

after the Secretary signed an order finalizing the decision to close the majority of the facility.

The battle wasn't over. In 2014, I had succeeded in attaching a measure to an appropriations legislation prohibiting the closure of the Hot Springs facility until a national VA realignment strategy was proposed. In each year, with appreciation to the Appropriations Committee, I have managed to renew this measure. And after a new VA Secretary—Secretary Robert Wilkie—took the helm, I repeatedly urged him to come to Hot Springs and to check out our facility for himself. Early this year, the Secretary announced that he would visit the facility in March.

I then organized a letter with the rest of the South Dakota delegation strongly urging the Secretary to make time to sit down with Hot Springs veterans and other stakeholders and listen to their concerns about the planned closure. To our great gratitude, the Secretary agreed.

Early in Secretary Wilkie's visit to Hot Springs on March 2, I requested that he revisit the order to close the facility signed over 3 years ago. A bit to our surprise and much to our relief, the Secretary agreed, reassuring us that the Hot Springs VA would remain open for our veterans.

That meeting with veterans was pivotal. I worked hard in Congress—along with other Members of the South Dakota delegation—to keep the Hot Springs facility open. But the campaign would never have succeeded without the passion of Hot Springs veterans and the Hot Springs community, which rallied in support of the facility and have proposed innovative ideas for the campus's future. And meeting with these veterans and other stakeholders and hearing their thoughts and stories played a major role in Secretary Wilkie's decision.

Now, 2020 has been a tough year. But even in tough times, good things can happen. And last week's announcement that the VA has begun the formal process of rescinding its order to close the Hot Springs facility, expected to take 30 to 60 days, has given a lot of us reason for gratitude. I am thankful to Secretary Wilkie for taking a real look at South Dakota veterans' concerns and reversing the VA's decision to close the facility. And I look forward to celebrating with South Dakota veterans the next time I am in Hot Springs—or, as a lot of us know it, the "Veterans Town."

AGRICULTURE

Mr. President, while most sectors of our economy were thriving before the coronavirus pandemic hit, farmers and ranchers were struggling. Low prices, extended trade disputes, and natural disasters had meant a lot of tough years for agriculture producers even before the arrival of the coronavirus.

Yesterday, I held virtual meetings with South Dakota farmers and ranchers and heard firsthand about the challenges they are facing because of the pandemic.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of my home State of South Dakota, and making sure our ag producers have what they need to keep feeding our Nation—and the world—is one of my top priorities here in Washington.

During debate on the CARES Act—our largest coronavirus relief bill to date—I fought to make sure that we included relief for farmers and ranchers. The final bill included \$14 billion for the Commodity Credit Corporation, plus an additional \$9.5 billion in emergency support to allow the Department of Agriculture to provide income and price support for farmers and ranchers.

USDA has been putting these resources to work to provide assistance to producers in South Dakota and across the country who were affected by the pandemic, and they have been a lifeline to many farmers. But more needs to be done to support our Nation's agriculture industry. And part of doing that is funding the Commodity Credit Corporation in the continuing resolution—the appropriations measure that hopefully Congress will be considering soon.

The Commodity Credit Corporation ensures that USDA has the resources it needs to provide assistance through farm programs, including the programs included in the bipartisan 2018 farm bill—commodity programs like the Agriculture Risk Coverage, we call it the ARC Program; the Price Loss Coverage, what we call the PLC Program; and Marketing Assistance Loans; dairy programs like the Dairy Margin programs; disaster programs, like the Livestock Forage Disaster Program; and the Livestock Indemnity Program.

These programs are a critical part of farmers and ranchers' safety net, and we need to ensure that they are fully funded.

Later this morning, my colleague Senator HOEVEN from North Dakota will be hosting a colloquy to draw attention to the need to get USDA the resources it requires to help our agriculture producers weather this crisis. I appreciate Senator HOEVEN's work to highlight this issue, and I hope my Democratic colleagues will hear agriculture producers' concerns.

I see my colleague, the chairman of the Agriculture Committee—the committee on which I serve—is here as well to talk about these issues and to point to the need to ensure that we are doing everything we can to support our Nation's farmers and ranchers during this time of incredible challenge.

