance. It is a day that we look back and say we ought not take it for granted because there are many in this world who would threaten our freedoms and our liberties.

Earlier this week, I was talking with some of the members of our team, and we were trading stories about where we were on the morning of September 11 and how it affected the way we viewed their place in the world, and their memories, and what their recollections were. Those of us who vividly remember that day still recall an unsettling cascade of emotions. There was shock, confusion, and, finally, dread as we realized we were not, as initially thought, seeing a senseless accident, but that, indeed, we were under attack. As the morning wore on, dread really gave way to fear and panic and, finally, to absolute terror that our loved ones who were in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania and who were in the air, maybe flying home, were among those who were experiencing firsthand what was happening. It was the perfect storm of conflicting media reports and

jammed cell service that made it almost impossible to reach out to people and to ask that question, "Are you OK?" and to hear their voices.

Through the smoke and the blood came a moment of awful clarity. Life would never be the same because we would never again experience life without feeling as if we were a target. The events of September 11 introduced a new generation of Americans to the reality that our country is not and will never be immune to the threat of terror.

Those who were teetering on the edge of adulthood may not have immediately made the connection between global politics and the disaster that was playing out on TV in real time. Yet, by the time terrorists struck that second tower, I think a lot of people really had begun to understand what was happening. Later, they learned that a half a world away, a group of men who referred to themselves as al-Qaida had made it their life's mission to murder Americans. They were doing it to prove a point. Yes, it did leave a mark on this Nation and on our citizens. Younger Americans' memories of that day really are fuzziest, but almost without exception, my staff members remember what they now describe as a sense of national unity rising up in the days following the attacks.

They remember that every house on the street flew an American flag and that every adult they knew stood in a line to give blood. They saw small town first responders load up those firetrucks and emergency vehicles and head to New York.

At the time, they really didn't understand geopolitics, but they did understand fear and suffering because they saw that fear in the eyes of their teachers and in the eyes of the adults who surrounded them; but they also saw the shift that the attacks and the aftermath caused in our country. For a time, partisanship and bitterness was washed away. What you saw was unity, and waving flags.

Now, almost 20 years later, memories are growing fuzzy. Sometimes they are nonexistent. Calls for unity have been replaced by heated debate. Too often, the loudest voices look back at 9/11 as an event in the collective memory, and they don't look at it as an occurrence that changed lives and lifestyles forever.

They consider in passing the remnants of the attacks in debates over foreign policy and defense spending, but ignore why we remain so focused on national security. This is why every year, without exception, we remind ourselves that the kind of hatred it takes to bring an entire country to its knees gives no quarter.

We acknowledge the actions of 19 terrorists whose twisted beliefs led to the violent murder of nearly 3,000 innocent people because even though the panic of that awful morning has faded, our enemies' desire to make an example of us has not. But America, with all her