

working folks there. And I know how highly important it is to the Presiding Officer about healthcare access. So let's act as a body. Let's do it together and make certain that folks do have healthcare, just don't have the anxiety and uncertainty and the bills that are just going to cripple them. I want to thank the Senator from Illinois. I want to thank my colleagues in the Senate.

I yield the floor.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank the Senator from Vermont as well as the Senator from New Hampshire for organizing this block. I am going just say that people have contacted me from Illinois and are scared to death about what is going to happen on October 1. This big beautiful budget bill of President Donald Trump, unfortunately, is not going to extend the tax credits available to reduce premium costs. Families are asking me: How in the world, Senator, are we supposed to pay these increased costs of thousands of dollars each month?

I don't have an answer for them, but the Senate has the answer. The Senate can change that. We can restore this tax credit. There are a lot of priorities for a lot of people, but I will tell you, if you have ever lived without health insurance, you understand it is a basic priority.

You never know tomorrow what you are going to end up paying in a medical bill, and if you aren't prepared for it, it can wipe out your savings in no time flat.

I just want to thank my colleagues from Vermont and New Hampshire for organizing this floor block.

Access to healthcare is one of the most important issues facing Americans today, and it is an issue near and dear to my heart—because I know what it is like to live without health insurance.

I will never forget being the father of a new baby, who had a serious medical condition but I didn't have any health insurance. I never felt more helpless than I did in that moment. It is a terrible feeling and something I do not wish on anybody.

Unfortunately, Republicans in Congress are preparing to subject millions of Americans to the stress-filled, sleepless nights, that come from knowing your family does not have health insurance. If Congress fails to renew the Affordable Care Act's enhanced premium tax credits before the end of this year, the cost of health insurance will spike for almost every American who relies on an ACA Marketplace plan. Increased premiums will create financial hardship for middle-income families across the Nation and cause millions of Americans to lose their health insurance.

There has been a lot of confusion surrounding these tax credits, and I want to make clear who is at risk of being affected by these cuts. More than 90 percent of families with a Marketplace plan receive the ACA's premium tax credits to lower their monthly premiums. That is 22 million Americans

who rely on these tax credits to afford healthcare.

Without these subsidies, 22 million people will see the cost of their insurance premiums rise rapidly. For most families, the cost will skyrocket 75 percent. That means that a family of four making only \$32,150 a year will see a nearly \$400 annual increase in their healthcare costs. A family earning \$64,300 will see their premiums rise to \$905 a year from \$180—more than a 400-percent increase.

The imminent expiration of these tax credits, combined with the devastating Medicaid cuts passed earlier this year by Republicans, will devastate families of limited means and hospitals. The increase in premiums will be too much to bear for many families. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that if the ACA credits expire, 4 million people will become uninsured. And that is in addition to the more than 10 million set to lose their healthcare as a result of the so-called "One Big Beautiful Bill's" Medicaid cuts.

Last night, on the Senate Floor, I shared two messages my office received from Illinois constituents who are terrified about the upcoming tax credit expiration. The first message was from Kristen, from Rochester. She is a freelance writer, who has recently been diagnosed with a long-term degenerative disease. She said, "I depend on the ACA Marketplace for insurance. Without it, one of my multiple medications could cost \$7,500. Without these subsidies, I would be unable to cover the cost of my care."

The second message was from Zach. He is a small business owner and father of four from Highland. Zach wrote, "The Affordable Care Act has been a lifesaver for my family. It would ruin us if we lost the benefits from the Affordable Care Act. It would ruin us economically and physically if we lost these big, beautiful benefits from the ACA."

These are real stories, from real people, who will be affected by the callous inaction of my Republican colleagues. But Kristen and Zach are not the only ones who are living in fear because of the upcoming expiration of these tax credits.

Melanie, from Elmhurst, wrote to my office and said, "Without the tax credit my monthly payment is unaffordable, plain and simple."