I look forward to working with the chairman of the Ag Committee and our other colleagues from our agriculture States—many of whom will be here momentarily to talk about this issue—to help our ranchers and farmers face down the challenges that are in front of them.

I urge my Democratic colleagues to work with Republicans to make sure that USDA has the resources it needs to support our agricultural producers—the men and women who feed not only this country but the entire world.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. ROBERTS. Madam President, I want to thank Senator THUNE for his very pertinent and cogent remarks. This is an important time to make a decision that affects all farmers and ranchers and growers all across our country during a time in which we are going through some very difficult times—weather and everything else that you can imagine.

I see Senator ERNST over there, who will be following me, I am assuming.

I want to thank Senator HOEVEN for reserving this time, as other members of the Agricultural Committee come and speak on an issue that we shouldn't really be having an issue.

As I said, I rise to engage in a colloquy on the importance of providing certainty and predictability. Those were the watch words we used when we passed the farm bill. To our Nation's farmers, ranchers, and growers, by replenishing the Commodity Credit Corporation, there should not be an issue.

First, I would like to thank Senator HOEVEN, who has just arrived on the floor, for his leadership and speaking to this issue, and other Senators for their commitment to agriculture in their respective States and across the country. No matter what they grow or where they live, farmers, ranchers, and growers have done their part to ensure the U.S. food, fiber, and fuel supply continues without disruption during these unprecedented times.

I think everybody is familiar with the situation. Every 5 years, Congress passes legislation that sets the national agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and forestry policy—commonly referred to as the farm bill. That is our commitment, and we did that. These are for the folks on the frontlines, in the fields, caring for livestock, managing the lands day in and day out, despite all the weather problems we are having today.

As chairman of this committee—the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee—we were successful in passing the 2018 farm bill in a bipartisan manner. Everybody says: Oh, we have to work together to get back to where we were bipartisan. We were. Eighty-seven Members in this Chamber voted in favor of this legislation.

That vote demonstrated that the 2018 farm bill did provide much certainty and predictability to all farmers and ranchers across all regions and all crops. However, it is no secret that times continue to remain tough in farm country. Farmers and ranchers continue to experience low commodity prices, a global pandemic, natural disasters, and the effects of retaliatory tariffs. That is a terrible combination.

The 2018 farm bill does provide essential programs to producers that allow them to mitigate some of the risks—some of the risks—that are outside their control. Many of these programs are implemented through the authority

and the annual funding Congress provides to Commodity Credit Corporation, or the CCC.

I want to stress to my colleagues that now is not the time for partisan gamesmanship. If Congress does not replenish the CCC, it could significantly harm or even halt these important programs. I can't imagine doing that. Farmers, ranchers, and others in farm country are counting on us to do our job. In fact, we have heard loud and clear from over 40 different organizations representing farmers, ranchers, and other rural stakeholders across the country that the CCC must be reimbursed before the end of the fiscal year.

I want to say this and make this emphatically clear: Failure to do so would result in delays of the 2018 farm bill programs. We are talking about other programs because of COVID-19 and the pandemic and all of that. But even during a global pandemic, U.S. farmers and ranchers continue to hold up their end of the bargain by producing their crops for the world's safest, most affordable food supply. The least we can do is to ensure that the 2018 farm bill—the piece of legislation that received 87 votes in this body right here in the Senate—continues to be fully implemented, on time, and without delay.

I hope that we can reach a bipartisan agreement. This business of at least holding up the CCC funds—I understand what people have with regard to their own top things that they want to get accomplished, but holding up the CCC is not an answer.

I look forward to working with my Senate colleagues in a bipartisan way to ensure that we provide farmers and ranchers with certainty and predictability from the 2018 farm bill.

I thank the distinguished Senator, Mr. HOEVEN, for asking for this time.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I want to thank our Ag chairman. I want to thank him for being here today. I want to thank him for his many, many years of service in this body. And most of all, what I want to thank him for today is his leadership on farm issues, on ag issues, on working on behalf of our farmers and ranchers, and in working in a very bipartisan way. That is what he is here doing.

