

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, for the information of my colleagues, Senators should expect three votes at 11 a.m. and further votes later in the day.

ORDER FOR ADJOURNMENT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order, following the remarks of my colleagues.

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

The Senator from Rhode Island.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, well, we are headed into a miserable situation. It is a miserable situation for all of the Federal employees around the globe who are going to be put into shutdown mode. It is a miserable situation for our country, as the rest of the world looks at us as the gang that can't get its act together and pass simple funding bills for the government.

It is an extraordinarily frustrating moment to be here now. There are very few people for whom this is not a miserable prospect, but there are a few of them, and one of them is OMB Director Russell Vought, who is a strange character who has spent his life in the care and feeding of the fossil fuel industry and big polluters and who takes a perverse joy from destroying American government from the inside.

So there will be misery ahead for most normal people, not counting the weird ones who like inflicting pain and doing damage for the benefit of a bunch of creepy, rightwing billionaires who have propped them up their whole lives.

The reason we are here is really twofold. One, as they have shown during the Trump regime, Republicans really don't want to govern; they want to rule. They don't want to talk to Democrats even where they need our votes.

Here, they need our votes. Yet what have we been offered to get those votes? Nothing—not even discussions. The President only met with the Democratic leaders just yesterday, and he didn't seem to be aware of what was at stake here for the Americans who are about to lose a huge healthcare benefit.

They just go wildly forward. We have seen it over and over again here on the Senate floor. How many times in just the few months that we have been here in this administration have Republicans done the thing that they were furious we even talked about doing to overrule the Parliamentarian and change the rules to make things easier for themselves rather than negotiate with us? My count is four already—four—and we are only 9 months in.

They don't want to govern. They don't want to talk to us. They want to rule. They want to dictate to us.

At the same time, the other reason we are here is that there is this strange

Republican fixation with taking healthcare away from people. I do not understand it. There are lots of Republican constituents who really depend on Medicaid, who really feel great that they are on Medicare, who really have their family budgets made possible by the credits from the Affordable Care Act. It is not like Democrats get the benefit of this; everybody gets the benefit of this. Yet what have we been put through just in these months? A trillion dollars in cuts to Medicaid. A trillion dollars in cuts to Medicare. Already, hospitals and nursing homes and doctors' practices are reeling at what those cuts mean for their financial viability.

Medicare—Medicare—half a trillion dollars in cuts hidden in the bill in a tricky way so that the cuts come through sequestration and nobody has to own them. They can do a Pontius Pilate hand-wash of the cuts.

Well, no. We saw what you did. You own it. It is a half-trillion-dollar cut to Medicare. And why you want to do that, I cannot imagine, but that is what you did.

Now we have these cuts to people receiving help paying for their healthcare under the Affordable Care Act. It is going to be about 40,000 Rhode Islanders. These aren't people who have loads of money. Their premiums are going to, on average, double or better. I mentioned a retired mental health counselor yesterday. She is going to have \$477 in added expenses every single month because of this. And it all starts now. It all starts happening now.

So when we are told, why are we forcing the issue now? It is because now is when the issue is upon us. When we are told, why don't we negotiate later? my question is: Why aren't we negotiating now? Why would we believe when we are told that you will negotiate later on this when you won't negotiate now on this? Now when you need our votes, you won't negotiate on something. You say you will negotiate later. Why does that make any sense? Why is that even remotely credible?

The harm starts now; the negotiations should start now. Frankly, what Democrats are asking for is something you ought to be doing anyway just to help your own constituents. This shouldn't be hard at all. We should not be here having this conversation. This should have been resolved already—except that the Republican majority wants to rule, not govern, and they have this strange fixation with taking away healthcare even from their own constituents.

Over and over again, we have seen it. We have seen it with the repeated overruling of the Parliamentarian. We have seen it with the "Beautiful for Billionaires Bill" that got rammed through with a simple majority. We have seen it with the change in the rules to allow 100 nominees to go through at a time under advice and consent. We have seen it with clean air standards that help

everyone being repealed. Over and over and over again, the Republicans take the path that allows them to rule, not to govern; that allows them to ignore the minority party even when they need our votes, even when what we are asking for is in their constituents' interests, even when what we are asking for is something that their constituents want. Even then, we are up against this blockade.

