

off" even though they have never conducted a spectrum auction in their lives. Do you know how much \$60 billion is? I did the math. And our FCC is thinking about doing it.

What I find really incredible is that the President just issued this Executive order—well, he did it a little while ago—buy American and hire American. I was so proud when I saw this Executive order—buy American and hire American. It doesn't mean we don't love our world's neighbors, but America first. And what is our FCC thinking about doing? They are thinking about giving our spectrum to three foreign companies and letting them keep the \$60 billion. Talk about swampy.

These are also foreign companies. Now, I don't mean that in a pejorative sense, and I love Luxembourg, and I love Canada. They had a French company in here too. The French company has bowed out, at least for a while. But our job is not to maximize profits for foreign corporations; our job is to help our people.

This 5G has national security implications. Before we give away these 5G airwaves to a foreign corporation, we need to know whom they are going to give it to. What if they give it to China? What if they say "Well, we will conduct our own auction" and they give it to Huawei?

There is another reason that this whole approach is foolhardy. 5G is going to be great for the cities. That is where it is going first. But what about the people who don't live in the city? What I would like to see us do and I am encouraging the FCC to do is to hold a public auction, take some of that \$60 billion they are going to get, and use it for rural broadband to make sure the people who live in rural areas get taken care of as well as the people who live in the cities because our wireless technology companies are going to have to be encouraged. They make a whole lot more money selling in a city than they do out in the rural areas.

Remember, this foreign corporation group says they can do an auction faster, even though they have never done an auction in their lives. They say: We can do it faster, and we have to beat China. So give us the radio waves. We will do a quick auction. We get to keep the \$60 billion, but we will get it out there.

There is just one problem: All those wireless technology companies that didn't get to bid—every single one of them is going to file suit if we don't do a public auction. So we are going to have this tied up in court for 20 years. We are going to be so far behind China. China is going to have lapped us several times. We are going to think we are in first place, but we are really going to be in last place.

I have held hearings—not because of anything that I did or any competence on my part. I am chairman of the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee, and the only reason I

got the job is seniority, OK? Nonetheless, I got it, and the FCC is under my jurisdiction. I have been holding hearings, and I am going to hold more hearings.

So far, the only reason that anybody can give me to take these 5G airwaves and give them to a foreign corporation is that they think they can do it faster, despite the fact that we will have litigation and despite the fact that they have never done an auction before.

The best way to resist temptation, in my opinion, is a proper upbringing, a strong set of values, and witnesses. We need to have a public auction of this internet, of the 5G radio waves. Everybody needs to compete. If we don't want a foreign company to get control of it—and I don't—we can put it in the bid specs. Huawei need not apply. Not personal, but as long as you spy for China, you can't work here.

We need a level playing field. We need to have competition. Competition is a moral good. Everybody needs to get an equal bite at the apple. This doesn't need to be done in a backroom, swampy deal. I am not saying that anybody's brother-in-law is going to get taken care of here. I am not saying that, but it sure looks swampy. And we need to do it exactly like we have done for the 100 past broadband spectrum auctions.

I am saying that not only to our Senate colleagues here, but I hope I am speaking clearly enough to the FCC. Do the right thing. Don't give away \$60 billion that belongs to the people of America to two companies in Luxembourg and one other one in Canada. It is wrong.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I am going to speak on another matter in just a moment, but I want to thank my friend the Senator from Louisiana.

There are a number of subjects that are debated on this floor that I may know a little bit about, may not know much at all about, but on the subject he was just addressing, the question of spectrum and the challenges and the threats around 5G—I can still claim this—I am proud of the fact that I spent a longer time in business than I have in politics. My whole career was spent in the business of mobile communications, wireless communications. I spent the last 3 or 4 years on the Intelligence Committee in a bipartisan way looking at both the challenge and the opportunity in 5G, and let me assure you that some of the items the Senator from Louisiana has raised in terms of the security threats that will be posed if we end up with the wrong vendor in 5G are an enormous problem.

I don't always agree with this President. On this item, he is right. My hope is that he will stick to his guns and not trade that away in a trade negotiation with China.

I also know that getting spectrum aligned the right way has been one of our challenges because other nations have been able to, frankly, in Asia and elsewhere, align spectrum better, so the underpinnings are better positioned than we are. So how we do this is 100 percent right.

Let me also say that whether it is Louisiana or Virginia, one of the issues I hear the most—I am not talking far world; I am talking small towns and midsize cities in Virginia, and I am sure the same is the case in Louisiana—the issue is—Democrat, Republican, and Independent—when am I going to get broadband in an accessible way?

If we don't make sure that we think this through on spectrum and recognize the national security implications and also recognize that if we roll out 5G and leave, in my State, 18 percent of the population behind who doesn't even have broadband, their ability to compete in the 21st century is going to be dramatically undermined.

So I hope I will have a chance to visit with my friend the Senator from Louisiana and see if we might be able to work together on some of these issues.

For a while, at least before the FCC auctioned off that spectrum, it was left in other hands, and suffice it to say that I know how much that spectrum is worth.

I thank my friend the Senator from Louisiana for his comments.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL DISAPPROVAL UNDER CHAPTER 8 OF TITLE 5, UNITED STATES CODE, OF THE RULE SUBMITTED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY AND THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES RELATING TO "STATE RELIEF AND EMPOWERMENT WAIVERS"

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I will turn to a different matter.

I move to proceed to Calendar No. 278, S.J. Res. 52.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the motion.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 278, S.J. Res. 52, a joint resolution providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to "State Relief and Empowerment Waivers".

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, I know of no further debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the motion?

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the joint resolution.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (S.J. Res. 52) providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Secretary of the Treasury and the Secretary of Health and Human Services relating to “State Relief and Empowerment Waivers”.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There will now be up to 10 hours of debate equally divided between the proponents and opponents.

Mr. WARNER. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

(The remarks of Mr. INHOFE pertaining to the introduction of [S. 2731] are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. INHOFE. With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

AMERICAN MINERS ACT

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I want to first say thank you to my colleagues Senator WARNER and Senator CASEY for joining me on the floor today and also to Senator JONES, Senator BROWN, Senator Kaine, and the Presiding Officer for standing with all of us to protect the coal miners.

When coal companies go bankrupt, coal miners’ benefits are the bottom of the priority list, which is why we are here today to introduce the American Miners Act amendment to the appropriations minibus to protect coal miners’ pensions and healthcare.

At this time, I yield my time to my good friend from Virginia, Senator WARNER, and I will come back later.

Senator WARNER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. WARNER. Madam President, first of all, I have done this a number of times. I know you care. I know my colleague from Pennsylvania cares, but nobody has kept this issue alive more often and more consistently than JOE MANCHIN from West Virginia.

I am only going to take a minute or two, then I have to step off. I appreciate our leader on this issue giving me a little time.

In a few minutes, he will point out that last night, we had another coal company go bankrupt, Murray Energy. That potentially leaves 70,000 folks without a pension.

In Virginia, we have about 7,000 miners who are dependent upon UMWA funds for their healthcare retirements. Another company, Westmoreland Coal, has already gone bankrupt as well, where literally folks are weeks away from losing their benefits.

The truth is, this issue may not affect everybody across the country, but the people it does affect, it affects in a way that oftentimes undermines widows and pensioners—their very ability to maintain their livelihoods.

Our country made a commitment back in 1947 to honor miners, and we

would stand by that work. We are now going to be put to the test. My hope would be that this Miners’ Act amendment would be included in the appropriations bill. I will do everything I can in my power to urge my colleagues to consider it.

Again, I thank the Senator from West Virginia. I will turn it back to the Senator from West Virginia, but I also want to again acknowledge the Senator from Pennsylvania, who has also been a leader on this. Let’s make sure we commit to get this done.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, I thank Senator WARNER. I appreciate very much the hard fight to get in the middle of this with me and everybody else that is in this room right now that is in this fight because we have a lot of people’s lives at stake.

I came to the floor and warned that, without passing this bill, the American Miners Act, the UMWA pension fund would be insolvent by 2022, and that timeline could be accelerated to within a year if one of the major coal companies declared bankruptcy. Last night, that happened.

Murray Energy, the largest coal company in the United States, filed for bankruptcy, making it the eighth coal company in the past 12 months to do so. Murray Energy has contributed 97 percent of the money going into the UMWA pension fund annually. With Murray’s bankruptcy filing, the UMWA pension fund will become insolvent even faster. They are telling me, by this time next year, there will have to be drastic cuts into people’s pension checks and, if not, eliminated.

Most of those checks, I would remind everybody watching and listening, are \$600 or less, and most of them are for widows from their husbands that have passed away. They still depend on them for their basic necessities of life.

Once the United Mine Workers Pension fund becomes insolvent, this is going to start the snowballing effect. The crisis will truly go into a snowball effect and impact every other multiemployer and pension fund for America.

To say that this does not affect all of America is wrong because anybody that goes to work and pays into a benefit package, with their employer matching it, is in this same condition and in this same vulnerability. That is going to be another day that I am going to be speaking about this and what we can do to prohibit that from happening also.

That is why it is essential that we protect the coal miners’ pensions now—not next year, not the year after, but now—and the reason for that is it is going to be too late if we do it any later than now.

The only problem is that we have a little bit of a stumbling block with the majority leader, Senator McCONNELL. I know he is concerned about other pensions. We are all concerned about other

pensions, but this is on the front burner now. When this happens, everything else will tumble and snowball with it.

The American Miners Act would amend the current Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 to transfer the funds. These are funds that are in excess of the amounts needed to meet the existing obligations under the Abandoned Mine Land fund.

So you know what AML is—the Abandoned Mine Land fund—for every ton of coal that is mined, there is a certain percentage of that put aside to take care of the reclamation that is going to be done if it is abandoned so we don’t leave the environment in a horrible shape, and that is what we work towards.

This fund has some excess funds. We are still meeting those obligations. We are using those excess funds to try to prevent this insolvency. It also raises the cap on these fund transfers from \$490 million a year to \$750 million to make sure that the pension plan has sufficient future funding also. The funding for coal miners’ pensions is already there. It is already there. This is the product that they have worked and developed and basically extracted. So we are working in the same realm of what their livelihood has been—and it is exactly what our amendment will do—it will reallocate those funds that they worked for.

Everybody that receives a paycheck, which is over 10.6 million hard-working men and women, they take home less wages and instead invest their pensions. As I was telling you, they invest into these multiemployer pension funds, and they take money out, and they expect it to be there.

When it is not and the bankruptcy courts allow them to walk away, the miners and the workers are put on the back burner, and that has got to change. When workers expect the wages that they have contributed to be there when they retire as they were promised and it evaporates, there is no answer. It is all in bankruptcy. Because of the bankruptcy, they are told that they are sorry they lost all the money they have invested. It is not their fault. They gave the company everything they had.

Under the current law, workers’ pensions are not protected, and executive and investment firms exploit the code to benefit from filing for bankruptcy. If you have never read anything about bankruptcy, read one case, Sears & Roebuck. If you want to find out the unraveling of America and what happens to 250,000 workers that gave their life to this company and how basically investors came in and raiders came in and took advantage of every person’s pension plan, that is the one case you want to read, Sears & Roebuck.

That is why I am here today to introduce the American Miners Act as an amendment to the appropriations minibus the Senate is voting on this week because it is imperative that we do it now. We cannot wait.

Since the majority leader won't allow the American Miners Act to come to the floor for a vote, which is his prerogative, my colleagues and I are here today to introduce the American Miners Act as an amendment to the appropriations minibus that the Senate is planning to pass this week.

If we include the American Miners Act in the minibus, we would protect coal miners' pensions now before it is too late, and we will protect other pensions from starting to unravel and the snowball effect. We will also protect the PBGC, which is a guarantee from the Federal Government. If not, all of this is going to come into fruition, which will be horrible for the workers of America, the most important of the economy in this country, and a lot of people will be hurt by that.