You heard from our whip, the Senator from South Dakota, an ag State. You heard from our Ag chairman, the Senator from Kansas, an ag State. You are going to hear from other members of our Ag Committee. You are going to hear from the Senator from Iowa, an ag State. You are going to hear from Senator BOOZMAN from Arkansas, an ag State; from Senator FISCHER, Nebraska, obviously a big farm and ranch State; the Presiding Officer, I know, would be right here speaking with us if he weren't presiding—again, an ag State.

What this is all about today is making sure that we support farmers and

ranchers. We are here in a very positive, encouraging way, and it is to make the point that we need to get assistance to our farmers and ranchers. We have some of that available. We have about \$14 billion that we secured in the CARES Act that is ready to go out. It is ready to go.

We have done a ton of work with the USDA. We want to thank the Ag Secretary, Sonny Perdue. Georgia is another ag State. His whole team worked hard on this. We worked hard with him.

That \$14 billion needs to get out to our farmers and ranchers and across the country. It really touches just about every State.

Then we need to replenish the Commodity Credit Corporation, the CCC. I chair Ag Appropriations. I work with that every year. There is about \$30 billion, year in and year out, that goes in it. This is not a new thing. This is something we do every year. We need to get that done now in the CR so we can continue to provide that help and support for our farmers and our ranchers. This is what funds the key farm programs.

The countercyclical safety net. Very key programs—ARC, AGRIS coverage, and PLC, price loss coverage—are funded by the CCC. That is just fundable—that is the heart and soul of the bipartisan farm program we passed, as our Ag chairman just described. It is bipartisan, strongly supported in our committee, and strongly supported on the floor of this body, as well as in the House. As I say, this funding is the heart and soul of the farm program. It also funds conservation programs and other things. That safety net that our farmers and ranchers rely on every year is what is funded through the CCC. That is why we are here today.

As our Ag chairman said, we have over 40 farm groups from across the country that sent a letter to leadership and said: Absolutely, not only move forward with this aid we are talking about, the \$14 billion we have gotten through CARES—and I think we are close to getting there again, thanks to the USDA. I think you will see that very soon. But absolutely take that step to replenish the CCC so that we can continue to provide that countercyclical safety net, that farm program our farmers and our ranchers depend on.

Remember, this isn't just about our farmers and ranchers. This isn't just about good farm policy. In this country, we have the lowest cost, highest quality food supply in the world that benefits every single American every single day because of our farmers and ranchers. That is how important this is.

Let me turn next to my colleagues. I am going to turn to the Senator from Nebraska. She is a cattle rancher. Who better to hear from next than Senator FISCHER from Nebraska, a cattle rancher herself?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nebraska.

Mrs. FISCHER. I want to thank my colleague from North Dakota.

It is so appropriate, Madam President, that you are in the chair right now presiding because you are a cattle farmer from the great State of Mississippi, and we have many, many discussions on the importance of livestock and on the importance of agriculture to our States.

Nebraska is an ag State. In 2018, Nebraska generated around \$21.3 billion in agricultural cash receipts. Agriculture and ag processing accounts for 9.4 percent of the State's GDP. The agriculture production complex accounts for approximately one-quarter of our GDP workforce. By these measures, agriculture plays a greater role in my State of Nebraska than it does in the economy of any other State in the United States. When agriculture suffers, Nebraska suffers.

Over the last several years, our farmers and ranchers have done their fair share of suffering. As my colleague mentioned, USDA's most recent farm income projections forecast that cash receipts will be at their lowest level in more than a decade. As a rancher, I know it is difficult to plan for the future when you are facing so many factors that are outside of your control, whether it is low commodity prices or retaliatory tariffs or natural disasters that we have gone through and also a global pandemic.

Nebraska's farmers and ranchers have maintained their patience in these tough times, but they deserve to know without any kind of doubt that amidst all of this unpredictability they are experiencing, we here in Congress are going to hold up our end of the bargain.

For decades, the Commodity Credit Corporation has been routinely replenished to fund the programs that the Senator from North Dakota spoke about—those programs that are so important to the farm safety net. Producers count on programs like the agriculture risk coverage, price loss coverage, marketing assistance loans, the important conservation programs, and so many more.

For PLC alone, U.S. farmers are expected to receive \$4.7 billion in October. Out of that total, Nebraska farmers are anticipating \$180 million in program payments. Without that immediate CCC reimbursement, these payments and these programs are going to be significantly delayed. That will jeopardize the nearly 46,000 farms and ranches in my State of Nebraska.

