

her you like something she has because if you tell her—if one of the staff members would say to her, “I really like that jacket that you are wearing,” she would just take it off and give it to them. If she brought something for lunch one day and they would say, “That smells delicious,” well, guess what, she would actually bring it to them the next day to be able to make sure they had it because Mona’s mission was always to take care of people. It has always been that way.

That is why I think Oklahomans have no idea how hard this is going to be for our State because the person in the middle of our Federal delegation has had that heart for four decades and has impacted the way we take care of people.

I don’t fault Mona for retiring. Her best job is her job of being “Momo” to her granddaughter Georgia Marie. She is the biggest cheerleader for her two boys, and she loves taking care of Andy. She dedicated early on, according to their agreement, that their house will never ever, ever run out of ketchup—ever—because Andy loves ketchup. And she, early on in their marriage, said: Our house will never ever run out of ketchup.

Mona is also the person that keeps the “mom” drawer in her desk. She is the one in our office—if you need a bandaid or if you need something else, Mona has got it. And she is going to take care of everybody else.

Her recordkeeping is a gift to us because we are going to be able to go through and see the cases and the things—and the people—that she has done, but, really, her heart for service will be the legacy for Mona Taylor.

I know, again, we talk about a lot of policy issues here, but I just didn’t want to miss a moment for us to remember that our policy issues are all connected to people. Mona never forgot that—ever—and I have been honored to be able to serve with her this decade and a half. I am grateful for the gift of her time to our State and her mentorship to so many different staff across our State.

So, to Mona, I would just say to this body, we owe a lot to her, and she will be missed.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Louisiana.

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, this has nothing to do with why I am speaking, but I was sitting there thinking, listening to Senator LANKFORD talk about Miss Mona.

Miss Mona, we are going to miss you.

And I was thinking—you know, I know it is a sin to covet, but I wish God had given me a voice like Senator LANKFORD’s. You know, he gave me a voice that scares small children and sets off car alarms. I would love to have a voice like Senator LANKFORD’s. I would also like to have his big brain too.

That was really nice of you, James.

And thank you, Mona, for your service.

#### TRIBUTE TO KAILYN SHEEHAN

Mr. President, with me today are two of my colleagues—Mr. John Lowery, my executive assistant. You have met John before. But the star of the show today—for me, anyway—is Ms. Kailyn Sheehan.

Kailyn is also an executive assistant to me. Her job includes scheduling. It is the worst job in America. All scheduling jobs are tough because you have to tell a small percentage of people yes but a whole lot of people no, and some people don’t take no well.

Kailyn is leaving me. I say that with joy and sadness. As I said before, I try to hire the best people I can, and when you do that, as the Presiding Officer knows, you hire good people, and they are ambitious and they want to move up. And so it is just the price you pay.

Kailyn is very, very smart. She has an undergraduate degree and an M.B.A. degree. In college, she really was a good student, but she was also a student athlete. She played soccer in college and was very good at it.

Kailyn never loses her composure. She is steady. She never panics. That doesn’t sound like a big deal, I suppose, but being a scheduler up here is hard. It is really, really, really hard.

Kailyn is going to work for Congressman RILEY MOORE in West Virginia. She has gotten a fancy title there: “director of operations.”

Congratulations, Congressman. You are getting a good one in Kailyn.

I hate to lose her, but it is a step up for her, and she will be not just doing scheduling but doing other things in the office.

So, Kailyn, I wanted to ask you to come down and to say thank you. Thank you for your good work.

#### MEDICAID

Mr. President, I just want to talk for a few minutes about what I think should be obvious. I know the cost of living is a problem in America today. We all know that. I like to say, when moms and dads go to sleep at night and can’t, one of the things they are worried about is the cost of living. I get that.

What could we do to help? Well, obviously, one thing we could do would be to lower taxes. We have to be careful how we do that because we don’t want to increase the deficit. We don’t want to just borrow money to do that. Another thing we could do to help would be to lower interest rates. If we lower interest rates, people would pay less interest on their credit cards and on their car loans and on their house notes.

Well, what can we do—and the Presiding Officer knows this—to spend less so we can cut taxes and also lower interest rates? One of the things we could do is stop fraud. One of the things we can do is stop the outrageous fraud in our Medicaid Program.