These coal miners and their families deserve peace of mind knowing that the pension they paid into paycheck after paycheck is secure. There are so many. Less than \$600 is the average check of a miner's retirement. Most of that is retired miners' widows. They have passed on from the hard work they did. The widows are still there trying to manage what they have, which is very small at times. This is just a stifling of what they need, and to take this away will be very detrimental to their lives, the quality of their lives, and the family.

We can give them that peace of mind today if we can agree, in a bipartisan way, to do the right thing for the people that made America, the working men and women, and especially the coal miners. They get up every day, they go to work, and they produce the energy.

And I will say this: When you think about a coal miner and what they have given and the families that committed and dedicated to live their lives in these coal communities, they basically never complained. They have done the heavy lifting. They mined the coal. They made these buildings and built the guns and ships. They built the factories that built the middle class. They have been there every step of the way from this great country of the United States of America to become the super power of the world, and we owe them at least to give them the money back they paid into it.

It is not your taxpayer money but the money they paid into it. Don't let somebody steal it. Wall Street doesn't have a right to that money, but they have taken it as if it was their own little treasure chest. It is just wrong.

We are introducing this amendment, and we hope that we have bipartisan support. I would appreciate it very much. I appreciate my dear friend from Pennsylvania, who has the same hard-working people.

It doesn't matter where your State is. If you have good, hard-working coal miners and they and their families have sacrificed for this country, they need a Senator such as Senator CASEY.

With that, I yield the floor.

PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. BLACKBURN). The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, I command and salute the work of Senator MANCHIN, the senior Senator from West Virginia, for his work on behalf of American workers generally, but, in particular, his passionate advocacy and his hard work to make sure that we, in this body, the United States Senate, that we do everything we can to keep our promise.

I pick up from where he left off. As he has so often said when he came to this floor, as he did today, to talk about the people whose retirement security is on the line, this debate applies to a whole range of workers, but when you consider just coal miners and their families, who have given the country so much, I am reminded of a story from my home area, northeastern Pennsylvania.

We produce, in a few counties in northeastern Pennsylvania, the hard coal, anthracite coal. The great novel of Stephen Crane came to that region in the 1890s. He would go on to become famous for writing the novel, "The Red Badge of Courage." But Stephen Crane, when he was a young man—and he never made it to his 30th birthday, so he was an accomplished writer even as a young man—he wrote an essay about a coal mine in Scranton, my hometown in Lackawanna County.

In that essay, he described going into a coal mine and what he saw. At one point in the essay, he said that the mine was a place of inscrutable darkness, a soundless place of tangible loneliness. Then he went on to describe what the coal miners did—what really the children were doing, little boys in the mine and men in the mine. Then, at the end of the essay, he listed all the ways a miner could die in those mines in the 1890s.

Now, I know we made progress over the generations and over the decades, but even in modern times, coal mining has been very dangerous and very difficult work, work that I can't even begin to imagine. I never had to do it, but my ancestors did. These miners not only worked in those dangerous conditions and not only put their lives on the line to do that work, but they also did it with a sense of keeping their promise.

They made a promise to their employer that they would work hard every day, and they kept that promise. They made a promise to their families that they would work hard to provide a living for their families—in some cases, provide a living for several generations of their families—and they kept that promise. Some of them even made a promise to their country to serve in war all the way from World War I and all the way to our most recent conflicts. A lot of them died in Vietnam. A lot of them died in battlefields all over the world, in World War II and other conflicts.

They kept their promise to their country. They kept their promise to

their family and to their employer. All they have asked of us is to keep our promise. It is not hard to do it either. All you have got to do is put your hand up and say, "I support that bill," or "I support that amendment." It is not hard to do. It doesn't take a lot of floor time either to have these matters considered.

Now, what are we facing today? The bankruptcy filing of Murray Energy, which stems largely from competition from cheaper alternatives like natural gas and decline in exports. This could bring the pension and healthcare coverage for our coal miners to the very brink and to result in us not keeping our promise. Failure to act could result in devastating consequences for these coal miners in communities across Pennsylvania and West Virginia. We heard from the senior Senator from Virginia, Senator WARNER, and indeed all across the country.

Now, there is another bill that deals with pensions more generally, the Butch Lewis Act. Now, the House passed the Butch Lewis Pension Act—I am adding the word "Pension" into it. It is called the Butch Lewis Act. The House passed that 3 months ago, and the majority leader, Senator MCCONNELL, has chosen not to have a vote on that bill. I don't understand that. I am not sure that there are many people that do, but I would hope—I would hope—that he would reconsider and have a vote on the Butch Lewis Act.

We should also have a vote on the American Miners Act, the legislation that Senator MANCHIN has worked so hard on. We know that in the House, as well, a bipartisan effort led by Chairman GRIJALVA and Chairman SCOTT, we know that the Health Benefits for Miners Act of 2019 and the Miners Pension Protection Act were voted out of the Natural Resources Committee last week by a voice vote.

So, in the House, they are doing voice votes to advance legislation to help these workers, to help miners, and here, there is not even a vote—voice vote, rollcall vote, any kind of vote. We are not asking for days of floor time. All we are asking for is a short time for debate, but mostly, we are just asking for a vote. That vote is real simple: Keep your promise. Keep our promise and the promise our country made to these miners and the promise that our employers make to workers every day of the week. There is still a lot of work to do on pensions generally, as outlined by some of these bills, but they have kept their promise over and over again. It is about time we kept our promise.

I yield the floor.

PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, first of all, I thank Senator CASEY because he comes from the same coal mining regions that I come from and the hard-working families and communities they have there. It is unbelievable the commitment and dedication these people have had their entire life

and the patriotism they have. Most of them have served. Most of them have been there. Most of them will always be there.

In 1946, this promise was consummated by Congress and the President of the United States, and all they have said, up until that time there—my grandfather and all my family members working the mines—they had nothing. So if you ever heard that song, “I owe my soul to the company store,” they really did. There was never any money that transferred. They had scrip, and by the time they buy everything from the company store, their pay basically was eaten up. There was nothing left.

In 1946, they said there has got to be more, and that is when it came in. Truman was determined not to let this country fall into a recession or a depression after the war by keeping the mines working because we needed the energy for that. They have produced this energy in a patriotic way every time. If we can't even keep our promise to them through an act of Congress, then God help us all. That is what we are here to ask for.

We implore all of our friends—the Senator from Wyoming is here now, and he comes from a coal mining region. We are asking everyone just to help us do the right thing for the working people who built this country. That is what our request is, and it has to be done this week; if not, I guarantee you this problem is going to grow much larger much quicker and more than anybody wants to bite off and chew. I ask all my colleagues to please help us get this miners act to the floor. We can take care of this pension and keep other pensions from tumbling behind.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Wyoming.

S.J. RES. 52

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, I come to the floor today to once again discuss healthcare in America and, specifically, to oppose S.J. Res. 52, which is the latest congressional disapproval resolution.

What is happening here is that the Democrats are trying to block the efforts Republicans are making to actually lower the cost of health insurance. We are working on ways to lower the cost of health insurance for American families, and the Democrats are trying to block it.

Let me explain. People certainly understand that after the Obama healthcare law was passed, healthcare insurance premiums all across the country went way up. I strongly oppose the passage of this resolution, and I strongly opposed the passage of this law, which many of the Democrats running for President are now willing to admit has failed.

It is interesting that the Democrats now just say: Scrap the whole thing, and go with a one-size-fits-all, government-run healthcare program in which people will pay more to wait longer for worse care.

Ironically, it is the Republicans who, today, are delivering on so many of the Democrats' empty promises about ObamaCare because Republicans are actually doing things to lower the cost of care and the cost of health insurance for American families.

I like to think of Republicans as EMTs arriving on the scene of the ObamaCare train wreck. We didn't cause the accident. We are trying to help the victims, and the victims live in States all across this country. For nearly 3 years, Republicans have tried to treat the victims of ObamaCare and tried to help people who have been hit by skyrocketing health insurance premiums.

Last week we saw a major breakthrough. For the second year in a row, on average, we saw insurance premiums on the ObamaCare exchanges actually come down. They have actually come down. Well, it is very welcome news for people who have to pay these premiums. Yet, what we see is that the 2020 Democratic candidates, when you listen to them, don't seem to be concerned about lowering the costs. They are too busy pushing this astronomically expensive \$34 trillion Medicare for All health insurance healthcare scheme—one that by Republicans and Democrats alike has been called a pipe dream.

To put the cost into perspective, this total dollar figure has been estimated by people on the Republican side of the aisle, the Democratic side of the aisle, folks who looked at what promises are being made, and all have come to the conclusion that the cost will be greater than what we spend right now in this country on Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security combined. Add it all up, and it does not even reach the point of what the Bernie Sanders-Elizabeth Warren Medicare for All plan would cost.

Interestingly, when taking a look at the proposal, they actually want to take away from the American people—the 180 million people who have earned health insurance through work—they want to take that away from 180 million Americans and put them all on a one-size-fits-all, government-run program. Even union workers, who, as part of their contract negotiations, negotiated the health insurance they want, would lose their hard-fought healthcare benefits if it were ever to become law.

We see Democrats backing what I believe is a very foolish resolution of disapproval. They are attacking part of President Obama's healthcare law. We are talking about ObamaCare section 1332. This section of the law helps give States more flexibility. The Presiding Officer's State and mine like to have flexibility to provide better coverage and to bring premium costs down.

We need to set the record straight on one key point. Section 1332 never can be used to waive protections for the American people, such as for people with preexisting conditions. They can never waive those. It is not happening.

My wife is a breast cancer survivor. She has had three operations, chemotherapy twice, and dozens of radiation treatments. I know, as a doctor and as a husband, how important it is for patients to have protections of their pre-existing conditions. Republicans remain 100 percent committed to protecting people with preexisting conditions. We will protect them today, tomorrow, and always.

The House Energy and Commerce Committee Chairman, GREG WALDEN, asked the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for clarification regarding this section 1332. Administrator Seema Verma responded: “To be very clear, the 2018 guidance does nothing to erode the [healthcare law's] pre-existing condition provisions, which cannot be waived under section 1332.”

Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the full text of the CMS Administrator's letter be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES, CENTERS FOR MEDICARE & MEDICAID SERVICES

Hon. GREG WALDEN,

Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and Commerce, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE WALDEN: Thank you for your continued interest in new state flexibility available under guidance recently issued interpreting section 1332 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) (the 2018 guidance). Working within the limitations of the PPACA, this 2018 guidance is an important element of the Administration's actions to expand options and lower costs for patients around the country. I wanted to take this opportunity to set the record straight and reaffirm this Administration's commitment to lowering healthcare costs, increasing consumer choices, and protecting our most vulnerable citizens, including those who have pre-existing conditions.

To be very clear, the 2018 guidance does nothing to erode the PPACA's pre-existing condition provisions, which cannot be waived under section 1332. Section 1332 does not permit states to waive Public Health Service Act requirements such as guaranteed availability and renewability of health insurance, the prohibition on using health status to vary premiums, and the prohibition on pre-existing conditions exclusions. Furthermore, a section 1332 waiver cannot be approved that might otherwise undermine these requirements. This Administration stands committed to protecting people with pre-existing conditions.

Under the PPACA, we have seen dramatically higher premiums and decreased options for millions of consumers, in large part due to the law's overly prescriptive mandates and excessive Federal government takeover of areas traditionally under state oversight. In 2019, the average monthly premium for a benchmark plan for a family of four on HealthCare.gov is now over \$1,500, which can easily exceed a family's mortgage. There are many areas of the country with far higher monthly premiums. For example, a 60-year-old couple living in Grand Island, Nebraska, making \$70,000 a year, will need to pay over \$3,000 per month for the lowest cost silver plan available. That's almost \$38,000 per year for a plan with an 11,100 deductible. That's over half their income.

For millions of Americans, coverage this expensive is not a realistic option, and many choose to go without coverage at all. In fact, after average premiums rose by 21 percent, 1.3 million unsubsidized people walked away from the market in 2017 last year the prior administration oversaw open enrollment. While these higher premiums force some people to go uninsured, coverage is generally not optional for people with a pre-existing condition and so, without a subsidy, someone with a pre-existing condition must face the full burden of the PPACA's skyhigh premiums. This Administration has not forgotten the people facing this hardship.

