

which would be the biggest expansion of government healthcare in history. By some estimates, Medicare for All would cost more than \$30 trillion over 10 years. This one program would double the Federal budget and would require massive tax increases on each and every man, woman, and child in America.

Right now, we collect \$3 trillion in Federal revenue. Medicare for All would require everyone's Federal taxes to more than double. Coincidentally, the Congressional Budget Office has so far been unable to do an official score of the Medicare for All bill. I have asked the sponsor of the bill, the junior Senator from Vermont, who happens to be the ranking member of the Senate Budget Committee, to join me in requesting the CBO score for his bill. So far, crickets.

Why wouldn't the Senator want a score of his bill? It is because the Democrats don't want you to know how much it would cost. They don't want you to know how many people would lose the employer-sponsored healthcare they have and like. They don't want you to know how much taxes would have to go up.

Medicare for All is the Democrats' dream: every American on a government-run healthcare program, every American reliant on the Federal Government for their healthcare. Any effort to undermine this goal is anathema to them.

So this week they are going after 1332 waivers and claiming they somehow undermine protections for people with preexisting conditions. The Senate Democratic leader claimed yesterday that these waivers are an effort to "sabotage healthcare for millions."

I find that statement interesting. I wonder what Democratic Governor Jared Polis of Colorado thinks of the Democratic leader's claim that he is trying to sabotage healthcare. His State used these 1332 waivers to offer healthcare plans to best meet the needs of Coloradans. They have seen premiums go down by 16 percent.

I wonder what Democratic Governor John Carney of Delaware would say? His State also used this waiver and has seen premiums drop by 13 percent.

I wonder what Democratic Governor Gina Raimondo of Rhode Island would say? Premiums in her State have gone down 6 percent since they got their 1332 waiver.

Contrary to the misinformation from the Democratic leader, these waivers do not eliminate protections for people with preexisting conditions. These core protections, which I strongly support, remain unchanged.

This is personal to me. My brother grew up with a preexisting condition, and my mother had to drive 200 miles to a charity hospital just to get treatment for him. The Democrats are misrepresenting the facts about 1332 waivers because they realize they are losing the argument.

Remember the ObamaCare promise: You can keep your insurance plan,

your doctor, and every family will save \$2,500. ObamaCare only benefited hospitals, insurance companies, and the pharmaceutical industry. That is why they originally supported it. But for the average American, millions lost their insurance and their doctors, premiums skyrocketed, deductibles skyrocketed. The result is that while more people have healthcare insurance, fewer people have access to healthcare. Now they want to double down with Medicare for All.

There are three problems with our current healthcare system, all caused by government: cost, cost, and cost. None of the Democrats' proposals would do a thing to address the cost of healthcare. Their proposals only make the problem worse. Keep that in mind as you listen to the Democrats' fearmongering on healthcare. They have to misrepresent information because they can't defend their own position.

The American people don't want and can't afford Medicare for All. We need to reduce healthcare costs and provide a safety net for those who cannot afford their healthcare, not create a Federal Government-organized healthcare market, which causes healthcare costs to skyrocket.

Giving flexibility to the States is an easy way to increase access and quality of care for the American people. So, of course, Democrats oppose that—except for the Democratic Governors who are doing it every day.

If you needed any more evidence of how out of touch Washington Democrats have become, look no further than their criticism and their vote against Democratic Governors for supporting good policies that make sense.

Enough with the misrepresentations, enough with the nonsense, enough with the fearmongering. The American people deserve better.

Let's work together to lower the cost of healthcare so that all taxpayers can get the care they need at a price they can afford.

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

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BRAUN). Without objection, it is so ordered.

H.R. 2740

Mr. SULLIVAN. Mr. President, I want to say a few words this afternoon about the funding of our military, the support for our troops, and what just happened on the U.S. Senate floor because it is a pretty sad exercise that, unfortunately, happens way too often in this body. I know it can be confusing to the people who are watching in the Gallery and on TV, but I want to explain what just happened because the

American people should know what is happening right now in this body.

Unfortunately, it is *deja vu* all over again on the Defense appropriations bill. Now, I enjoy my bipartisan work. Some of the best friends I have made here in the Senate have been on the other side of the aisle, but there are also principled disagreements on key issues between some of the parties here. One of them is whether we fully support our military and national defense and if we make that support a priority, not a political football, which is what we just witnessed on the Senate floor.

Now, I know all of my colleagues are patriotic. I have no doubt about that—all 100. We all love our country. Yet, in our looking at history over the decades and also just in the past few years, it certainly leaves one with the impression and the strong conclusion that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle support our military when it is convenient but have much higher priorities for which they are ready and willing to undermine military funding, readiness, and support for our troops who keep us safe.