Now, look—I want to be very clear here—I am proud of Medicaid. I am proud of the fact that in our country, if you are too poor to be sick, we will pay

for your doctor. That is not true in every country, as the Presiding Officer knows. In some countries, they will just let you die in a ditch. We don’t do that in America. We will pay for your medical care. But that is outrageously expensive. That is OK. Money well spent, but it is very, very expensive.

One of the ways we pay for people’s care—particularly for low-income Americans but also, now even more so, for middle-class Americans since ObamaCare passed—is through Medicaid. We spend almost \$1 trillion on Medicaid every year.

Once again, I am not speaking against the concept of Medicaid. We don’t want people to die in America. That is one of the things that separate us from other people. But we spend almost \$1 trillion a year. And the Federal Government—some people don’t know this—pays for 67 percent of all Medicaid spending. Some people refer to Medicaid as a Federal-State program, and it is. The State puts up some of the money, but the Federal Government puts up most of the money. We pay for about 67 percent of all the spending in Medicaid.

Medicaid keeps going up. I have seen studies that show it is going up anywhere, consistently, between 6 and 8 percent every single year. When you are spending \$1 trillion and it goes up 6 to 8 percent, you are talking about real money.

What we also know is that there is an enormous amount of fraud in Medicaid. We know that. There are a lot of studies out there. And not everyone can agree on how much, but I have seen studies from reputable think tanks that show that Medicaid fraud—stealing in the Medicaid Program—runs between \$1.1 trillion and \$1.2 trillion over a 10-year period. Can you imagine what we could do to lower interest rates or to reduce taxes if we could save \$1.2 trillion in our budget?

Now, how does this happen? Well, first of all, why don’t States do a better job of controlling the fraud? You say, why am I blaming the States? Well, because it is a Federal-State program, and the Feds put up 67 percent of the money, but States administer that program. And some States do a pretty good job. Some States do a very good job. Some States are terrible at it.

I don’t know exactly why that is, but every State—I want to make this clear—has fraud.

I saw an audit done by our inspector general in Louisiana, a few years ago, and he talked about the incidents of fraud in the Medicaid Program in Louisiana, the people who were getting Medicaid that didn’t qualify.

And I said, can you send me a list of all the people you found in the Medicaid Program who didn’t qualify or were making too much money? I don’t want names. I just want the amounts of money that they were making and how they have been on Medicaid.

He sent me the list. And if I stacked it up here, I could stand on it and paint

the ceiling. I mean, we had people making \$150,000, \$200,000, \$250,000 a year getting Medicaid.

Now, that was the State's fault for not checking. Some people say the States don't have any incentive. That is a cynical view. I prefer not to believe that is true. But they see Medicaid as free money, since the Federal Government is picking up most of the tab.

I prefer not to think that is true, but it is probably true to some extent.

The point is that if our States would do a better job of administering the Medicaid Program and stopping the stealing, we could save \$1.2 trillion, over the next 10 years, to help people reach the point where they don't have to sell blood plasma to go to the grocery store.

You probably think I am going to talk about Minnesota, and I am not. We all know what happened in the Medicaid Program in Minnesota. The State of Minnesota basically declared that Medicaid was an open bar. Just, come on down, and if you want Medicaid and you want the Medicaid money and you want to steal some, you are welcome to it.

I hate to say that, but that is what happened. And I hope every single person who is involved in that stealing up there goes to jail—every single one.

But what I wanted to talk about was—and again, every State has its problem. But some have it worse than others, and one of the ones, besides Minnesota, that seems to have a problem with controlling stealing in the Medicaid Program is California.

Now, California spends an enormous amount of money on Medicaid. They spend about \$220 billion a year. The Fed puts up—the Federal Government, the Federal taxpayer—puts up \$140 billion of that. So the taxpayers that pay money to the Federal Government put up most of the money—not all of it, but most of the money.

How much does the Federal Government put up vis-a-vis the State government? Well, in the ObamaCare portion of Medicaid, the Federal Government puts up 9 bucks. So for every \$1 that the State government puts up for the Medicaid Program, the Federal government puts up \$9—wow.

And some of the public officials in California have started to look at this as free money—just free money. And they don't try to fight the fraud.

Now, how do you stop the fraud?

One thing a State can do is investigate people who claim they are healthcare providers. We saw this as a problem in Minnesota.

If you claim to be a home health provider, you are supposed to have a minimum level of qualification. If you claim to offer—to provide—after-school services, you are supposed to have a certain level of qualification.