Section 1332 of the PPACA provides the discretion to approve a section 1332 state waiver plan if the following four statutory guardrails are met: affordability, comprehensiveness, coverage, and federal deficit neutrality. Section 1332 allows states to develop new healthcare programs and solutions that would be not permissible without a section 1332 waiver.

Unfortunately, guidance issued under the prior Administration in December 2015 (the 2015 guidance) regarding section 1332 waivers had the effect of significantly restricting the innovation states could pursue. The prior Administration imposed a one-size-fits-all approach to these waivers, making it difficult for states to address the specific needs of their residents.

In October, the Administration issued guidance under section 1332 of the PPACA to provide states with significant opportunities to chart a different course for their markets through expanded flexibility. Section 1332 and the 2018 guidance ensure that consumers who wish to retain coverage similar to that provided under the PPACA can do so, but they empower states to take steps to stabilize their markets and allow more affordable coverage options that may be more attractive to individuals and families priced out of the current market, including people with pre-existing conditions.

Over the past two years, this Administration has approved seven section 1332 waivers authorizing reinsurance programs to help fund claims for people with high healthcare costs. These reinsurance programs provide much needed premium relief for people in the market and, in particular, for people with pre-existing conditions without other coverage options. These section 1332 waivers were all approved under the prior, more restrictive 2015 guidance. I believe, given the expanded flexibility discussed in the 2018 guidance, states will be able to develop additional healthcare programs and solutions that work for their residents.

As you know, some have criticized the state flexibility offered under the 2018 guidance, claiming that states will pursue section 1332 waivers that undermine their own individual market risk pools and make coverage more expensive for their own residents with pre-existing conditions. Again, I want to make clear that a section 1332 waiver cannot undermine coverage for people with pre-existing conditions. Moreover, any section 1332 waiver will need to carefully account for any impact on the individual market risk pool and guarantee that access to coverage is at least as comprehensive and affordable as would exist without the waiver.

So, if a state seeks to pursue the use of more affordable options, such as catastrophic plans or short-term limited duration plans, under a section 1332 state waiver plan, the state must ensure access to coverage that is overall as affordable and comprehensive for people who remain in the individual market risk pool.

Thank you again for your shared interest in bringing down healthcare costs and protecting our fellow Americans with pre-existing

conditions. We remain focused on improving our nation's health care system by empowering states to innovate and develop new solutions to expand access to affordable and high value coverage options, and we look forward to working with you to achieve these goals. Should you have questions, please contact the CMS Office of Legislation.

Sincerely,

SEEMA VERMA.

Mr. BARRASSO. Madam President, the letter proves that all patients will be protected. Section 1332 simply gives States some leeway—a little wiggle room for following the law and how to use and apply the law best in their own States.

All State waivers must meet the following conditions: They must provide coverage at least as broad as is currently offered under the healthcare law; they must provide coverage and cost-sharing at least as affordable as under the healthcare law; they must provide coverage to at least as many people as under the healthcare law; and they must not increase the Federal deficit.

The section 1332 waivers leave protections for preexisting conditions unharmed. They are not just popular with Republican Governors. It is interesting that the people applying for these 1332 waivers are Democratic Governors from around the country. They are at odds with what the Democrats in the Senate are trying to do. They are pursuing waivers. They are asking the Trump administration for waivers for their States as well. Why would these Democratic Governors come to the Trump administration and ask for waivers? It is because they work. The reason the Democratic Governors are coming to the Trump administration asking for waivers is that they work. In fact, a number of States are using these waivers today to help lower the cost of health insurance.

Let's look at the States whose section 1332 waivers have been approved since the Trump administration guidance was issued. Let's look at just the States that have applied for waivers since the new Trump administration guidance was issued. Again, these waivers were approved using the very same guidance that the Democrats in the Senate now want to have repealed.

It is astonishing. The States with 1332 waivers since the Trump administration came out with its guidance are Colorado, Delaware, Montana, North Dakota, and Rhode Island. Nearly all have Democratic Governors—four out of the five do—and have Democratic Senators in many cases or they have both.

Take a look at what has happened for the proposed premiums for 2020—what they are expected to be in States under the leadership of Democratic Governors who have asked for and have been granted waivers from the Trump administration and what the impact is on insurance premiums in these States. In Colorado, with a Democratic Governor and one Democratic Senator, the rates are going to fall this next year by

about 16 percent. In Delaware, with a Democratic Governor and two Democratic Senators, the rates will fall about 13 percent. In Montana, with one Democratic Governor and one Democratic Senator, rates will fall by 8 percent. In Rhode Island, with a Democratic Governor and two Democratic Senators, rates will fall by about 6 percent.

So in State after State where Democratic Governors applied for and were granted a waiver, they have seen rates go down. Yet Democratic Senators on the other side of the aisle are offering a resolution to remove these waivers, to remove the guidance from the Trump administration that is resulting in rates of insurance and the costs going down.

Of course we need to fix healthcare in this country, but we need to take a scalpel to our healthcare problems, not a meat cleaver, which is what we see the Democrats doing.

The Obama healthcare law was a train wreck. Republicans opposed it all the way. We are still treating the victims of this wreck, and we want to help them for years into the future by changing and coming out with guidance that will make it easier and give flexibility to the States, whether their legislature is Republican or Democratic, to help lower the high cost of ObamaCare insurance.

I find it outrageous that Senate Democrats are wasting precious healthcare debate time. They should be working with us to find solutions to lower the cost of care, to lower the cost of prescription drugs, to provide more accountability and more transparency so that patients can make more informed decisions.

Even as we address this issue and vote on this joint resolution tomorrow, it is time to really take a look at what the Democrats are saying in the Senate as opposed to what the Democrats who are in the statehouses are doing across the country.

I say, let's make sure the States can keep the relief they are asking for and are getting by rejecting what the Democrats in the Senate are proposing. Let's keep working to give patients what they need, which is the care they need from a doctor they choose at lower costs.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arizona is recognized.

Ms. SINEMA. Madam President, I rise today to address one of the biggest concerns facing everyday families in Arizona: making healthcare more affordable and maintaining critical healthcare protections.

Sometimes the issues discussed on the Senate floor appear far removed from the concerns of everyday Americans, but not today. Today's debate focuses the Senate's attention on the most important issue for many Arizonans and offers elected officials the opportunity to reject partisan political games in favor of commonsense solutions.

Not long ago, insurance companies were allowed to deny care or overcharge Americans based on the fact that those Americans had been sick before or had been born with a chronic condition.

Arizonans who had been previously treated for skin cancer or diabetes were told that no insurance company would cover them or that the insurance plans they purchased would not cover their preexisting conditions, despite promises of comprehensive coverage. Beyond major illnesses, Arizonans with even common conditions, such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, asthma, and even acne, were denied the coverage they needed. Until recently, insurance companies had also been allowed to charge consumers high prices for insurance plans only to leave out coverage for essential health benefits that virtually all Americans eventually need, such as prescription drug costs, ambulance costs, and hospital stays—critical needs that consumers rightly expect will be covered.

Insurance is supposed to be there when people need it. Hard-working Americans who play by the rules and pay their monthly premiums shouldn't have the rug pulled out from under them at the very moment they need healthcare. That is why such discrimination against people with preexisting health conditions is now banned and why health insurance plans are now required to cover essential health benefits. That is why it is so disturbing that the administration and some Members of Congress have begun moving backward, allowing insurance companies to again sell plans to Americans that lack the very health protections consumers need.

Congress has a lot of work to do to make healthcare affordable and protect access for American families and businesses, from lowering premiums to stopping surprise medical billing, but partisan approaches will not solve these challenges. We can and must work across the aisle to pass bipartisan solutions, such as increasing the number of doctors to address provider shortages, lowering costs for home health services, expanding mental healthcare, and eliminating the health insurance tax.

I have partnered with colleagues on both sides of the aisle to sponsor legislation that achieves these goals, but allowing insurance companies to return to their old practices will only hurt everyday Arizona families. These health plans lack key protections. They are often called junk plans and for good reason. Junk plans mislead Arizonans—selling something billed as health insurance when, in fact, it is better described as a bill of goods. When Arizonans who are sold these plans need to actually use the coverage they paid for, the rug gets pulled out from under them yet again.

I hear from hard-working Arizonans on a daily basis who deserve access to critical health protections; Arizonans

like Chantal, who has a preexisting autoimmune disease that without treatment would cause her to become blind; Arizonans like Corrine from Phoenix, whose daughter was born with a congenital heart condition—before the law protected people with preexisting conditions, Corrine's family was unable to find an insurer who would cover their family—and Arizonans like John from Casa Grande, who signed up for a plan that he was told covered preexisting conditions only to find out after he paid his first month's premium, that his particular preexisting condition wouldn't qualify for coverage.

There are 2.8 million Arizonans under the age of 65 just like Chantal, Corrine, and John who live with preexisting health conditions. That is half of all nonelderly Arizonans whose healthcare is at risk. These Arizonans remind us exactly what is at stake and exactly what is wrong with partisan politics in Washington today. For too long, too many elected officials here have focused on how they can score political points to help them win the next election, all at the expense of the health and security of everyday families.

Arizonans are rightly worried that the dysfunction and chaos they see coming from Washington could threaten their family's coverage, and that is unacceptable.

It is time to get partisan politics out of Arizonans' healthcare. I call on both parties to quit the partisan games, come together, and stop the sale of junk plans that fail to protect people with preexisting conditions. We must protect access to healthcare for these millions of Arizonans and tens of millions of Americans, and we must make healthcare more affordable for everyday families.

I urge my colleagues to vote yes on S.J. Res. 52.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

IMPEACHMENT

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I come to the floor as a proud Member of this Chamber of the Senate and as someone who believes earnestly in our role in our country's constitutional order. I am on the floor because a real and significant challenge to this body and each of our Members is potentially in the very near future.

Right now, the House of Representatives is holding an impeachment inquiry, focused on grave and significant charges against our President related to the very threats to our democracy of foreign interference that our Founders feared the most. I am not here to argue over whether President Trump's actions deserve impeachment or perhaps even removal from office. It is, I think, inappropriate to reach that point. Instead, I am here today, as the inquiry proceeds in the House, to urge my colleagues in the Senate—Republicans, Independents, and Democrats—to take seriously the moment we are in and the

tests we may have soon ahead as a Senate when we will need to uphold and defend the role of this institution.

I am on the floor to issue a challenge to all of my colleagues. If an impeachment trial does take place in the Senate, all of us must decide to approach it as Americans—less as people representing any parochial or partisan or particular interest, less as Democrats or Republicans or Independents, and instead as Senators. If we are called to serve as jurors in an impeachment trial, all of us must show our Nation and the world that this body—that this institution—has not been completely overtaken by the divisive political era in which we live. Nothing less than the Senate's very legitimacy will be at stake.

Our Founders warned about the challenge of this moment. They warned specifically that foreign powers improperly influencing our American Government were, in the words of Alexander Hamilton, “the most deadly adversaries of republican government.” This is why our Constitution entrusts Congress with the enormous power of potential removal through impeachment.

James Madison called impeachment “indispensable . . . for defending the Community [against] the incapacity, negligence or perfidy of the chief Magistrate”—a reference to the President. Alexander Hamilton argued that the Senate was the proper body to hold an impeachment trial. The Founders entrusted us to protect our country from “the misconduct of public men” and “the abuse or violation of some public trust.”

George Mason put forward the precise language that appears in our Constitution, the language of “high crimes and misdemeanors” and urged that impeachment must be a remedy to remove even a President, asking: “Shall any man be above Justice?” Our Founders insisted that no one—no one—in our Nation, in our constitutional order, not even our President, is above the law. This fundamental principle remains the very lynchpin of our government.