To put this in context, we just voted to get on the Defense appropriations bill, which is the bill that funds our military. We had a budget agreement several months ago that did that. We just took up a previous appropriations bill. The plan in the Senate was to go from the bill on appropriations that we just passed to the Defense bill. That was the plan. Lo and behold, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle said: No. We are going to filibuster the funding for our military. That is what just happened.

America, media, please understand that this is what just happened.

As I mentioned with regard to my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, this priority for the military isn't always there. I also mentioned decades. If you look at the national Presidential level over the past four decades during which a Democratic President has been in power—think about it: President Carter, President Clinton, President Obama—what has happened? Defense spending has been cut dramatically every time, and the readiness and morale of our military forces has plummeted. That is a fact.

I chair the Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness and Management Support. From 2010 to 2015, defense spending for our military declined by 25 percent, which was President Obama's second term, and we are still digging out of the hole we dug for our military with regard to readiness. Let me give you a couple of examples.

In 2015, when I first got to the Senate, 3 out of 58 brigade combat teams in the U.S. Army were at the tier 1 level of readiness that we expect. Think about that. The men and women who joined the Army who were ready to fight were in 3 out of the 58 brigade combat teams. The brigade combat team is the 5,000-man building block of

the Army, but over half of the Marine Corps naval aviation couldn't fly in 2015. Think about that. In terms of training for all pilots in the military, the flight times plummeted to, I think it was, about 8 hours a month.

My very first challenge in 2015 was part of this Obama drawdown of the military. Right when I got here, they had announced that they were going to cut an additional 50,000 U.S. Army Active-Duty troops. This was in 2015. This was only 4 years ago. Again, national security challenges are growing in the world, and 4 years ago, the Obama administration cut the Army by an additional 50,000 Active-Duty troops. This included a very important unit for the Army that happened to be in my State, the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division—a 5,000-man Airborne brigade combat team. It was the only airborne, Arctic-trained unit in the entire Asia-Pacific, in the entire Arctic. It was on the chopping block to go.

We fought that. I fought that. It was an issue I put hundreds of hours into with my team. I put a hold on the Secretary of the Army's confirmation. I put a hold on the Chief of Staff of the Army's confirmation to finally get their attention that this was a bad idea for America's national security. We won that fight, but the other 40,000 Active-Duty troops whom the Obama administration decided to get rid of are gone, and we are still rebuilding from that.

Make no mistake, if one of my colleagues who is running for President—my colleague from Massachusetts or my colleague from Vermont—gets elected next year, defense spending is going to plummet. That is just the way it is.

Go look at some of the versions of the Green New Deal for which they are advocating. It is not just about shutting down resource development. Some of the versions of that legislation, of that idea, say we are going to cut defense spending up to 50 percent. That is in the legislation.

So that is at the national level.

What about what has been going on in the U.S. Senate?

I have been here for almost 5 years. One of the big reasons I ran for the Senate was to stop the gutting of our military and to take care of our troops. I mentioned that from 2010 to 2015, readiness plummeted and that defense spending plummeted, but we have turned that around. In this Congress, with the Republicans in control and with a Republican in the White House, we have turned that around.

Now we are rebuilding our military, and a lot of my Democratic colleagues have supported this. I want to give them credit. They realized the Obama cuts were very harmful to our readiness, to our military, and to their families. There has been bipartisan support for rebuilding our military, but—and this is a big “but”—this has been a big struggle. Why? Every time my colleagues on the other side of the aisle

have higher priorities than funding our troops and the national security of our Nation—and I am not sure there are many higher priorities than that, not in my view, anyway—they turn to holding hostage defense spending by filibustering the funding of our military.

That is just what happened a couple of hours ago—actually, an hour ago—here on the Senate floor. Their friends in the press don't report on it, but it happens all the time. This puts lives at risk, and this undermines our military. By the way, the members of the military see this. The press might not report on it, but our Nation's troops and their families watch.

I said it happens all the time. Let me give you a couple of examples.

In 2015 and in 2016, when the minority was led by Harry Reid, of Nevada, he filibustered the Defense appropriations bill seven times. Again, the media didn't report on it. I am a colonel in the Marine Corps Reserves, and I trained with the Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. I remember being out, training with these marines, many of whom are now going off to the Middle East—to Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan. Yet what was going on in the Senate was that the minority leader, Harry Reid, was blocking the funding of the troops.

