

In northern New York, we have had a great border—a peaceful, wonderful, prosperous border—between Canada and New York. Trump just about destroyed it in a minute with some jerky comment that he always typically makes.

Well, Thomas's costs have gone up in his brewery, in addition to the anger for the Canadians not buying his beer. Tariffs have made it more expensive for him to can his beer and buy the grain he needs to brew his beautiful product.

I have met scores of businesspeople like Thomas, some of whom have gone out of business. A chocolatier who just loved making her chocolates but who can no longer afford it had to fire the people who had worked so hard in her company.

I met with another New Yorker, a man named Jeremy. He lives in the Hudson Valley, in Kingston, NY, who relies on the ACA tax credits to pay for health insurance. As his tax credits expire, Jeremy is going to pay more than double. Nearly \$1,000 every single month is what he is going to have to pay, and that is not an expense he can deal with or that people like him can deal with. He makes a good salary, and he is a hard-working guy, but he can't afford such a dramatic jump in the price of his healthcare insurance. That is the kind of financial shock that Jeremy will have about which I heard over and over and over and over again.

What do you do—sign up for healthcare you can't afford or go uninsured? Go broke or go uninsured?

What a terrible choice our Republican colleagues are forcing people like Jeremy and thousands and thousands of other New Yorkers to make.

And, finally, I met a woman named Roberta who lives in Wyoming County, one of our big dairy counties, by the way. She told me she relies on SNAP benefits to put food on the table. I took a picture with her. She had six of her seven beautiful children there, many of them redheads, like their mom.

She told me that, now, with rising grocery prices and budget cuts to SNAP, she can't put food on the table for all of her seven kids. She is living on the edge—what a horrible story to hear.

Can you imagine those beautiful red-headed kids? And they have to decide who is going to get the eggs, who is going to get the vegetables, because she doesn't have enough money, and SNAP doesn't give her the food she needs to feed her family.

So here is what I say to you, Donald Trump: If you are serious about focusing on affordability, come take a road trip with me through Upstate New York so you can see what a disaster your policies have been.

The stories were the same everywhere I went.

Under Donald Trump, costs are up, and financial security is down. People are having such a tough time affording the things they very much need—not

luxuries, not frivolities—things they need: food, medicine; got to fix the car that just broke down and which you need to get to work, and you don't have the money to do it—over and over and over again.

And, of course, the tip of the spear in these higher costs is what is becoming of healthcare. Nowhere do costs matter more. In no place have they accelerated more greatly than with healthcare.

Last week, the Senate had one last chance to halt the imminent spike of people's healthcare costs by supporting our legislation to extend the ACA premiums by 3 years—the ACA tax credits by 3 years. But Republicans blew it by voting our bill down, and now they have all but guaranteed that millions of people, including countless New Yorkers, will see their premiums go up.

In fact, sadly, today is the last day for Americans to sign up for January Marketplace coverage. And over the next 2 weeks, this holiday season—this Christmas season, this Hanukkah season—millions of people will see their skyrocketing premium amounts deducted from their bank accounts, wondering how they are going to make the numbers work, how they are going to balance their own books. That is shameful—shameful.

The No. 1 thing I heard this year during my 62-county tour is that people are worried about paying for the things they need—healthcare, above all.

Donald Trump and Republicans, meanwhile, have intentionally sent people's costs up and up and up. The idea of reducing costs on day one, which Donald Trump promised in the campaign and many people voted for because of that promise, is out the window. No one is even paying any attention to it. Donald Trump really is not paying attention to it.

People don't believe it anymore. They don't believe any of the promises that Donald Trump has made. Donald Trump has broken faith with the very same people he promised to fight for, and I have felt that frustration through my 62-county tour this year.

If Donald Trump and Republicans stay the course, the frustration people feel right now is probably only the beginning.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic whip.