Based on what we know today from press reports about the President's actions and from notes of a conversation, I believe it is critical that the House conduct a thorough impeachment inquiry. If the House does vote impeachment articles, Members of the Senate will have to live up to the responsibilities which the Framers of our Nation entrusted to us. The eyes of history will be upon us.

Let me be clear. I am not saying that if the House should vote articles of impeachment, it will be the Senate's duty to vote to remove him. It will be, instead, the responsibility of every single Senator to carry out their duty to serve as impartial jurors with their principle focus—their oath—to uphold and defend the Constitution and nothing else informing our decisions.

This is a challenge to all of my colleagues. Both Republicans and Democrats must appreciate the gravity of this process as we call on our colleagues to do the same. Democrats, equally with Republicans, must not allow our vigorous disagreements with this President and our colleagues to influence our judgment and cloud it. We have to understand that this process—this likely future moment—is far more important than our own individual political fortunes. An impeachment trial of a President would be a true test of the integrity and capabilities of the Senate—our commitment to follow the facts, to consider the evidence, and to apply the rule of law. It will be a test that we, as a body, cannot afford to fail.

It is important to begin the process of establishing what that process might look like as soon as there are impeachment articles, if that is the direction the House takes. The basic rules are clear as stated in the Constitution: The House is given the “sole power of impeachment,” and the Senate “the sole power to try,” as jury, “all impeachments.” If the House votes to impeach, the Senate must conduct a trial and either convict by two-thirds or acquit on whatever counts are presented.

At that trial, the Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court will preside; the House managers will present the case; the President’s counsel presents his defense; and the Senators serve as the jury. The manner in which our leaders, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer, direct the Senate in the event of a trial will be the most important test in a generation of whether our Senate remains capable of enforcing the law, living up to the Constitution, and upholding the responsibilities our Founders bestowed upon us.

I will remind you of the opening vote in the Senate of the impeachment trial for President Clinton. The vote that set the rules under which that trial would proceed was unanimous. It was 100 to 0. An impeachment trial, should it come in the near future here, must not be gamed or politicized or subjected to brinksmanship, and any trial should be governed by rules that are passed on a broad and bipartisan basis, animated by justice over partisanship.

In many ways, an impeachment trial would mean that our institution of the Senate would itself also be on trial. We as a body need to show the American people and the world that we are more than just 100 elected politicians who have been brought here by partisan whim or by a bare majority of our States but, instead, by a body whose sum is much more than its individual parts. We must act as stewards together for our democracy. History is watching us, all of us—Democrats, Independents, Republicans. How we respond will shape and impact our Senate and our Nation for years to come.

In the days, weeks, or months to come, I hope my colleagues will rise to

the challenges we face, deliberate with an eye toward history, an ear toward our constituents, and a heart focused on our Constitution, and prove that, in this body, we answer to the Constitution, not to any particular or partisan loyalty to our President or to any other elected official. The health of our very institutions and of democracy itself is at stake.

REMEMBERING SONIA SCHORR SLOAN

Madam President, in my home State of Delaware, we have just lost a dear friend and a remarkable leader.

Sonia Schorr Sloan was a force of nature. “Sonny,” as we affectionately called her, dedicated her life to confronting social injustices, and her activism, her philanthropy, her mentorship, and her public service made my home State of Delaware a better place for everyone. So I rise to celebrate and honor her work, her spirit, and her impact on so many of us.

Her story began on April 1, 1928. She was born in Wilmington, DE, to parents Sigmund and Rosalia Schorr. Sigmund Schorr was a well-known Wilmingtonian haberdasher, who was elected to the Delaware General Assembly and later served for many years as president of the New Castle County Board of Elections. Rosalia, her mother, worked as a public schoolteacher and was very active with community and civic groups, like the Young Women’s Hebrew Association and the Gardeners Guild of the Arden Club. Sonny credited her parents for raising her in an atmosphere of active community involvement.

Throughout her life, she was exceptionally bright and gifted. As an honors graduate of Wilmington High School, she pursued a bachelor’s degree in bacteriology and graduated magna cum laude from Syracuse University in 1949. She was accepted to Jefferson Medical College in Philadelphia, where she earned her master’s degree in microbiology. She was the very first woman to graduate from Jefferson in its 125-year history and was the first student to complete graduate work there. After teaching several years at Temple University School of Medicine, she became the very first woman hired by DuPont to work in the prestigious central research department in Wilmington, which is where many great inventions were made.

While at DuPont, she got involved with the Young Democrats and met fellow scientist Gilbert Jacob Sloan of nearby Fairfax. Sonny and Gil, who were, frankly, inseparable for the rest of their lives, fell in love. A few years later, they were married at Temple Beth Emeth on Memorial Day of 1957. Together, they raised two wonderful sons, Victor and Jonathan.

During this period, Sonny became more and more involved with local community groups and political organizations. Sonny’s commitment to public service was a hallmark of her life. She was a skilled and forceful advocate, a tireless campaign organizer,

and a relentless fundraiser for community groups and campaigns alike. Whether it seemed doable or not, when she saw a need, she would fill it.

When people felt like Delaware needed a more active advocacy organization or they were concerned about civil liberties and civil justice and civil rights, Sonny and others founded and launched the Delaware Chapter of the ACLU. When she became increasingly concerned about the restrictions on access to reproductive rights, she launched and ran a capital campaign to build a brandnew facility for Planned Parenthood of Delaware. She was involved in the creation and launch of an AmeriCorps program, Public Allies of Delaware, and the Cancer Support Community of Delaware. She was involved in so many different civic and community organizations and in so many campaigns that they are more than I could relate in my time on the floor.

Her legacy of service to our State, which began more than 60 years ago, steadily grew over the next 50, 60 years. She eventually formed her own fundraising firm, and according to Sonny, it raised over \$100 million for various nonprofits and agencies. She was able to pick and choose the causes she championed and didn’t do anything for which she lacked passion. Her work touched our whole community, from the Food Bank of Delaware and the West End Neighborhood House to the YWCA of Delaware and the Delaware College of Art and Design.

Besides supporting these many causes, Sonny invested in the people in whom she believed. She was a mentor from the very first days of when a young, then-29-year-old Joe Biden launched his campaign first for county council and then for the U.S. Senate, and she played a central role in Joe Biden’s first election in 1972 to this body. Sonia Sloan mentored countless other people and dozens of other elected officials, not just my predecessor and the Vice President. She was a mentor to this young candidate as well when I first ran for office.

Equally, if not more importantly, she was a tireless and engaged mentor for folks no one has heard of—folks not elected but folks in need. She was a mentor for a young man who had just been released from our local juvenile detention center. Sonny helped him get a State identification card, helped him get a new job, and helped him get a new bicycle—a reliable means of transportation. She helped him, mentored him, and supported him until he was able to get back on his feet.

She recorded books for the blind. At one point, she even agreed to put up the deed of her own home to bail out a Vietnam war protester from jail. These were the sorts of things Sonny did that many have never heard of.

She won too many awards in our State to name, but she was inducted into the Hall of Fame of Delaware Women. Yet she wasn’t the sort of person to hold up these accomplishments.

Aside from her civic engagements, she loved to run and was often seen jogging around Rockford Park, which is near my home. She adored cooking for her family; she collected stamps; she could play the flute and piano; and she loved to read.

Upon learning that Sonny had passed away at age 91, one friend remarked that Sonny still had so many stories to share and so much energy and passion to give.

Another friend called her a beacon of light and a pillar of courage whose light will shine for many years to come.

She never stopped taking a chance on young candidates and on first-time candidates.

A friend of mine, recently elected State Senator Laura Sturgeon, said: Sonny Sloan took a chance on me, even though I had no political experience, name recognition, or resources. Once people heard she was in my corner, endorsements and support poured in. I am who I am because of my parents, but I am where I am, representing the Fourth District in the State Senate, because of Sonny Sloan.

It is clear that she accomplished many firsts, broke many barriers, and paved endless paths for many people. She had strong and passionate feelings about countless issues, but the empowerment of women, the election of women to office, and the advancement of women in our society was absolutely at the forefront.

As she so often said, "Women's issues are not just women's issues; they are everybody's issues."

One of the last times I got to see Sonny was at a dinner in her honor in March of this year. It was there that I joined hundreds of friends and neighbors to recognize her legacy of service, from her efforts to end the Vietnam war to her advocacy for women's rights. She lived her life committed to a deep belief she shared with many of us—to focus on what you can do to change just one life for the better because, as the Talmud teaches, when you change one life, you can change the world. Sonny did that thousands of times.

She was tough and determined, funny and smart. She never hesitated to offer very direct input to those of us she knew needed correction or direction, but she could equally offer compelling and comforting advice. She has been and will continue to be that voice of conscience inside my head, challenging me not to settle for the easy but to push for what seems difficult or even impossible.

Her dedication for fighting for justice was rivaled only by her tireless love for Gil, Victor, Jonathan, her five granddaughters, and five great-grandchildren. She was the best of what we are as Delawareans. Her sharp intelligence, her fierce resolve, and her unwavering dedication to people and causes will be impossible to replace.

So, to Sonny, I wish to say: We will all miss you—family, friends, neigh-

bors, and the thousands whose lives you have touched. You have affected the lives of countless Delawareans. I am truly grateful to have known you and to have been a part of your work to make our State and our world a better place. You will forever have my deepest thanks.

Back in October of 1969, in concluding an anti-war rally, Sonia read a Jewish prayer with some touching and, I think, fitting final words:

Bless our country, that it may always be a stronghold of peace, and its advocate among the nations. May contentment reign within its border, health and happiness within its homes. Strengthen the bonds of friendship among the inhabitants of all lands, and may the love of Your name hallow every home and every heart.

These are touching and fitting words. Sonny, bless you and thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

H.R. 3055

Mr. GARDNER. Madam President, I come to the floor to talk about several amendments I am working on in relation to the Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies; the Agriculture; the Interior and Environment, and Related Agencies; and the Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bills that this body will be working on shortly.

The first amendment I am offering to the legislation addresses a very serious issue; that being the rising scourge of methamphetamine around the country.

Methamphetamine—meth—use is something we talked a lot about a decade ago. Conversations turned to opioid abuse in this country—and rightfully so—and focused on opioids, but unfortunately meth use is now increasing dramatically in States like Colorado as we continue to address the opioid epidemic.

When I traveled across Colorado over the summer and last week and through the August work period, I heard from rural sheriffs across the State who were especially concerned about the severe impact that meth was having on our small communities. Headlines this summer and as recently as this week talked about the increase in meth use across Colorado and the country.

From 2011 to 2018, treatment admissions for meth across Colorado increased by nearly 40 percent. In 2018, 318 people died in Colorado from meth overdoses. That is a 750-percent increase over 10 years. From 1999 to 2018, there has been a 1,450-percent increase in meth deaths in Denver alone. In 2018, which was just last year, the Denver Police made nearly 1,500 meth-related arrests. Indeed, there were more meth arrests in Denver than there were arrests for heroin and cocaine combined.

Meth causes property damage. It damages our families. It can cause, certainly, permanent damage to the individual who is using meth, and it causes

tremendous harm to families. In Utah, just in August, nearly \$2.2 million worth of methamphetamine was confiscated—seized—in the State of Utah that was heading to Colorado. That \$2.2 million was enough meth to provide 1.1 million individual doses in Colorado. It was on its way, and it would have done great harm.

I have introduced an amendment that would add \$1 million to the COPS Anti-Methamphetamine Program. This \$1 million increase would allow one more fully funded grant to go to an area, to a State, to a drug program to help reduce and to break up this cycle of meth.

We have heard from the people in Colorado. We have heard from the sheriffs. We have heard from our communities to do more. I believe this amendment does more to help to address the epidemic of meth and the lives it is shattering in Colorado, and I hope my colleagues will be able to support this issue.

In particular, I thank Senator DAINES, Senator TESTER, Senator GILLIBRAND, Senator BALDWIN, and Senator JONES, who have all joined me in adding \$1 million, fully paid for and offset within the bill, in order to help combat this epidemic of meth in our country and certainly in our States like Colorado.