I get it, that one leader of the Democratic Party was doing that, but what really shocked me back then was why all of the colleagues on his side followed suit to do that. I still can't understand it, especially the colleagues who have a significant military presence in their States, like in my State, the great State of Alaska.

During that time, I went to the majority leader, Leader McCONNELL, and asked him to keep bringing this bill to the floor. Let's debate it. Let's talk about it. Let's see if the American people understand what is happening, which I think they did. As we kept bringing this up to the minority leader of the U.S. Senate, many of us came down here and asked the questions: Why are you doing this? Do you not think the American people understand? Do you not think the troops understand? Come down to the Senate floor and explain why you are not supporting the funding of our troops and their families and military readiness.

Unfortunately, he never did that. That was a couple of years ago, and it is *deja vu* all over again today.

We tried to bring the Defense appropriations bill to the floor in September, before the end of the fiscal year, but my colleagues on the other side filibustered. What does that mean? It means they didn't want to vote on it, and they didn't want to deal with it so they didn't let us vote and get the 60 votes to get on the bill.

Now we are a month into the new fiscal year, and as we just saw on the floor, we finished another appropriations bill that had strong bipartisan support. The plan was to then go to De-

fense appropriations, but there was another filibuster. Amazing. I still haven't heard an explanation from anybody on the other side as to why they are doing it, but I will tell you this: It is clear to me that supporting our troops and military readiness are not their priorities.

Here are just a few items in the bill that was just filibustered: a 3½-percent pay raise. For the Army, there is full support for the 58 brigade combat teams I mentioned that were in such a low state of readiness. By the way, it is increasing. I think the number is close to 25 brigade combat teams now that we have been funding the military at tier 1 levels. Included is support for the Navy's carrier strike groups, amphibious-ready groups for the Marines and Navy, and Navy and Marine aviation units. It funds the maximum amount of flying and training for our Air Force pilots, which has been such a problem in terms of readiness. There is a huge boost to missile defense, most of which is based in the great State of Alaska, and it appropriates the funding to buy 96 F-35s in fiscal year 2020. These are the most sophisticated fifth-generation fighters. Two squadrons of F-35s will be coming to my State soon—this is funding for that—to compete with China and Russia.

These are just a few of the particulars, but what do these numbers really amount to? A better paid, better equipped, and more lethal military force.

That is what the American people want from us. It doesn't matter party—Democrat, Republican—or region—South, North, Alaska, Florida—the people want this. The troops want this. Their families want this.

We have troops in harm's way right now all around the world. Yesterday, almost every one of the Members of this body—all 100 Senators—went to a top secret briefing about the raid that killed the ISIS leader, al-Baghdadi. We were able to actually see some of the video of the remarkable professionalism, courage, and dedication of our military Special Forces who went in there at great risk to their lives and took out this ruthless, brutal, dangerous terrorist.

We owe these and our other military members and their families such a huge debt of gratitude and certainly the support of the Congress of the United States.

I was honestly thinking this morning: How can any Senator who witnessed that yesterday—and I think all 100 were there—come to the floor this afternoon and filibuster the funding for our military? Well, a bunch of them just did.

I don't know why, but as far as I can tell, since I have been in the Senate—going on 5 years—that is the ninth filibuster of defense spending in the appropriations for our military and their families that my colleagues on the Democratic side of this body have done.

Let me repeat that. Nine times in the last 4½ years, there has been this exercise to hold our military hostage for some other political priority by denying them funding—nine times.

I checked, and since I have been here, there has been no bill—no bill—filibustered more by my colleagues on the other side of the aisle than the bill that would fund our military.

Think about that. Think about that for a minute. This is the bill, when they want to leverage some other issue that has nothing to do with national security, that they pick out and they filibuster—nine times in the last 4 years.

I think it is shameful. It is politics pure and simple, certainly driven by the extreme left of their party, many of whom have not focused on the national security of our country and supporting our troops. They are trying to leverage funding for our troops to gain political concessions on other issues.

Here is the bottom line: The men and women who serve in the military don't deserve this. I wish the press would write about it. Don't hold your breath on that.

For my part, I am going to continue to come down here, as I have done before on this very issue, and say: Look, if there is one thing we should be focused on, it is supporting our military and funding them and their families to make them ready, to make them lethal, to enable them to protect our country.

If there is one bill in the Congress that we shouldn't have filibustered nine times in the last 4 years, it is this one. But that is what just happened.