Vivien, from Evanston, emphasized that "We cannot go back to the years when millions of Americans could not afford to get insurance."

I could not have said it better. The end of the year is approaching, and my colleagues from the other side of the aisle seem uninterested in extending these lifesaving healthcare subsidies for Americans in red, blue, and purple States. I am calling on my colleagues, both Democrats and Republicans, to come together on a bipartisan basis to extend these subsidies and offer families some financial relief.

Senate and House Democrats will soon introduce a bill that would keep

the government open and permanently extend these tax credits. We can do both. And we should do both. I ask my Republican colleagues to join us in these efforts. In doing so, I am reminded of something my former boss, the late Senator Paul Douglas, said after the creation of Medicare and Medicaid. He said, "We will indulge in no comments about those who came at the 11th hour to the support of the measure . . . All can share in the thrill of victory. We merely ask that we all work together to make this measure a success."

I hope my colleagues will heed his words and protect the tax credits that so many Americans rely on to afford their healthcare.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT AGREEMENT—S.J. RES. 71

Mr. MORENO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Democratic leader, no later than Friday, October 10, S.J. Res. 71 be discharged from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and that the Senate proceed to its consideration; further, that there be 6 hours for debate only, with the time equally divided between the leaders or their designees on the joint resolution and that following the use or yielding back of that time, the joint resolution be read a third time and the Senate vote on the resolution.

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

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

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

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

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

Mr. CASSIDY. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome to America His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the spiritual leader of the world's second-largest Christian Church—Orthodox Christianity—which encompasses over 250 million faithful worldwide.

We in Louisiana take particular pride in welcoming His All-Holiness, given that the very first Greek Orthodox Church in America, Holy Trinity Church, was established in 1864 by Greek merchants in New Orleans. This historic church welcomed Orthodox Christians of various nationalities and backgrounds. To this day, Orthodox

Christians throughout Louisiana who worship in churches across our State are held in high regard by their fellow citizens.

We are pleased that during this visit to America, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew will, as he has during previous trips, meet with our President at the White House and with the leadership of both Houses of Congress from both parties. We recognize that His All-Holiness is among the very few world leaders who commands such high-level access to the leadership of our Nation.

The U.S. Congress expressed its profound respect and admiration for His All-Holiness in 1997 when it awarded him the Congressional Gold Medal, Congress' highest honor. This distinguished award has been bestowed upon such luminaries as George Washington and Winston Churchill. Remarkably, the legislation for His All-Holiness's Gold Medal attracted more of the Members of Congress as cosponsors than any other bill introduced during that entire congressional session. This Gold Medal also recognized the significant international and historical role the Ecumenical Patriarch has played throughout his lifetime. Historic international figures who received the Congressional Gold Medal immediately before and after His All-Holiness were Mother Teresa and Nelson Mandela.

We also acknowledge the extraordinary historic role His All-Holiness has served as the longest tenured Ecumenical Patriarch in history. It is significant that Jesus Christ's first Apostle Andrew and his brother Peter each established distinct spheres of Christian influence. The Apostle Andrew established his ministry in the region that encompasses present-day Turkey, and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew stands as the 269th direct successor of the Apostle Andrew. Similarly, the Apostle Andrew's brother the Apostle Peter traveled to what is today the Vatican, and Pope Leo XIV serves as the 267th successor of the Apostle Peter.

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

Mr. PETERS. Mr. President, I rise to offer remarks to welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to the United States. He is the spiritual head of the second largest Christian Church in the world and the leader of over 1 million Greek Orthodox in the United States, including many of my constituents in the State of Michigan. Michigan is home to a vibrant Greek Orthodox community, whose presence in the State stretches all the way back to the late 1800s with the arrival of the first Greek immigrants to Michigan. Today, the community is represented across the State, with 23 parishes spanning from metro Detroit to the Upper Peninsula.