Another amendment I have been working on is the bulletproof vest amendment. We have seen far too many attacks on our law enforcement over the past several years. This legislation would provide a \$1.1 billion fund for our Nation's law enforcement officers with type 3 bulletproof vests. These vests are capable of stopping more powerful rifle ballistics and, therefore, would allow more officers to come home at the end of the day from their service. That is what we need to be focusing on—how to protect the men and women in blue in our communities.

I am proud to have joined legislation earlier this year that has been signed into law that permanently reauthorizes the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program, and I hope we continue to build and offer our support to those who defend that thin blue line.

The crown jewel of our conservation programs, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, has benefited Colorado and this country so significantly over the past several decades. It is something that has affected every State in the country in our being able to preserve and protect some of our most pristine environments across this great land. Last spring, we were able to work together in a bipartisan effort to permanently authorize the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

This legislation, which is the amendment I will be offering to the bill, would fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund. So, while we have done a great thing in permanently authorizing the Land and Water Conservation Fund, we need to fully fund the Land and Water Conservation

Fund. This amendment would do just that and fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Why is this important?

The outdoor economy, that of protecting our public lands, is so critical to the State of Colorado. The outdoor economy alone in Colorado generates \$28 billion in consumer spending and \$2 billion in State and local tax revenue. It employs close to 230,000 people just in Colorado alone, which makes Colorado the year-round destination for visitors. If you are interested in skiing, there are already 40 inches of snow in Summit County, and several ski resorts have opened up already. It is snowing right now in Colorado, so this amendment is all the more important as people look to our State for the continued enjoyment of the great outdoors.

I have a bipartisan amendment with seven of my colleagues—Senators BENNET, DAINES, TESTER, BURR, HEINRICH, COLLINS, and SHAHEEN—that will fully fund the Land and Water Conservation Fund for fiscal year 2020, and I hope this Chamber will support the legislation.

I am also working on an amendment that will address the ski area fees that our ski resorts pay to the Federal Government in order to operate on public lands and have their ski runs on public lands. Many times, the ski resorts, the ski areas, are the largest employers in our mountain communities and contribute significantly to the economy and to the health and stability of our local communities.

There are 122 of our ski areas that operate on National Forest System lands. They generate, roughly, \$37 million in rental fees for the Treasury. Yet staffing levels for those very recreation programs are 40-percent lower than they were in the year 2000. Just as more and more people are enjoying our public lands, we see fewer and fewer people who are employed by the Federal Government to deal with those public lands, to process the permitting needs, and to address the needs of our public lands.

Fire borrowing has been an issue that has gobbled up some of the funding that has helped manage our forests. We have put a bipartisan fix in place that will no longer allow that money to be gobbled up, but we need to find a solution as to the ski area fee retention as well so we can allow that money to stay within the forest in which it is generated.

Now that we have the fire borrowing fix, we can put the ski area fee bill in place and have even more dollars returned to the forest from which those fees are generated so we can address the staffing issues and other complex issues we face in our national forests. This bill alone would allow a portion of that \$37 million to be returned to the forests from which they were generated. That means more timely permit application processing at the Forest Service and better customer service

from those in the ski areas that are trying to accommodate even more and more people who visit our great ski areas.

I am also working on an amendment to the legislation that deals with RTD, which is our public transit system in Denver, and the Front Range.

Years ago, the Department of Transportation was working on an effort that refunded some programs in Colorado. The RTD, more than 20 years early, had basically paid off the loan on one of these projects. The RTD was told it would be reimbursed by the Department of Transportation if it paid this off. Unfortunately, even though it has paid it off early, it has not been reimbursed.

If you look at the effort and the project it accomplished with this loan, the Denver Union Station project is one of the highlights of urban renewal in the country. The RTD got the loan successfully paid off early—a great success. Now it needs that money back in order to continue investing in Colorado. I am working with Senator BENNET to make sure this money gets back to Colorado, which is one of the amendments we have filed.

Mr. GARDNER. The National Institute of Standards and Technology is one of the Nation's premier research agencies in the Federal Government. Colorado is lucky to house the second-largest contingent of NIST staff in Boulder, where they work on issues like telecommunications, biosciences, forensics, and quantum information science and technology.

NIST's Boulder campus, and their affiliated NIST/JILA partnership, has won three Nobel Prizes and three National Medals of Science. These preeminent experts were charged with continuing to build on the successes in the National Quantum Initiative Act, which passed into law just this last Congress.

But in order to remain competitive globally, competing against countries like China, the United States has to continue its robust investments in science and research and development, and that is going to require investing in our science facilities as well.

When I was able to travel to the NIST facilities in Boulder, I witnessed a trash can and giant trash bag used to collect rainwater from a leaky roof. Nobel scientists—prize-winning scientists working there. It is harmful to think that it is okay for this great country to have Nobel Prize-winning scientists working in a facility that can't even keep them dry because the roof leaks.

While I am grateful to the Appropriation Committee's attention to increasing the construction and facilities budget for NIST in recent years, we have a lot more work to do. That is why, in light of the National Quantum Initiative, I introduced an amendment to the Appropriations bill to provide an additional \$161 million for construction and renovation costs for NIST projects.

In partnering with universities, like the University of Colorado at Boulder, NIST can continue to expand their work on issues like quantum in renovated and new state-of-the-art research facilities. That benefits the United States and will retain and grow our competitive advantage around the globe.

Another issue that I continue to hear about in Colorado, that we were able to address through the appropriations package before us, is affordable housing. It is an urban issue; it is something that you face in Boulder or Denver or Colorado Springs. But it is an issue that I hear in some of the smallest communities, as well as the biggest communities.

So Senator YOUNG and I have been working on an amendment that deals with affordable housing. We know we have a relationship between the lack of affordable housing and issues relating to health, education, nutrition, and job outcomes. And those issues, combined with homelessness and lack of affordable housing, combine with other issues to create strains on government and other social services.

The amendment we have offered will help us better understand those challenges and the root causes of and lack of affordable housing, and help us understand the effects of the affordable housing crisis on health and education and employment as well.

It will help us to understand what work we need to do to solve the problem or whether there are smaller programs that are already working to expand, to help, do even more good.

These are a number of bills related to the great State of Colorado, and in this country and I think will do a lot of good, and as we process these appropriations bills in a bipartisan fashion, we will be able to improve and help in addressing some major issues.

With that, Madam President, I yield the floor.

HEALTH INSURANCE PLANS

Mr. CARDIN. Madam President, today I wish to discuss this administration's perpetual actions to weaken protections for people with preexisting conditions.

Last fall, the administration issued guidance for the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act—ACA—that would loosen the statutory guardrails for 1332 State waivers. The guidance encourages states to increase access to ACA non-compliant coverage.

The actions of the administration cannot make this message any clearer: President Trump does not support protections for people with pre-existing conditions.

Because of the ACA, health insurance companies cannot refuse to cover someone or charge someone more just because they have a preexisting condition. Among the most common pre-existing conditions are high blood pressure, behavioral health disorders, high cholesterol, asthma/chronic lung disease, heart conditions, diabetes, and cancer.

In 2017, HHS released a report stating that as many as 133 million non-elderly Americans have a preexisting condition. The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange estimates that there are approximately 2.5 million nonelderly Marylanders with a preexisting condition, 320,000 of which are children.

Unfortunately, the Trump administration is taking actions that directly threaten these 133 million Americans, actions, which can lead to them being denied access to healthcare.

The Trump administration's updated guidance on section 1332 waivers skirts the intention of the law. Originally section 1332 of the ACA provided States with the flexibility to test new health coverage programs, as long as innovation waivers met certain criteria. States applying for 1332 waivers had to show that their proposal provided residents with health coverage with at least the same level of protections guaranteed by the ACA, that was at least as affordable, and covered at least a comparable number of State residents as currently covered under the ACA.

For example, Maryland was able to use a 1332 waiver to establish a State reinsurance program, which lowered insurance premiums by as much as 22 percent from 2018 premiums.

However, the Trump administration has issued guidance that redefines the guardrails of section 1332 and will now allow States to include plans that do not comply with the ACA's consumer protections. The guidance also encourages states to allow premium tax credits for non-ACA compliant plans, plans that don't offer essential health benefits or protect those with preexisting conditions.

The updated 1332 guidance allows State waiver applications to ignore statutory guardrails to ensure that coverage is not less affordable under a waiver, especially for those with high healthcare spending. This new guidance also sets a dangerous precedent, where a State waiver could skew numbers to disproportionately count junk plans in a State's total number of lives covered.

The updated 1332 guidance again makes it very clear that President Trump and this administration do not support affordable insurance for those with preexisting conditions. I was proud to join Senator WARNER in introducing a Congressional Review Act resolution to overturn the administration's 1332 waiver guidance to ensure protections for individuals with preexisting conditions.

The harm done by this administration towards individuals with preexisting conditions will lead to higher costs of care for the millions of Americans. This resolution is a clear opportunity to show our opposition to the actions of the Trump administration to deny coverage for individuals with preexisting conditions.

My Democratic colleagues and I are calling attention to ACA, which has

worked and is working, and how the Trump administration's actions seek to overturn the progress we have made to strip consumer protections like protections for preexisting conditions away from patients. We can't afford as a country to go back to the days before the ACA. Nearly 130 million non-elderly Americans rely on the protections provided by the ACA to guarantee that no insurer could deny them coverage.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Rhode Island.

Mr. REED. Madam President, today I would like to address my colleagues to discuss one of the latest attempts from the Trump administration to undermine and sabotage the Affordable Care Act. This week, the Senate will vote on a Congressional Resolution of Disapproval—CRA—on a Trump administration final rule that gives States broad latitude to ignore the consumer protections of the Affordable Care Act.

The rule essentially gives patients in those States the choice between health insurance that doesn't provide coverage when it is needed the most—so-called junk plans—or being priced out of the health insurance market entirely.

As we have already seen, Republican lawmakers in some States are more than eager to dismantle the protections of the Affordable Care Act and bring back the days of insurance companies being in charge, putting profits above the health of consumers in those States.

In fact, about 20 such States have gone a step further by moving forward a lawsuit seeking to invalidate the ACA in its entirety. This is not a theoretical threat to our healthcare system. Over the next year, we will see a final ruling on this lawsuit, and a ruling in favor of these States will be nothing short of catastrophic.

Not only will this upend the healthcare system as we know it in those States, this ruling would apply to every State, even those like my home State of Rhode Island, which has done an outstanding job of implementing the ACA, expanding coverage, and making healthcare more affordable for all.

The Affordable Care Act has given individuals and families more choice, more affordable options, and more control over their healthcare. With these new options for health coverage, the uninsured rate in Rhode Island has reached historic lows, hovering around 4 percent.

Today, because the ACA is the law of the land, insurance companies can no longer deny you coverage for preexisting conditions or put an annual lifetime cap on how much they will pay for your care. Because of the ACA, young adults can stay on their parents' plans until they turn 26 years of age, and women cannot be charged more based on their gender. Also, under the ACA, basic healthcare services like maternity care and behavioral and mental healthcare must be covered.

The ACA has helped keep costs down by requiring insurance companies to provide preventive care at no charge so that the small things do not turn into bigger, expensive medical problems, like surgery.

Yet President Trump continues to put all of this progress at risk. The rule that we are voting to invalidate this week is just one such example. In his first year in office, President Trump failed to pass his bill to repeal the ACA when he had Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate.

Despite widespread opposition to these efforts, the administration has since moved forward with its sabotage strategy in the absence of a legislative win. President Trump ended Federal funding for a key ACA program which helps keep plans more affordable for those in the private market by covering some costs for patients with the most expensive medical conditions.

Next, the administration put forth new rules which allowed more junk plans, plans which can charge more for preexisting conditions and that can refuse to cover needed health services.

Now, the rule subject to this week's vote goes one step further in allowing States to expand these partisan attempts to weaken the ACA, increase costs on consumers, and increase the uninsured rate. If this was not enough, a single court case, championed by partisans looking for a political win, could overturn ACA as soon as next year.