So I hope Republicans come to their senses. I hope the President realizes what he is doing and that we can put an end to this shutdown as quickly as possible. But let me make this absolutely clear: This is a shutdown that lands entirely at the feet of the Republican Party that controls the Senate, that controls the House, that controls the Presidency, that won't negotiate with Democrats even when it needs our votes, and that has an unhealthy fixation with taking away healthcare from their fellow Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. LUMMIS). The Senator from Delaware.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. COONS. Madam President, I am asking why we are here—why we are here on the floor of the Senate as the hours tick down to the end of the Federal fiscal year and the shutdown of the Federal Government.

I have served here 15 years. I have seen my share of shutdowns, and I know how much they hurt, how much they hurt the men and women of our military, Federal law enforcement, folks who serve and protect our country at home and abroad. And they should not have to wonder when or if they will get paid.

A shutdown isn't good for our reputation abroad and our cohesion at home.

I have always worked to find some path, some deal, some way to keep the government open, and I have talked to a dozen colleagues in recent days about this fight and about tonight.

This is about healthcare. This is about my party saying: Enough is enough.

We know that if you have healthcare, everything else can work itself out. And if you don't have your health, almost nothing else matters.

President Trump ran on making America healthy again, on reducing prices, on making life easier for the working people of our country and their families. And, instead, what we have seen is decision after decision, action after action by President Trump and the Republicans in Congress that raise prices—raise prices on healthcare, on insurance, on drugs, on medications. Whether it is the tariffs being imposed on prescription medications or the decision to end subsidies that keep health insurance affordable, or it is laying off thousands of researchers working to help cure pediatric cancer or address ALS or do research into HIV AIDS—decision after decision that moves us in

the wrong direction, that makes us sicker, poorer, and more divided.

I am usually one of the first to walk across the aisle and say: Let's find a solution. Let's find a way out of this. And I have been doing that in recent days, talking with colleagues. But I can't see a way forward if we can't change direction and, together, say to the people we serve: We want to help with your healthcare. We want to stop the cuts to NIH and CDC. We want to reduce the increases in health insurance costs. We want to help you and your family.

In my home State of Delaware, emergency room wait times are too long. And as millions of Americans get thrown off of health insurance, they are going to go to the emergency room. And those wait times will get longer and longer for all of us.

Next month, we are going to find out how much health insurance premiums go up. For some Americans, they are going to double. But for all of us, they will go up.

Healthcare is getting costlier, and Americans are getting sicker. So why am I standing on this floor tonight saying I am not voting to keep this government open? Because enough is enough.

There are ways we can and should work together to change direction, to put on the floor the bipartisan health appropriations bill that will restore tens of billions of dollars to the NIH and CDC, that will stop Trump's cuts to American healthcare and insurance and research. There is a path toward reforming and extending the Affordable Care Act that both parties should agree on.

But, folks, if you are listening, your Member of Congress needs to hear from you, needs to know that you want us to work together to reverse course and end Trump's tragic cuts to healthcare.

If my colleagues don't get those calls, they won't change direction. If they don't change direction, we won't reopen this government.

Make no mistake, we have Republicans in control of the House and Senate and the White House. If they want to find a way forward that reduces the harm to Americans and our healthcare, we can. And I will be one of the first to extend my hand to find that path.

But if we don't change direction, we shouldn't reopen this government because Americans have taken too many hits already, too much additional cost, too much in cuts to healthcare research, too much increase to health insurance costs. This is a fight about America's healthcare, and we are fighting for you.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Madam President, as my colleague from Delaware just noted, we are here today because Re-

publicans have created a healthcare crisis for millions of Americans. And like the Senator from Delaware, I am someone that works across the aisle all of the time. I have one of the best records for bipartisan bills, and I think that is an important part of our governing, and that is to find common ground.