We have seen more than 40 agriculture and commodity groups who have stepped forward and written congressional leadership this week with a very, very clear message: Blocking the inclusion of that CCC reimbursement in a CR will hurt farmers and ranchers, no question.

We need to come together. We need to come together and fund the programs that we, Republicans and Democrats alike, have voted on in countless

farm bills. Our farmers and ranchers rely on them, and they rely on them now more than ever. Congress must keep its commitment to these hard-working men and women.

I urge my colleagues in the House and here in the Senate not to allow politics to stand in the way of upholding our commitment to those hard-working men and women who get up every morning and work tirelessly day in and day out to put food on our tables. Our producers aren't thinking of just themselves; they are planning for future generations that will proudly carry on their life's work and continue feeding our world. Let's make sure we continue to fund these programs so that we can ensure that they can do that.

My thanks to my fellow ag State colleagues who know the importance of agriculture, not just to the States we represent but to this country as a whole. Thank you to the Senator from North Dakota for organizing us to come to the floor so that we as a group can stress that importance.

Mr. HOEVEN. Madam President, I would like to thank the good Senator from Nebraska and turn to the Senator from Iowa, who has also been an absolute champion on behalf of agriculture. Thanks so much for being here.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Thank you, Senator HOEVEN and Senator FISCHER, as well. We have so many of our great ag State friends here on the floor today to join in this colloquy.

I did grow up on a small family farm in Southwest Iowa and grew up around hogs. We have row crops, of course, coming out of Iowa—soybeans and corn, which are very, very important.

This is an important discussion today because our farmers need certainty—I hear it time and again from Iowa's ag community—whether it is trade, biofuels, or the supports that are coming from USDA.

Just yesterday, I heard the message loud and clear as I was on a phone call with our farmers from the Iowa Farm Bureau. They said we need to make sure the CCC is fully funded. This isn't just because of COVID-19 aid payments. That is something different. Those have been helpful to most of our farmers. This is because our farm bill programs depend on the CCC being funded. The important supports out there for dairy, for conservation, for young and beginning farmers—you name it; it is the CCC.

Just a couple of weeks ago, USDA Secretary Perdue was in Iowa, and we toured one of the many conservation sites across the State and saw firsthand the good work that is being done with our farmers through USDA's conservation programs. They are working to improve their operations while also cleaning Iowa's water, air, and keeping our soil healthy. Without these conservation programs funded through the CCC, this work simply would not be happening.

Folks, since 1987, Congress has replenished the CCC back to \$30 billion every year. This is not the year to stop.

Iowa farmers in particular have been suffering through COVID-19; plus we had a derecho and a drought. The last thing we need is to take away something they have come to depend on.

Madam President, 2020 has been hard on everyone, and there is no time to play games with our farmers' futures. I hope our friends on the other side of the aisle join us in supporting the replenishment of the CCC in the upcoming funding bill.

I yield back to Senator HOEVEN, the great Senator from North Dakota. Again, my thanks to the Senator and all of our farm State participants today for joining in the colloquy.

Mr. HOEVEN. I would like to thank the Senator from Iowa. Again, she directly brings that experience from the farm, growing up in agriculture.

Somebody else who is here represents Mississippi, so you can see we are going from North Dakota to Mississippi to Iowa to Nebraska. This is the whole country we are talking about.

The Senator also is somebody who has a long background in agriculture. I would like to turn to the good Senator from Mississippi.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, as a former commissioner of agriculture in Mississippi, this is so vital and so important. In Mississippi, agriculture is the No. 1 industry. One in every four jobs is related to agriculture. So this is very vital for my State.

With the end of the fiscal year fast approaching, we must act to ensure important agriculture and conservation programs administered by the Department of Agriculture do not come to a screeching halt on October 1.

The 2018 farm bill, which was supported by 87 Members of the Senate, authorized important safety-net programs to protect producers against sharp price and revenue declines; provide short-term loans and interim financing to help producers meet cash flow needs; assist dairy producers affected by low milk prices and high feed costs; compensate landowners for taking fragile land out of production and implementing conservation improvements to help the environment; and assist producers when natural disasters destroy feed for livestock, cause above-average livestock mortality, and damage commercial orchards and fruit trees.