If President Trump's strategy succeeds, many Americans will suffer. Preexisting condition protections will go away, and over 50 million Americans with preexisting medical conditions will go back to being priced out of coverage.

The Medicaid expansion that helps States cover more than 12 million Americans will also go away. Young adults will be kicked off their parents' insurance. Women could be charged more, as would older Americans. People will lose access to mental healthcare, and prescription drug costs for seniors will go up.

In Rhode Island, it is estimated that approximately 100,000 people could lose coverage if President Trump's lawyers convince the courts to cut down the ACA. The State will lose hundreds of millions of dollars in Federal funding for healthcare, all to satisfy President Trump's and congressional Republicans' desire for a political win at the expense of the American people.

We cannot afford to go back to the days when insurance companies were in control. We cannot wait until the Trump administration and Congressional Republicans come up with a plan.

The ACA was signed into law almost 10 years ago and still its opponents have no alternatives.

Americans with preexisting conditions, those who are fighting illnesses, parents with children with complex medical needs, young people who need

coverage while they explore new career opportunities, these people—our constituents, our neighbors, our families—do not have the time to wait for Republicans to come up with a solution for a problem they, themselves, are creating.

We should instead be spending our time working on solutions to today's problems. There are pressing issues that Congress should be spending time addressing to improve health in this country.

Prescription drug costs continue to skyrocket. In fact, addressing prescription drug costs alone would go a long way towards bringing down healthcare costs overall; yet, if the ACA goes away, this will be for naught. It won't matter if the drug companies are required to negotiate fair prices for drugs and are prevented from gouging customers. Without affordable health insurance, consumers will continue to be priced out of lifesaving drugs and treatment.

Further, without the ACA, requirements that plans must cover prescription drugs would go away. Indeed, before the ACA, many plans did not cover needed prescription drugs, leaving patients to pay entirely out of pocket for lifesaving treatments and interventions that prevent more expensive conditions down the road.

Congress has made significant bipartisan progress over the last couple of years on the opioid epidemic, providing considerable funding to States to help people access treatment to get on the path to recovery.

However, one of most effective interventions in the epidemic has been the ACA's Medicaid expansion, helping those with substance abuse disorders get treatment and get back on their feet.

Without the ACA, the bipartisan laws Congress has passed in response to the opioid epidemic will be nowhere near enough in both effort and funding to successfully combat this crisis.

We have also seen new data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showing growing rates of suicide in this country, especially among young people—nothing short of an epidemic. I have been working with my colleagues across the aisle, such as Senator KENNEDY from Louisiana, to increase funding for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, and with Senator GARDNER to make the Lifeline more accessible. This is important work. We need to ensure that, when someone courageously reaches out to get help in a time of crisis, that we are able to connect them with affordable mental healthcare for the long term. Without the ACA, that care may be out of reach.

There is certainly more we can be doing to increase access to healthcare, and I have been working with my colleagues to do just that. However, allowing the administration to continue its efforts to destroy the ACA not only undermines healthcare for the most vulnerable Americans, but also all of

our bipartisan work on critical healthcare issues such as lowering drug costs. The American people—my constituents and yours—expect better.

I implore my colleagues on the other side of the aisle to stand up to this administration's reckless plans to upend our healthcare system and work with us to improve our healthcare system instead.

Madam President, before I conclude my remarks, I would like to make some comments on the death of my dear colleague Senator Kay Hagan, and I would ask unanimous consent that these remarks be placed in the appropriate section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in which other tributes of Senator Hagan are placed.

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

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Mr. REED. Madam President, Kay Hagan was an extraordinary individual, a great Senator from the State of North Carolina, and a great person.

I had the opportunity to express my thoughts to her husband Chip, whom I talked with yesterday. We will all miss her advocacy, her spirit, her support of military families, small businesses, students, and Americans everywhere, particularly in her home State of North Carolina.

I had the pleasure of serving with her in this body and the Armed Services and Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committees, and we traveled together to Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan in 2010.

All of us here in the Senate are saddened by this loss, and we send all of our thoughts to Chip and her family.

I must share a vivid memory. Senator Hagan and I were in Afghanistan, and, again, this dauntless, courageous Senator—we were together on a moonrise infantry patrol, moving from a forward operating base far away from Kabul, far away from the center of our activities in a remote corner of Afghanistan. We were moving from the base to a meeting with local Afghan fighters.

As we rolled down this dusty road, I looked over and pointed and said, "Kay, see all those beautiful red flowers?" She said, "Yes, they are very attractive. What are they?" I said, "Well, they are opium poppies."

You see, we were in the middle of a battle in which we had to support our Afghan allies but at the same time not alienate the Afghan population. It was one of the complex issues involved in that struggle. She understood that. But she understood also the sacrifice and service of the men and women who were there that day with us in the middle of a combat zone, and she fought for them relentlessly.

Many of them were constituents from Fort Bragg, NC, from Camp Lejeune, from other places around that State. She had a deep and abiding influence in that, and she was not afraid to go forth to dangerous places to see what they were sharing in terms of danger and deprivation.

She was an extraordinary woman—such decency, such care, such compassion, such humanity. I deeply, deeply mourn her passing.

To Chip and all of her family, my sincerest condolences on the passing of an extraordinary woman who graced this Chamber with decency and dignity, and I know—I know—her example of courage, strength, and love will continue to sustain and inspire her family and those of us who were privileged enough to serve with her.

May she rest in peace.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oklahoma.

UNITED STATES-MEXICO-CANADA TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. LANKFORD. Madam President, a couple of weeks ago, I had the privilege to stand at Iron Horse Industrial Park. It is a brand-new industrial park just outside of Shawnee, OK. It is run by the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and for almost 10 years, they have had the dream of opening up a location in Oklahoma, where there could be foreign trade; different countries could come in to do manufacturing there, and they would be able to work through raw materials and products and sales. It has been a remarkable dream for them.

I stood on a platform with the leadership of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, members of the Shawnee community, sitting right next to folks from the Canadian Consulate and a Canadian business owner who is opening up a manufacturing plant in just a couple of months, right there on that spot, to be the first company in that location to start doing international trade in that part of Oklahoma.

That location of Pro-Pipe will start manufacturing pipe that they will send all over the place. It is a Canadian company, but it will have about 40 or 45 jobs that are Oklahoma jobs that are there.

Now, why do I mention that? I mention that because it was a reminder—again, as I sat on that platform next to Canadians, the Japanese delegation that was there, the Taiwanese delegation that was there, and others from multiple other countries—about how integrated we really are.

If I took you to Shawnee, OK, there are some great people—and it is a fantastic community—the first thing you would think of probably wouldn't be international trade, but it should be now.

In Oklahoma, our top two trading partners are Canada and Mexico. We have an overwhelming amount of trade just with those two countries. In fact, we exported \$2.4 billion worth of goods just to Canada and Mexico last year.

We are a very connected economy, and working through the trade issues is incredibly important to us. That is why this new trade agreement that replaces NAFTA, which is now decades old and needs a revision, is so important, because our Oklahoma economy depends a lot on how we trade. A lot of

our jobs are connected through agriculture, manufacturing, digital sales, other financial services that are connected through trade to Canada and Mexico. They cooperate with us; we cooperate with them.

So a new trade agreement started in the negotiation process. It started in August of 2017. The Trump administration, the administration in Mexico and in Canada all sat down and decided to reopen NAFTA after the Trump administration put tremendous pressure on Canada and Mexico to update this agreement.

Initially, everyone said they didn't want to change a thing, and from August 2017 until September of 2018, our three countries negotiated a new trade agreement that all three countries now have come back in their leadership and said: That is a better deal than what NAFTA was. That works better for everyone. It provides new elements on things like digital trade that wasn't an issue in the 1990s. E-commerce wasn't a thing at the time; now, it is. So there are digital trade updates.

There are also areas about innovation and intellectual property that help protect inventors in all three countries to protect what they have invented and to make sure the benefits come back to those inventors and back to those countries.

There are also new protections for labor. There have been longstanding issues in labor practices in Mexico. This addresses some of those things and some basic human rights elements for Mexico.

It also adds new environmental requirements so that we would take on as a whole of North America in the way we do manufacturing, the way we do fishing, the way that we handle marine litter, the way that we handle sustainable forest management, all of those things would be addressed in this trade agreement.

It is a very comprehensive agreement—the USMCA agreement—and it is very important that we actually get it passed. I hope you didn't miss the timeline that I laid out. The negotiation started in August of 2017. The negotiation finished in September of 2018. Since October of 2018, that agreement has been waiting on a vote in the House of Representatives.

Mexico has already long since passed it. They have not only passed the agreement, they have passed the laws doing the implementing language. They have long since passed it. Everyone is waiting for the United States to pass this trade agreement that will help us in labor issues, help us in manufacturing, help us in ag exports, help us in our digital trade, help us in environmental policy. We are all waiting on the House of Representatives to take it up.

We are now past a year that the House has had this. It has to start, constitutionally, in the House, and I cannot say strongly enough how important this is to be able to maintain our mo-

mentum in trade with Canada and Mexico that we should not have to wait.

Now, some in the House say this is about not giving President Trump a win, so they don't want to vote on it because it will give President Trump a win. This is not about the President of a country. In fact, Mexico has already changed Presidents since the time of this agreement. This is about giving the American people a win. This is, quite frankly, to be selfish, about the people of Oklahoma getting a win. It is additional jobs, it is additional protections, it is additional opportunities to do investment that we would like to be able to see for my State and for the people of my State, so I can't encourage enough the House to take this up.

I do want to also compliment the administration for taking this agreement on. Three years ago, no one thought this agreement could be done nor should be done, and now, when it is in the process of being finalized, everyone seems to be nodding their head, saying: That is better. Let's keep going.

The administration has also recently struck a deal with Japan. Japan is a trade partner already, just like Canada and Mexico, but we have had some problems with Japan. The United States exported \$14 billion in food and agricultural products to Japan just in 2018—\$14 billion. But out of that \$14 billion, right at half, \$7.2 billion of those had a need to address some of the issues about tariffs and about some additional protections. So this new trade agreement that the administration just struck with Japan is exceptionally helpful to us. It takes out half of the tariffs—either reduces them or eliminates them entirely—of our ag trade back and forth with Japan.

Why is that a big deal for Oklahoma? You may say Oklahoma is a long way from Japan. It is, except we ship a lot of beef that way, and we could ship a lot more.

This agreement specifically deals with things like beef, pork, poultry, sorghum, wheat. Those are products that are all coming right out of my State, and it is exceptionally important that this agreement has been done.

Now, this agreement doesn't have to come through Congress. It is an executive agreement. It is not like the USMCA. It is done. So we have already seen a gain in Oklahoma based on that trade agreement in Japan. The encouragement I can make to the administration is: Keep doing this.

We have further negotiations we need to have completed in the Pacific. While they have done step one with Japan, there is more to be done with Japan on lowering other tariffs, but we would also like to see a trade agreement with New Zealand. We would also like to see a trade agreement with other partners in the Pacific where we still need trade deals done. Keep going, and keep expanding markets.

The big issue right now is with China. Our trade issues with China

have been significant. They have been significant for decades. The last five Presidents have all tried to deal with some of the problems with China and trade, their theft of intellectual property, their violations of basic dignity for their workers. The environmental policies they have in China has been deplorable.

We should address the issues of trade with China, and we should address how we can further not only cooperate but deal with some of the inequities of workers and deal with some of the inequities of environmental policy and certainly deal with the theft of intellectual property.

As China is one of the worst human rights violators in the world, in our trade negotiations, we should talk about things like free press, freedom of religion, and opportunities for the Uighurs, who are literally bound up in concentration camps being reeducated to be more Chinese rather than being able to live out their faith as Muslims there in China.

There are many issues we need to deal with that go beyond just dollars. It is how we actually interact with each other. So for the administration, as they are finalizing the final moments of how they are going to deal with a trade deal with China, I continue to encourage them to keep doing the work. The last five Presidents have all tried to resolve issues with China.