#### SHOOTING AT BROWN UNIVERSITY AND SHOOTING IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, in Skokie, IL, a few miles north of Chicago, is America's second largest Holocaust museum. Those who visit see thousands of artifacts from victims and survivors and their families. There is one lesson that every visitor takes away: All who walk through its doors learn the importance of tolerance, the need to choose love over hate. I have been reflecting on this lesson in the wake of

the two awful acts of violence that took place this past weekend.

On Sunday night, in Australia, hundreds of people gathered at Bondi Beach to celebrate the first night of Hanukkah. Two men opened fire on the crowd. The attendees at Bondi Beach were targeted for simply one reason: They were Jewish, and they were out to celebrate their faith.

At least 15 people were killed, and dozens more were injured. I am offering my prayers for the victims and their families. I am thankful for the heroic actions of first responders and civilians to end the gunman's rampage.

This act of violence is a grim reminder that we cannot stop combating anti-Semitism. This tragedy occurred just hours after Brown University, in Providence, RI, here in the United States, experienced its own mass shooting.

In the aftermath of these two tragedies, I am in awe of the bravery and sacrifice displayed by those caught up in the attacks.

One of them, Ahmed al-Ahmed, tackled one of the shooters at Bondi Beach in Australia, saving countless lives. He is now going through surgery. I wish him a swift recovery.

Another, Spencer Yang, after being shot in the leg, continued to help one of his fellow students at Brown hide from the gunman. To Spencer, too, I wish a full and swift recovery.

Ahmed, Spencer, and countless others should never be put in these unimaginable situations. Yet their selfless acts in the face of such violence are the ultimate demonstration of love—a willingness to risk their own lives to save a stranger.

As we seek to address the scourge of anti-Semitism and gun violence, may we act in the path of these brave upstanders, who in crisis chose humanity and love over violence and hate.

#### HEALTHCARE

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, on an unrelated matter, America's health system is in critical condition. In 17 days, 22 million Americans will be asked to pay double or triple for their current health insurance premiums. Rural hospitals will be facing closure, small businesses won't be able to cover expenses, and more than 4 million Americans will lose their insurance if we fail to do anything in Congress.

Last Thursday, Senate Democrats put forward a bill to prevent this catastrophe. Our bill would have provided a clean extension of the Affordable Care Act's enhanced premium tax credits, which 22 million Americans rely on to help them pay their insurance premiums. These credits expire at the end of this year.

But too many Senate Republicans voted against extending them and, instead, rushed a vote on a partisan proposal that would upend the Affordable Care Act and the American healthcare system, less than a month before the

insurance premiums spike. Their bill, which was introduced last week, has never been debated in committee, and no Member had a chance to amend it.

I say this to my friends on the other side of the aisle: You are in the majority. You have the power to set matters for a congressional hearing. You have the power to go through a serious process to reform healthcare. You are in the majority.

But, first, we need triage. First, we have to stabilize the patient. Americans who are about to pay thousands of additional dollars cannot wait as Republicans attempt to change the entire healthcare system in a week.

Four Senate Republicans understood this and voted with all the Democrats to extend these tax credits. I thank them for their singular political courage.

Each additional day we delay an extension of the enhanced premium tax credits, more Americans forgo their health insurance because it is just too darn expensive.

Time is running out.

I recently spoke to a waitress at Lou Mitchell's restaurant in Chicago—in downtown Chicago, across from the train station. She is personally worried that she will not be able to afford her healthcare next year without the enhanced premium tax credits. She sees her health insurance bill doubling or more.

This waitress does not care about who is winning the political fight in Washington. She cares about whether she and her family can pay for their doctors' appointments and medications.

I want to go back to that restaurant soon and tell my friend that the Senate did something to help her. We can help her, so long as we act on a bipartisan basis.

If you don't like our proposal for a clean, 3-year extension, counter it with a reasonable offer. Show that there is a beating heart that cares to address the real problems Americans face. Let us come together and give American families the gift of health coverage they can afford for Christmas.