Current law requires many of these program payments to be made annually after October 1, which highlights the importance of this matter on this day.

As Congress discusses measures to keep the government open and Federal programs operating beyond the current fiscal year, it is essential for any continuing resolution to include a provision allowing the USDA Commodity

Credit Corporation to continue financing these programs. Failure to include such a provision would pose a serious risk to America's farmers and ranchers in these already challenging times. It would cause harmful delays in program funding and benefits at a time when many producers across the country simply cannot afford to wait months to recover for these losses.

This issue is not just about supporting American agriculture; it is about Congress living up to its promises. More than 1.7 million producers signed contracts for the Agriculture Risk Coverage and Price Loss Coverage Programs. Millions of private landowners have signed conservation contracts to take their land out of production. These are contracts, and the terms of those contracts must be met.

I remind my colleagues that this is not a situation to be taken lightly. In recent years, America's farmers and ranchers have experienced unfair foreign tariffs, depressed prices, catastrophic flooding and other natural disasters, market disruptions, and now COVID-19.

I applaud my fellow Republican colleagues on the Appropriations Committee and the Senate Agriculture Committee for raising awareness on this issue. It is our job to feed this country. We need to be allowed to do that.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, again, I thank Senator HYDE-SMITH of the State of Mississippi. Not only is she a strong advocate for our farmers and ranchers, but as I say, all of these people you are hearing from this morning have backgrounds in agriculture. They have been out there, and they know what they are talking about, as does the next Senator, somebody who himself has raised cattle—the Senator from the good State of Arkansas.

This documents again that ag touches every region of the country and that the people you are hearing from have strong ag backgrounds. So, when they talk about this issue, they know how important it is, and they know that this help is very much needed at this time.

I turn to the good Senator from Arkansas, Mr. BOOZMAN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I thank Senator HOEVEN and Senator ROBERTS for organizing this and getting us down here to talk about a topic that is so, so very important.

I am not going to say anything new. I am going to be saying that we need to include reimbursement to the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation in the upcoming continuing resolution. The CCC is the funding mechanism for the bulk of our Nation's agriculture and conservation programs that are authorized with broad bipartisan support in the farm bill.

In order for these programs to work as intended, the CCC must be reimbursed by Congress on an annual basis. For decades, the CCC has been reimbursed by Congress without fanfare, and I am hopeful this year will be a continuation. Earlier this year, the Senate voted unanimously to allow the USDA to use \$14 billion from the CCC to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus. This provision was included in the CARES Act.

As our farmers and ranchers face the most challenging year in recent history, we have an obligation to advance this provision so the important farm and conservation program payments are made on time and in full to our farmers and ranchers.

Earlier this week, over 40 agricultural organizations representing farmers and ranchers across the country sent a letter to the Appropriations Committee, urging this provision be included in the continuing resolution.

Preventing a CCC reimbursement would only exacerbate the tremendous hardship and challenges facing our farmers and ranchers. So I am here with so many other members of the Senate Ag Committee and Members who represent rural States to urge the Senate to help farmers and ranchers and prevent the uncertainty that would come from not including this important provision.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Dakota.

Mr. HOEVEN. Mr. President, I thank Senator BOOZMAN for his strong leadership on ag. He said it very well and very clearly and very simply.

We have heard from more than 40 ag groups from across the country, including from the Presiding Officer's State. The last I checked, he has tremendous agriculture in his State of Florida, whether it be with the cattle raised in Central Florida or those wonderful oranges that we all enjoy all year round. It is just one more example of how agriculture touches everybody's life every day in the most important ways.

Our farmers and ranchers feed the country. They feed the world. What could be more important? Look at the challenges they have faced. They have come into this cycle with very low commodity prices when they have had years of low commodity prices. We have tough trade agreements in which countries like China and others have targeted us on trade. Then you put COVID on top of that. In the midst of that, they have continued to provide the food supply that feeds every American every single day. What could be more important? As we have said, that food supply is the highest quality, lowest cost food supply in the history of the world. Do you know what else? It is safe, and they have never missed a beat.