Keep going. We have to be able to get this done, but hold China to account on human rights issues, while we are also dealing with economic issues. This is our moment to address those critical needs.

With that, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CASSIDY). The Senator from Washington.

HEALTHCARE

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, this afternoon, I join with a number of my colleagues to put Republicans on notice that their healthcare charade is coming to an end.

Tomorrow, the Senate will go on the record and make clear, once and for all, whether they stand with patients and families who are counting on them or with President Trump and big insurance companies.

Tomorrow, Democrats will force the Senate to vote on our bill to reverse President Trump's rule that undermines protections for people with pre-existing conditions and promotes junk health plans and higher costs for families.

For too long, Republicans have been making empty promises on healthcare, while taking harmful steps that make things worse for patients and families.

Time after time, Democrats have asked Republicans to work with us to actually make healthcare work better for patients and families, but, time after time, Senate Republicans have said no. In fact, there has been no greater cheerleader for President Trump's relentless attacks on families' healthcare and no greater obstacle to

passing solutions to repair the damage than Senate Republicans.

This isn't just a hypothetical conversation. Any day now—any day now—we could get a ruling on the partisan lawsuit brought by President Trump that would undermine healthcare for over 100 million people by ending protections for people with preexisting conditions, stripping away coverage families got through the exchanges and Medicaid expansion and letting young adults get kicked off of their parents' insurance before they turn 26.

A Republican win on this could absolutely drive up costs by scrapping the caps on patients' out-of-pocket costs, while bringing back lifetime and annual caps on their benefits—even for those insured through their employer—and ending essential health benefits that require insurers to cover prescription drugs, maternity care, mental healthcare, emergency care, and more.

When Senate Democrats took a stand against this dangerous lawsuit and introduced this legislation to fight for patients and protect their care, Senate Republicans ducked for cover and did not bring it to a vote, just like they have done with Senate Democrats' efforts to bring down drug prices through impactful steps like Medicare negotiation, or to restore funding to help people find the care that is right for them when open enrollment starts this week, or make coverage more affordable for working families.

Democrats in the House have already made progress on some of these steps, from successfully joining the lawsuit to fight for patients to passing legislation that would restore navigator funding, reverse President Trump's harmful junk insurance rule, and more.

Republicans in the Senate have blatantly failed to live up to their promise to fight for families' healthcare instead of working with us on these steps to help our families and protect patients with preexisting conditions—to do what families sent us here for. They have buried each of these solutions in their legislative graveyard so that they don't even have to admit on the record that they aren't doing anything to help protect families' care—well, not tomorrow. Tomorrow, Democrats are going to bring forward a bill to ensure protections for preexisting conditions that Leader MCCONNELL cannot bury and Republicans can't hide from.

Tomorrow, every single one of us is going to have to go on the record about where we really stand on families' healthcare and protections for preexisting conditions. Tomorrow, we will be voting on Democrats' legislation to reverse a step President Trump took to work a tool that was meant to encourage innovation into one that encourages States to eliminate protections for patients with preexisting conditions, increases costs, undermines essential health benefits, and promotes harmful junk insurance plans that can charge vulnerable patients more and cover less.

Letting President Trump's rule stand could leave millions of patients with higher premiums, higher out-of-pocket costs, and no affordable options to get the healthcare they need.

Our vote tomorrow to reverse this rule that takes protections away from patients and gives power back to insurance companies offers a very clear test about who Senators are actually fighting for. People across the country are going to be watching tomorrow and taking note of who is pushing for solutions to protect their care and who is blocking them, who is trying to repair the damage President Trump has caused and who is trying to cause even more harm, who is fighting for their healthcare and who is fighting against it.

I hope each and every one of my Republican colleagues think long and hard about the promises they have made to their constituents and how they are going to look them in the eye after the vote tomorrow. I hope each of them finally decides to do the right thing and stand up for families' healthcare, even if it means being a Republican who stands up against President Trump.

I believe issues as important as families' healthcare should come before party, and I hope we will see tomorrow that Republicans agree.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Hampshire.

Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, first, I thank my colleague, the distinguished Senator from Washington, for her leadership on the issue of providing healthcare to all Americans. In a democracy where everyone counts, everyone should have access to high quality, affordable care.

I rise today to discuss the Trump administration's efforts to undermine our health insurance system and scam healthcare consumers by allowing harmful health plans to be sold to unsuspecting, vulnerable Americans.

Since the President's first day in office, his administration has taken measure after measure that makes it harder for patients to access necessary care, weakens our healthcare system, and increases costs.

This latest effort to expand access to what are appropriately referred to as "junk" health insurance plans would allow insurance companies to discriminate against Americans who experience preexisting conditions and would also leave patients with higher healthcare costs and worse insurance coverage.

Junk plans don't cover even basic benefits, such as prescription drugs, substance use disorder treatment, or maternity care. People often don't realize how inadequate these plans are until they are in the middle of a medical crisis.

Unless you can guarantee that you will never get sick, never break a limb, or never get into an accident, these plans are a bad deal for you. We all

know that life doesn't come with those guarantees, and when the worse does happen, when illness or injury strikes, these plans are, more often than not, barely worth the paper they are written on.

This can lead to two very bad outcomes. The first is that the patient chooses to receive the critical care they need, but, because the short-term junk plan doesn't cover the care, the patient ends up being stuck with an incredibly high out-of-pocket medical bill, or the patient, upon learning that the junk plan doesn't cover critical care, chooses not to get the care they need, which leads to adverse outcomes or an unplanned trip to the emergency room, the cost of which may be footed by the taxpayer.

If you are someone with a preexisting condition, such as asthma, diabetes, or cancer, you could be charged more, sometimes truly astronomical amounts, for insurance that will not even cover many of your most basic benefits or you can be denied certain benefits altogether.

If that sounds familiar, it is because it is the same situation people with preexisting conditions were in before the passage of the Affordable Care Act. That is why I am calling on all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to vote to repeal the Trump administration's rule that authorizes these junk plans, threatening protections for millions of Americans with preexisting conditions and increasing healthcare costs all across the board.

If there is one thing that Republicans and Democrats should all agree on, it is that we must ensure that people with preexisting conditions are protected and that they can be covered—people like Bernadette Clark of Manchester, whose youngest son is living with cerebral palsy, a complex medical condition, and would not have access to the type of health insurance that she and her family need if not for the protections that the Affordable Care Act afforded to people with preexisting conditions.

Doctors, nurses, hospitals, and patients universally oppose these junk plans because they know how dangerous these plans are for the health and well-being of our people.

I urge every Senator to stand with Granite Staters and all Americans in opposing the Trump administration's latest attack on our healthcare system.

Thank you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Vermont is recognized.

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the Senator knows, Senator SHELBY and I have been working very hard on the appropriations bills. I commend his staff and my staff for all the work they have done. It is not just the bill's first page and the number at the end that counts. There is a whole lot that goes in between.

There are a number of policy considerations that are in there. There are

things that Senators from both parties want that make a great deal of sense and both parties are for it, and we are putting those together. I would hope, having done all that, it means that within the next day or so we can get at least four of these appropriations bills passed.

I remind everybody that the last time Senator SHELBY and I went through this exercise, we passed most of the bills, if not unanimously, virtually unanimously. I think it helps the Senate. It shows that we are doing our work and that we can set aside partisan differences and do what is best for the country.

The other body has been working very hard in the House of Representatives on their appropriations bills. Their Appropriations Committee is led by two of the finest members I have served with: NITA LOWEY, the chair from New York, and KAY GRANGER, the ranking member from Texas—one a Democrat and one a Republican—both of whom believe in the Congress and have our support, and they worked hard. I say that just because I have had so many Members ask me how it is going. I think it is going better than anybody thought it might at this point earlier. We will get it done.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

S.J. RES. 52

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, since President Trump was sworn in, he has made it his mission to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. Last Congress, time and again, we saw the House and Senate majorities try—and fail—to repeal the law of the land, the Affordable Care Act.

After their attempt to repeal the Affordable Care Act failed in the Senate, the Trump administration made it abundantly clear that they would do everything possible to sabotage the act through regulations and administrative action. Through this sabotage, the administration has undermined the critical protections healthcare provides for people with preexisting conditions.

I just want to reiterate my support for the Congressional Review Act disapproval resolution that I worked on with Senator WARNER, and I congratulate him for his leadership. What that resolution points out is that preexisting conditions and short-term insurance plans, also known as junk plans, are inconsistent. I am proud to support the disapproval resolution that we will vote on this week that would reverse this administration's so-called 1332 waiver rules.

Those rules allow for the use of taxpayer dollars to subsidize junk insur-

ance plans. These waiver rules are part of the Trump administration's ongoing attempt to make an end run around Congress and dismantle the Affordable Care Act through the regulatory process.

I think it is important to understand the shortcomings of these junk plans that the administration is promoting. These plans are allowed to deny coverage to someone who has a preexisting condition. They also allow insurance companies to charge higher premiums if somebody has a preexisting condition. They are not required to cover the Affordable Care Act's essential benefits, such as maternity care, substance use disorder treatment, or prescription drugs. In New Hampshire, where we have a real challenge with the opioid epidemic, without coverage for substance use disorders, we have thousands of people who would not be able to get treatment for their substance use disorders.

These plans are allowed to place arbitrary limits on the dollar value of services that will be covered annually, and they also don't have to comply with the Affordable Care Act's caps on how much insurers can require that patients pay out of pocket. In short, these junk plan policies are often not worth the paper they are written on, but for some reason, these are plans that are favored by this administration.

The administration's 1332 waiver rules effectively rewrite the law to allow the Affordable Care Act premium tax credits to be used to purchase junk plan coverage. So rather than help subsidize comprehensive healthcare coverage as was intended in the act—coverage that will actually allow people to get the healthcare services they need—what the Trump administration waiver does is have those taxpayer subsidies cover junk plans that generally do not provide the care that people need.

Allowing taxpayer dollars to subsidize junk plan coverage is not only dangerous for consumers, who can be duped into purchasing junk plans, but it also poses a threat to the stability of the insurance market. By aggressively pushing enrollment in junk plans, this administration is seeking to split the insurance market into two: one market for younger and healthier individuals and a second, much more expensive market for older individuals and people with chronic health conditions. This is not the outcome that people in New Hampshire and patients across this country want or deserve.

That is why I intend to vote in favor of the Congressional Review Act resolution, which will overturn these rules that are sabotaging the Affordable Care Act.

Unfortunately, the waiver rules are not the only grave threat that this administration is posing to access to healthcare coverage and protections for people with preexisting conditions. In addition to the sabotage of the ACA that is going on, the Department of

Justice—our Nation's highest law enforcement authority—continues to refuse to defend the law of the land, the Affordable Care Act, in Federal court. Instead, the Justice Department has argued that the Affordable Care Act should be struck down, resulting in the loss of coverage for millions of Americans. The estimate is that if the Affordable Care Act is struck down, 20 million Americans will lose their healthcare.

In New Hampshire, approximately 90,000 Granite Staters have obtained health insurance coverage through either the Affordable Care Act or Medicaid expansion. Across the country, more than 17 million Medicaid expansion enrollees and 11 million people in the marketplace health plan depend on the ACA for their coverage. So these families can see their coverage ripped away if the Department of Justice gets its way in the courtroom.

If the Department is victorious in its litigation, they will also take away the best tool we have for combating the opioid epidemic—the Medicaid expansion. In New Hampshire, more than 11,000 people have substance use treatment thanks to Medicaid expansion. Access to those services will be gone without the Affordable Care Act. At a time when so many families are struggling with sky-high prescription drug prices, a victory by the Department of Justice in this case would increase prescription drug costs for Granite State seniors, who currently save an average of \$1,100 a year thanks to the ACA's Medicare Part D drug discount program.

That is not all. If the courts strike down the Affordable Care Act, insurers would once again be able to exclude coverage for prescription drugs, and the FDA's approval pathway for less expensive biosimilar medication would be invalidated.