His All-Holiness is in the United States this month to meet with the President and Members of the House

and Senate leadership. He is also set to receive the distinguished Templeton Prize for his years of dedicated service as Ecumenical Patriarch. Throughout this time, His All-Holiness has sought to bring together people of all faiths to combat religious intolerance and enhance understanding between the faiths.

One of his major efforts during his first years as Patriarch was to convene an interfaith international conference on peace and religious tolerance in Istanbul. The conference brought together faith leaders from around the world to find ways to encourage understanding and peaceful coexistence. Moreover, he has advanced Christian-Muslim relations by advocating for peace-building measures in conflict affected regions like the Balkans.

The Templeton Prize is not the first recognition His-Holiness has received for his years of profound service. The Patriarch has also been honored by the United Nations, the European Union, and dozens of governments, universities, and institutions for his bold efforts to promote peace and understanding, especially between the East and West. In 1997, he was honored in Washington, DC, with the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest congressional award.

Once again, I would like to extend a warm welcome to His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. His work to strengthen ties between communities of differing faiths is critical in helping combat religious intolerance.

WELCOMING ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

Mr. KELLY. Mr. President, I rise today to welcome His All-Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew to Washington, DC. He is the spiritual leader of Orthodox Christianity, the second largest Christian Church in the world, with more than 250 million members worldwide and over 1 million here in the United States.

His All-Holiness is the 269th successor of the Apostle Andrew and the longest serving Ecumenical Patriarch in history. He is recognized across the globe for his leadership in promoting peace, advancing religious freedom, and speaking out on environmental stewardship. He has been honored with the Congressional Gold Medal and will receive the Templeton Prize during this visit.

In Arizona, the Greek Orthodox community is an important part of our State's civic and cultural life. Parishes across the State serve as places of worship, education, and service, and they host traditions that strengthen families and connect generations. Their contributions are an important part of Arizona's diversity and character.

I am proud to join Orthodox Christians in Arizona and across the country in welcoming His All-Holiness to the United States and to Congress. His

visit is a point of pride for many Arizonans and a reminder of the shared values of faith, service, and community that strengthen our country.

RECOGNIZING THE BOSTON PASSPORT AGENCY

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the Boston Passport Agency on its 100th anniversary. For a century, the dedicated public servants at the Boston Passport Agency have connected the people of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts—and travelers from across New England—to the wider world. Today, the agency continues to safeguard the integrity of the U.S. passport and ensure families, students, service-members, business leaders, and humanitarian workers can safely travel across the globe.

I celebrate the Boston Passport Agency's centennial milestone on September 17, 2025, which marks Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. On this day, every year, we recognize the adoption of the U.S. Constitution and celebrate those who have become, or are on their path to becoming, U.S. citizens. Every American—whether they were born on U.S. soil or immigrated to our shores—offers their own unique story, traditions, faith, and values to the fabric of our Nation. For the last 100 years, the Boston Passport Agency has taken part in the incredible task of honoring American stories—one passport at a time.

The Boston Passport Agency tirelessly serves the public trust. Day in and day out, agency professionals uphold the highest standards of security, while delivering the responsive, compassionate service Commonwealth residents have come to know and appreciate. Whether it is assisting a college student preparing for a semester abroad, a grandmother traveling to welcome a new grandchild, or a family navigating the urgency of a medical or humanitarian emergency, the agency meets the moment with expertise, diligence, and care.

Over the decades—and especially in recent years—the Boston Passport Agency has displayed remarkable resilience and innovation. During periods of unprecedented demand and global uncertainty, including public health disruptions that strained travel systems worldwide, the agency's personnel adapted operations and devised creative ways to serve the public, all without compromising security. In partnership with local communities, elected officials, and Department of State leadership, the agency's staff helped reduce backlogs, protect against fraud, and strengthen processes essential to both national security and individual liberty.

The economic and cultural impact of the Boston Passport Agency's work reverberates far beyond the walls of its office. By powering international research collaborations, trade and tourism, and educational exchanges, the