You don't always pick your neighbors, but you find a way to live next to your neighbors. You find a way to work with them. And what is so unfortunate about what is going on tonight is that it didn't happen here. There was no crossing over the fence with some coffee for the neighbors to try to have a meeting, to try to work this out.

In fact, it was Senator SCHUMER and Leader JEFFRIES who had to request time and time again—that got canceled on—a meeting with the President.

There is still time to continue to negotiate, but not if they are just going to say: Hey, this healthcare thing, it is not a problem. Maybe we can deal with it in December.

First off, who would believe that when Donald Trump just says one thing one day or posts something on Truth Social, and then everyone changes what they agreed to, which has happened time and time again. So that is one reason it is not reality unless he is at the table.

No. 2, it is not reality because this is not a December problem. This is not a January problem. This is a now problem. November 1, that is when people start reenrolling—a whole bunch of small businesses, 20 million people, more than a quarter of the farmers in this country, who are already facing, as one of my farmers said to me last week, "a perfect storm of ugly." That is about the tariffs. That is about their input costs with fertilizer, and that is about their personal healthcare costs—"a perfect storm of ugly."

When you are in a big storm in Minnesota, you don't just go outside, hold an umbrella, and think: Maybe it will go away. You do something about it then. You take cover then. You help people take cover then.

That is not what they are doing with this vote tonight.

We have a bill that would help millions of Americans sleep easier. We are still dealing with the tariffs. We are still going to push on that, which has led to all of these grocery cost increases. We see what is happening with the electricity cost increase.

Costs are up. Chaos is up. And corruption is up.

But there is one thing we can do, and that is one of the biggest cost drivers when we look at inflation, and that is healthcare.

So let's start with how we got here. We know that over 110 million Americans depend on Medicare and Medicaid—110 million. These programs cover everything from hospital visits to lifesaving prescriptions to the long-term care that allows seniors to remain in their homes.

And these programs, along with Social Security and SNAP, which is the nutrition program, have driven poverty among seniors, for years, to record lows. The best poverty-fighting program there is: Medicare, Medicaid.

But the budget that congressional Republicans passed earlier this summer, without our votes—again, they didn't listen to us—makes the biggest cut in history to Medicare and Medicaid. That is right—the biggest cut in history, while all of these other costs are going up. Their budget cut Medicaid by over a trillion dollars and will trigger more than \$500 billion in Medicare cuts.

How does that happen? Well, the debt is so high from that bill because of the trillion dollars in tax cuts to the wealthiest Americans and the trillion dollars in tax cuts and giveaways for corporations that it actually automatically triggered \$500 billion in Medicare cuts on hospitals.

So when we go, as we did—our Members on the Democratic side—last week and met with people in hospitals and patients and doctors and nurses, we heard about that. We heard about the 15 million Americans who are going to get shoved off their healthcare.

But the one thing they could have done—and they voted against it once, but we know behind closed doors they are very interested in doing something about this—it is the tax credits to help people afford their health insurance. Without these tax credits, more than 20 million Americans will see their premiums skyrocket.

A Kaiser study, just today, came out: double the premiums—double the premiums.

That is why one of my hospitals told me: Look, of course Medicaid hits us hard. Of course, Medicare does. But so many of our patients and the people who visit our clinic are on MNSure—that is the Affordable Care Act plan in my State—that, if this happens, a whole bunch of them won't be able to afford it. Then they are going to show up in our emergency rooms. They are going to show up without insurance. They are not going to get the surgeries that they need, and they are not going to do their doctor's visits.

That is why you are seeing some Republicans—some overtly—saying: We have got to do something about this.

They shouldn't be talking about off-ramps. They should be talking about how to get their constituents off a cliff.

Earlier this year, we marked the 60th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid. As we look back at this monumental achievement, we should be strengthening healthcare in the country, not undermining it.

We made progress, right? Capping out-of-pocket costs, passing my bill to allow Medicare to finally negotiate for better prices, making healthcare more affordable. But we should be building on that progress because the status quo is not OK for people right now. We should be building on that progress by