I have been watching these ads on behalf of President Trump and the administration that talk about his commitment to lowering prescription drug prices and the importance of the pathway for biosimilar medications that are basically generic drugs for biologics. Yet this pathway to approve those less costly biosimilar medications would be invalidated if the Affordable Care Act gets struck down.

The stakes are really just too high for us to continue the partisan bickering around the Affordable Care Act. We should be coming together to tell the Justice Department to defend the law of the land. That is why I filed an amendment to the Commerce, Justice, Science appropriations bill that would prohibit the Justice Department from using Federal funds to argue against the Affordable Care Act in court. That is why we need to support the Congressional Review Act vote that we will have this week, which would ensure that people with preexisting conditions are not going to be cut off of their health insurance when they are tricked into buying junk plans through this administration's deceptive advertising.

This Friday is the start of the 2020 open enrollment season for the Health Insurance Marketplace coverage under the Affordable Care Act. At this important juncture, we should be sending a very clear message that the Department of Justice should defend the law of the land and that the administration's promotion of junk plans should not continue. If we fail to do so, we are going to be endangering vital access to care for millions—tens of millions—of Americans.

I yield the floor.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 916

MR. DURBIN. Mr. President, it is my honor to come to the floor to speak on an issue that is important for so many Americans.

Let me start at the outset—before I move to unanimous consent on a specific piece of legislation—by saying that I believe that the change in the Affordable Care Act, which prohibited discrimination against people because of preexisting conditions, is one of the most fundamental changes in health insurance in America. Who among us doesn't have a member of their family or a friend with a preexisting condition?

There was a time, of course, when because of that, people were denied any coverage or charged exorbitant amounts of money. Overwhelmingly, we understand that if we are going to have a health insurance system that really serves the entire Nation, we cannot allow health insurance companies to pick and choose.

Prior to the Affordable Care Act's passage in 2010, health insurers used to charge people with preexisting conditions higher monthly premiums or simply deny them coverage all together. Health insurance companies used to impose annual lifetime caps on what they could pay for. These arbitrary limits disproportionately hurt people with preexisting conditions who often needed ongoing intensive medical care, and insurance companies before the Affordable Care Act used to refuse coverage for certain healthcare services that people with preexisting conditions needed—prescription drugs, hospital visits, mental health and substance abuse treatment, maternity and newborn care.

The Affordable Care Act changed all of that. There are no more denials or higher premiums for preexisting conditions, which is an amazing breakthrough. There are no more annual or lifetime caps on benefits and no more refusals to cover maternity benefits or doctors' visits.

Ten years ago, every single Democrat—I was one of them—voted in favor of the Affordable Care Act, and I would do it again today. It was a law that ensured these protections for people with preexisting conditions really meant something and were enforceable.

Ten years ago, every single Senate Republican voted against the Affordable

Care Act. Since it has been signed into law, House and Senate Republicans have voted more than 100 times to repeal the Affordable Care Act. Their efforts have failed. There was one most dramatic effort, which many of us can recall happened just a couple of years ago, right here in the well of the Senate when the late Senator John McCain, Republican of Arizona, came to the floor in the middle of the night and cast a “no” vote. He believed, and I think he was right—I am sure he was right when he said: You can't be just against something; you have to be for something. The Republican side of the aisle has no alternative to the Affordable Care Act. They are just against it. They don't like it. They don't like the name of it. They don't like ObamaCare. They don't like Obama's administration. They just vote no over and over again.

Right now, there is a pending lawsuit that even would try to eliminate the entire Affordable Care Act, including the protection for people with preexisting conditions. Eighteen Republican-led States, including the State of Texas, brought the suit after congressional Republicans eliminated the CRA's individual mandate. President Trump's Department of Justice supports this bill to eliminate the Affordable Care Act. If this lawsuit is successful, nearly 20 million Americans—600,000 of them living in Illinois—could lose their health insurance, and nearly 133 million Americans with preexisting conditions—3 million in Illinois—could once again be at risk of discrimination by health insurance companies. As if that weren't bad enough, President Trump has also proposed new rules that would allow States to discriminate against Americans with preexisting conditions.

This week, the Senate will be voting on a Congressional Review Act resolution to overturn the Trump administration's latest assault on Americans with preexisting conditions. Senator WARNER of Virginia has offered a resolution of disapproval, cosponsored by every single Senate Democrat. If any Senator on the Republican side really wants to help people with preexisting conditions, join us. Make this a bipartisan effort to tell President Trump and his administration it is wrong. We should not discriminate against people with preexisting conditions.

I hope that Senate Republicans will consider supporting a piece of legislation known as the MOMMA's Act. I am cosponsoring it; in fact, I am the lead sponsor in the Senate. The House sponsor is Congresswoman ROBIN KELLY of Illinois. It would ensure that all pregnant women get the care they need. Why is this important to raise in a modern country like America, with our great natural and medical resources? Because the United States is 1 of only 13 countries in the world where maternal mortality rates are worse now than they were 25 years ago. I want to repeat that because it is an incredible

statement, though true. The United States is 1 of only 13 countries in the world where maternal death rates are worse now than they were 25 years ago.

Fortunately, the Presiding Officer is a medical doctor. I know he has devoted a good part of his professional career to serving people of low income, limited means.

You think when you hear that number about maternal mortality in the United States, it cleverly must be associated with economic levels, income levels, wealth levels, education levels. It turns out it is not. Nationwide, more than 700 women die every year as a result of pregnancy, and more than 70,000 suffer near-fatal complications. More than 60 percent of maternal deaths are preventable.

Sadly, the tragedy of maternal mortality is even more pronounced when it comes to mothers of color. In the United States, women of color are three to four times more likely than White women to die as a result of pregnancy. In Illinois, they are six times more likely than White women to die.

When I researched this, I went to the University of Chicago and asked the OB/GYNs there to look into the stats, look into the studies, and tell me what is behind this. They said: Senator, there is no correlation among income, education attainment, and this death rate among women. It is only a question of color. We are losing new moms, and, sadly, we are losing babies as well. Every year, more than 23,000 infants die in the United States, largely due to factors that could be prevented. Black infants are twice as likely to die as White infants—a disparity that is greater than it was in the year 1850 in this country.

That is why Representative KELLY, my colleague Senator DUCKWORTH, and I introduced the MOMMA's Act. First and foremost, our bill would expand the length of time that a new mom can keep her Medicaid healthcare coverage. Currently, Medicaid has to cover women only for 2 months postpartum—after the baby is born. Our bill would expand that to a full year.

Next, the MOMMA's Act would improve access to doulas, as well as improve implicit bias and cultural competency training among healthcare providers. Too often, Black women are just not listened to or taken seriously by healthcare providers. Doulas can provide education, advocacy, and support for women whose voices are being ignored.

Lastly, our bill would improve hospital coordination reporting on maternal healthcare outcomes.

Leader McCONNELL has made it clear that he has no intention of allowing the Senate to debate and pass legislation, instead, rendering the Senate to what has been characterized as a “legislative graveyard.” Senator McCONNELL says with pride that he will be the Grim Reaper—his words—the Grim Reaper. Nothing will pass in the Senate.

But I hope he will make an exception for the MOMMA's Act, which is currently moving through the House of Representatives. Whether you are pro-choice or whether you are right to life, shouldn't we all stand together—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—and say: Let's do something to eliminate this unacceptable level of maternal mortality in the United States. Let's do something to save these babies. Let's agree on that part if we can't agree on anything else.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Finance Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. 960 and the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Reserving the right to object, this bill is in the jurisdiction of a committee that I am chairman of, the Senate Finance Committee. I think the Senate Finance Committee has a reputation for doing things in a very bipartisan way and moving a lot of important legislation. For example, we moved a bill out of committee to, hopefully, get consideration on the floor. It is a very bipartisan bill that reduces the cost of prescription drugs. We did that on a 19-to-9 vote.

There are a lot of other things we are working on, including some trade legislation. We want to consider, hopefully, in a bipartisan way the U.S.-Mexico agreement. We also have an agreement out on encouraged savings and things of that nature.

I want to respond to my friend by reminding him how our committee works. Last night was the first time that I heard there was an interest in moving Senator DURBIN's bill. The bill has not been through the committee process, and, therefore, there has been no opportunity to weigh in with what we know and to determine what we need.

There are a number of programs focused on reducing maternal mortality, and it is unclear how this bill coordinates with those efforts. This bill makes a number of long-term changes to Medicaid, and the policy and budgetary impacts are unknown.

I am offering a counterproposal in the Medicaid Program to address maternal health and identify underserved areas. Additional funding is provided for existing Maternal and Child Health Services Block Grants. This focus is fully offset by a policy that saves money by focusing our limited resources on moms and babies, rather than spending on prisoners at a higher percentage in our most vulnerable populations.

I am going to offer Senator DURBIN this proposal that I just described. I ask the Senator to modify his request

to include my amendment, which is at the desk.

I ask unanimous consent that the amendment be considered and agreed to; that the bill, as amended, be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. DURBIN. Reserving the right to object, the Senator from Iowa is my friend. We throw that word around here on the Senate floor, and it usually doesn't mean much, but it is true. We are friends. I respect him very much. I think he is a good father, good grandfather, and I think the time will come—and I hope soon—when we can sit down and take his proposal and my proposal and put them together and make a bill we will both be proud of. We have done that before, even to the point of getting the President to sign the bill into law.

For the time being and because his proposal cuts some Medicaid benefits that are a great concern to me, I am going to object in the hope that we can use this opportunity and this moment as a basis for sitting down and finding a bill we can agree on.

I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard on the modification.

Is there objection to the original request?

Mr. GRASSLEY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. MCSALLY). The Senator from Kentucky.

TRIBUTE TO JIM MILLIMAN

Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise to honor and pay tribute to one of the most tenacious and dedicated Kentuckians I have had the pleasure of knowing, Mr. Jim Milliman.

Jim began his career in 1964 after graduating from the University of Notre Dame. He subsequently graduated magna cum laude from the University of Louisville School of Law in 1970. He married Nan Milliman, and they made their home in Louisville, KY. They have been married for 48 years.

When I first met Jim, I knew him as one of Kentucky's finest attorneys, who represented Brown & Williamson during the tobacco litigation and the State Republicans in election law matters. I knew him as an accomplished managing partner of the Louisville-based law firm, Middleton Reutlinger. I also knew him as the fiery conservative cohost who often sat opposite Congressman JOHN YARMUTH on WAVE 3 TV's political show "Hot Button." He was known for his spirited debate and for not backing down.

After having over 40 successful years in commercial litigation and receiving numerous awards from his peers, such as being named one of the top 50 attorneys in Kentucky, Jim decided to retire—from the law, at least. In 2010,

right after I was elected to the Senate, I convinced Jim to come out of retirement and be my State director for Kentucky. I am truly grateful that he said yes because, for nearly a decade, Jim has served in that role and has been one of my most trusted advisers.

Anyone who knows Jim knows that he is a force to be reckoned with. He is fiercely loyal, a real problem solver, and a highly accomplished legal mind. Moreover, he is an incredibly kind person who cares deeply about his friends and colleagues. When I ran for President, Jim spearheaded the approval of a caucus for Kentucky so I would not be kept from the ballot for President and the U.S. Senate.

Recently, Jim has decided to transition from the daily State director duties into more of an advisory role. Considering he tried to retire over 10 years ago, I think it is well-deserved. No matter in what capacity, I will always be thankful to have Jim as a part of my team as an ally and an adviser.

He has dedicated so much of his time to the pursuit of liberty and freedom, to defending the principles that made this Nation great, and to supporting a pro-Kentucky policy agenda.

Thank you, Jim, for your service to Kentucky and to this country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that debate time for S.J. Res. 52 expire at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, October 30, and that notwithstanding rule XXII, the cloture motions filed during yesterday's session of the Senate ripen following the disposition of S.J. Res. 52.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

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

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2019

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Wednesday, October 30; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of S.J. Res. 52, under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?