What we are talking about today, make no mistake, is of making sure that we fund the heart and soul of the farm program. The bill passed on a bi-

partisan vote in this body with about 87 votes. That is what we are talking about with regard to funding the CR. It is vitally important that we do it. I thank these members of the Ag Committee for making that point so clearly and so well.

We will wrap up, actually, pretty close to on time, which is fairly remarkable as seven Senators have just gone through this colloquy process, and I thank them all.

Remember what we are talking about here—the food supply that benefits every single American every single day.

Thank you.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

MEDICARE

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, the election is only weeks away. Voting has already begun in some places. I know that folks at home in Oregon, where some of our communities are literally reduced to ashes, are already thinking about how they are going to vote. They will have a lot on their minds when they fill out their ballots, obviously, and I hope all Americans will fill out their ballots early as a raging pandemic and catastrophic fires in Oregon and across the West have taken a huge toll on our communities.

What I want to do this morning—and I am going to use public records to sound an alarm—is talk about another issue that isn't getting nearly the attention it deserves—not even close. A Medicare crisis is headed our way and fast. Whoever wins the next Presidential election will be in charge during the biggest crisis Medicare has ever faced.

Based on these public records, I want to warn the public—particularly seniors—about something I believe they already know: You cannot trust Donald Trump to protect Medicare, so you have to protect Medicare from Donald Trump.

Donald Trump has proposed extreme budget cuts to Medicare for 3 straight years. In 2018, he proposed cutting \$500 billion, and in 2019, more than \$800 billion. In 2020, Donald Trump proposed cutting \$450 billion from Medicare. The Democrats blocked him from making those cuts, but in another Presidential term, he could undermine Medicare on his own. Here is how the situation comes to be.

Our economy melted down earlier this year because the President downplayed the coronavirus. Millions were out of work, and businesses shuttered—whole sectors of our economy mothballed. The economy collapsed. Again, I base this on public records. It has been devastating to Medicare's finances. According to the nonpartisan experts in charge of Medicare's books, the Medicare trust fund is going to be insolvent within 4 years.

These funds are essential to Medicare as we know it. They pay for basic services that millions of seniors need each day—treatment for heart attacks and

strokes, care for a broken bone or a bout with the flu that lands an older person in the emergency room, and access to skilled nursing care. Once you reach insolvency, you are sending this country's seniors out into no man's land.

Whether Medicare is going to continue to function the way it does today is a big unknown. If Donald Trump is in a position to be in charge, these Trump budgets are going to be the end of the Medicare guarantee. Ever since I was the director of the Oregon Gray Panthers, we had always looked at that Medicare guarantee as sacred. It meant that there would be defined, secure, high-quality health benefits for America's seniors and that they would be available under any type of Medicare that older people received.

Based on some of these Trump budget proposals, older Americans are going to have to figure out some other way to pay for their healthcare and their prescription drugs. That includes the millions and millions of seniors who have very modest incomes—many who are just scraping by on Social Security. What we know based on the policies of Trump's favoritism for the insurance lobby, they could be at the mercy of insurance companies and be stuck with huge premiums and bills they couldn't afford to pay.

The reason I wanted to put this into the RECORD today and sound this alarm is that this is not some far-off crisis that Americans and particularly seniors can ignore and can afford to ignore. If you are on Medicare now or if you plan on getting on Medicare anytime soon, these are direct threats to your healthcare. Whoever is sitting behind the desk in the Oval Office on January 21 is going to be in charge when this crisis hits.

Everybody ought to understand that the special interests that want to see Medicare crumble will have an advantage this time around. This isn't like repealing the Affordable Care Act or slashing Medicaid, where Trump can't act without Congress. If he has his way, he won't need Congress to help him undermine Medicare; he would be able to just sit back in front of the television, forget about his obligation to protect that sacred Medicare guarantee, and let Medicare just drift into a crisis on its own. Any attempt to fix it then would have to happen on his terms, and, for seniors, good luck with that.

The Trump administration has spent years doing the bidding of healthcare's special interests. In my view, there is no question they would seize on this Medicare crisis as another way to let those special interests make a buck, and there would be no way for Americans to know what kind of financial interests Trump and his cronies would have in undermining this program that tens of millions of American seniors rely on every day.

Now, if you were the President and you were to ask him "Well, what about