I don't think the government—the State government of California—even checks. I mean, we have got every fly-by-night artist in America, it seems, going to California to become a

healthcare provider to get some of the money. And a lot of the times, when they get that money, the money never makes it to the patient. They steal it.

California, for example, has 12 percent of the population. In the last decade, they have been responsible for 50 percent of all of the new healthcare providers formed in America. Most of them are social assistance and so-called healthcare establishments.

And there is an enormous amount of fraud there. We saw that once again in Minnesota, which has been publicized more, where people say: I am now a healthcare provider. Give me the money so I can help people.

You give this fly-by-night healthcare provider money, and they never help anyone.

So that is one way.

The other way that you can control the spending in Medicaid is to be careful about the services you offer. You want to spend the Medicaid money on the people who need it. You want to spend the Medicaid money on people who need it because they are sick. That is why we passed Medicaid.

But States, once again, administer their own Medicaid Programs, and, for the most part, they get to decide which services their Medicaid Program pays for.

Now, supposedly, the Federal Government has to sign off on it. And, clearly, we have got to do a better job there. I will save that topic for another day.

But what got my attention about California, despite the fact that they have thousands and thousands of these fly-by-night, so-called healthcare providers, who the State government of California happily gives money to, and sometimes some of that money gets to a patient, but most of the time it gets into their pocket—what got my attention were the services that California's State government will pay for in its Medicaid Program with money from the Federal Government, which has been provided by the American people.

Here is an example, and this came from an article. This isn't my research. This came from an editorial in the Wall Street Journal—a recent editorial, on May 16, 2026.

In California, under its State government's definition of Medicaid, the California Medicaid Program will pay for Tribal prayers. The California Medicaid Program will pay for exorcisms. The California Medicaid Program will pay for herbal medicines. The California Medicaid Program will pay for meal deliveries. In some cases, the California Medicaid Program will pay for in-home chefs.

Thousands of businesses have popped up in California that literally cater to Medicaid patients.

The Medicaid Program in California will pay for sports club fees. The Medicaid Program in California will pay for a gym membership.

The Medicaid Program in California will actually pay for student loans. They do it under the guise of: Well, we

want to encourage people to become healthcare providers, and they can't do it if they have onerous financial burdens. So we will pay for their healthcare.

Now, once again, Medicaid is supposed to be for sick people. When you are spending other people's money, it is really easy to expand beyond that.

The Medicaid Program in California will pay for scooters. I get that. Sometimes, that might be necessary. Bicycles. But it will also pay for music lessons.

The Medicaid Program in California will also pay for art lessons.

This money didn't just fall from Heaven. We all thank Heaven for it, but it came out of people's pockets. And that is how we end up having \$1.2 trillion, over a 10-year period, stolen from the Medicaid Program—money that was put up by the American people.

It happens in every State. Some are worse than others. Minnesota is an example, but so is California. When you are taking American taxpayer dollars and spending them on an exorcism or a gym membership, something is wrong.

And if we want to lower the cost of living in America, if we want to be able to find the money to give people a tax break, if we want to lower interest rates in America, one of the easiest, best ways to do it is to try to fight the fraud in our Medicaid Program. It is as simple as that.

Mr. President, \$1.2 trillion over 10 years of fraud—this didn't just happen, as you know. This has been going on for a long, long time, and I want to give credit where credit is due.

Dr. Oz, our new CMS Administrator, and the Department of Justice are both working to try to stop this fraud. But it has been there since God was a baby, and it has got to stop now.

That is what I wanted to—it is out in the open, and this is not something I am accusing anybody of unfairly. These are just the facts.

So with that, I thank you for your attention. I thank Kailyn for her great work. And peace out.

I want to thank the Parliamentarian too. She didn't rule me out of order one time. Thank you, Madam Parliamentarian.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Hawaii.

#### RECONCILIATION

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, a billion dollars goes a very long way, especially in a State like Hawaii. With a billion dollars, we could cover out-of-pocket costs for insulin for every person in the State who relies on it for almost 20 years. We could help to provide healthy meals to women, infants, and children in need for almost 40 years. We could cover the cost of childcare for nearly every child under 3 in Hawaii for an entire year, or we could cover tuition for every instate undergraduate student at the University of Hawaii for close to a decade.

But instead of doing any of that, this week, Republicans plan to give Donald