#### NIH FUNDING

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I also want to draw attention to the crisis surrounding medical research in this country, created entirely by this new Trump administration.

Ten years ago, I met with Dr. Francis Collins, then the Director of the National Institutes of Health, the world's premium biomedical research agency. I admired his work so much that I asked him what I could do to help.

He said:

If you can provide a 5-percent increase to NIH's medical research budget, year after year, we'll light up the scoreboard.

So I took that message and went back to Congress. With the help of colleagues on both sides of the aisle—Republican Senator ROY BLUNT, Repub-

lican Senator Lamar Alexander, and Democratic Senator PATTY MURRAY—we increased NIH funding from \$30 billion to \$48 billion over the next 10 years, a 60-percent increase in research—a 60-percent increase in cures, hopes, and breakthroughs.

But what took us 10 years to build, President Donald Trump has all but dismantled in less than 11 months.

Recent reporting from the New York Times shed light on the dire consequences of President Trump's medical research cuts. The President and DOGE instituted a new set of rules at NIH that resulted in 3,500 fewer medical research grants, affecting virtually every area of medical study.

Funding for mental health was reduced 31 percent, brain diseases by 26 percent, and cancer research by 19 percent. All of these reductions are in real areas of opportunity, which we are walking away from under Trump. This is a fundamental blow to how America supports medical research and has real implications for the progress we made.

Instead of ushering in the next wave of medical breakthroughs, which could save you or your loved one from suffering, this administration has cut them off at the knees.

I am pleased that the Senate Appropriations Committee, on a bipartisan basis, rejected Trump's proposed cuts and actually provided an increase for next year. But if the administration ignores Congress's wish and continues to upend research funding, that could create irreparable harm.

As the father of a child born with a severe medical condition, I know personally that families across this country depend on the hope and promise that research holds. Cures and treatments that come from the National Institutes of Health funded the research behind 99 percent of the new drugs approved by the FDA in the last decade.

Oh, sure, you see the ads on television for all these new drugs that they say hold onto some promise. The pharmaceutical companies that are selling them and developing them have virtually all started with Federal research by the taxpayers of this country—the same research that has been cut off now by President Trump.

So when Donald Trump handicaps the NIH's work, he is telling patients: Your cure can wait.

Our communities will feel the pain of this change too. Our universities, not just in blue States but in every State—great research institutions in Alabama, Kansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma—will be unable to pursue more cures. Our hospitals, already scaling back operations thanks to budget cuts and the President's so-called "Big Beautiful Budget Bill," will be forced to diminish services even more.

The scientists and doctors of tomorrow may decide to forego their profession entirely or bring their talents to other countries.

As we fight to protect healthcare for millions of Americans, let us also not

forget to fight for research that fuels that care. We cannot stand for this assault on medical research funding. We need to continue to work on a bipartisan basis to make sure that funding does continue.

It is not just a matter of national pride. It is a matter of finding cures and drugs that will help people all around the world and that has defined America for decades.

We can't let the Trump administration kill off medical research and kill off that dream that people keep alive every single day.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

#### WAIVING QUORUM CALL

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to waive the mandatory quorum call with respect to the motion to concur in the House message to accompany S. 1071.

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

#### EXECUTIVE SESSION

#### EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to executive session to consider Calendar No. 560.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Joshua Simmons, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

#### CLOTURE MOTION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I send a cloture motion to the desk.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The cloture motion having been presented under rule XXII, the Chair directs the clerk to read the motion.

The bill clerk read as follows:

#### CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 560, Joshua Simmons, of Virginia, to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency.

John Thune, John Barrasso, Tim Sheehy, Mike Rounds, Pete Ricketts, Roger F. Wicker, Steve Daines, Todd Young, Mike Crapo, Tim Scott of South Carolina, Bernie Moreno, Markwayne Mullin, John R. Curtis, Marsha Blackburn, Tom Cotton, David McCormick, Ted Budd.

#### LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I move to proceed to legislative session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.