I hope more Americans see this. Call your Senators who voted no today and tell them you don't agree with that vote. You do not agree with that vote. I guarantee you, the men and women who serve our country don't either, and they would appreciate if you would weigh in on their behalf.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

REMEMBERING KAY HAGAN

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to a woman who was more than just our colleague. She was our friend, and I am missing my friend today.

When I think about Senator Kay Hagan, I remember a lot of things. First was her deep dedication to public service. From the moment she woke up until the sun set behind her beloved Blue Ridge Mountains, Kay was focused on serving the people of North Carolina and the State she loved so much.

It was such an honor working with her, especially on behalf of North Carolina's farmers, small towns, and rural communities that she loved so much. She was passionate about the health of the land and the people who live and work on it.

Second, Kay was a fighter. We all knew that. Growing up between two brothers probably contributed to that. I have two brothers myself, and I can attest to the fact that it toughens you up.

We saw that spark every day on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Kay had a deep and abiding sense of justice, and she stood up for North Carolina families every single day, even when it wasn't easy and even when she paid a political price for it.

She stood up for expanding healthcare and protecting the rights of North Carolina women and families. That same fighting spirit kept her going through her own grueling health challenges.

I had the chance to visit with her a couple of years ago when she was receiving treatment at a rehabilitation hospital in Georgia. She was working so hard to recover her ability to move and to talk, but one thing hadn't changed—that spark in her eyes.

I know I speak for all of us when I say that Kay's grace and endurance over the past 3 years were incredibly inspiring.

Finally, when I think of Kay, I think of kindness. In a city full of sharp words and even sharper elbows, Kay was unfailingly optimistic and an absolute joy to work with.

I know that even my Republican colleagues would agree with me and join in our sorrow over her loss.

Kay and I happened to have daughters who were getting married around the same time, and as many of you know, mothers of brides love to talk about wedding plans and to share photos about the big day, and we shared a lot of photos.

I will never forget the way her face would always light up whenever she talked about her family. She was so proud of each and every one of them, and they were proud of her too.

In her final floor speech, Kay shared one of her guiding principles, a paraphrase of Luke 12:48: To whom much is given, much is expected.

This Chamber and this country are better for having known Senator Kay Hagan. She lived by that principle. She gave us so much, and she gave it with her whole heart.

Knowing Kay was a gift, and I feel so fortunate to have been able to call her my friend. My deepest condolences are with her husband Chip and their children and their extended family and many, many friends and her beloved State of North Carolina.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

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

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

NOMINATION OF LAWRENCE VANDYKE

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Madam President, I rise today in opposition to the nomination of Lawrence VanDyke to serve on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit.

Mr. VanDyke fits neatly into this administration's pattern of picking Federal judges for our circuit courts of appeal without meaningful input from home State Senators. The President continues to select ideologically extreme nominees like Mr. VanDyke, and the White House is putting forward people without enough experience for the momentous roles they have been chosen to serve.

Mr. VanDyke has been nominated to fill a Nevada seat on the Ninth Circuit even though he is not a Nevadan. He didn't grow up in my State. He doesn't appear to own property there. He doesn't seem to have family ties. And he was an active member of the Nevada State bar for only 2 years.

Senator ROSEN and I engaged with the White House to put forward highly respected Nevadans with bipartisan support, but our suggestions were summarily ignored because the White House was laser-focused on Mr. VanDyke.

I want to be clear. The administration did not meaningfully consult about this nomination with Nevada Senators, and the result is a poor nominee.

First and foremost, I am extremely concerned about the effect that Lawrence VanDyke's lifetime appointment would have on women's reproductive rights in America. As Montana's solicitor general, Mr. VanDyke supported an Arizona abortion ban. In an amicus brief in *Horne v. Isaacson*, he contended that the constitutional right to choose should be revisited. He also defended a Montana law that made it harder for young women in that State to seek an abortion, and he advocated for letting corporations sidestep their obligations to provide insurance coverage for contraception.

Based on this record, I fear that, as a Federal judge, Mr. VanDyke would limit women's health choices in Nevada and throughout the country, including their access to birth control.

His record on LGBTQ rights is also dismal. Mr. VanDyke has ties to two ideologically extreme, anti-LGBTQ groups that the Southern Poverty Law Center has designated as hate groups. Those are the Alliance Defending Freedom and the Family Research Council. These ties are hardly surprising given that Mr. VanDyke has opposed gay rights since law school, when he wrote an article for the *Harvard Law Record*. This is that article: "One student's response to 'A Response to Glendon.'" It is dated March 11, 2004, by Lawrence VanDyke. In this article, he promotes the truth that same-sex marriage would hurt families, children, and society. This is that article, and this is his quote—clearly not only his writing but