

high energy costs because they don't want people to use fossil fuels. They think the higher the energy cost, the fewer fossil fuels will be used. And that is their worshipping of the climate god that they have continued to worship.

That is where we are today. Democrats want coal to remain in the ground. They want to treat coal as something to be punished, taxed, regulated, eliminated.

Here is the difference. Republicans understand national security begins with energy security.

When Joe Biden was President, he told his EPA—his Environmental Protection Agency—to prioritize climate over energy that is affordable, available, and reliable, used by the American people.

President Trump and Republicans see it differently. We put American families and American workers first.

Coal is a key economic driver in Wyoming. Wyoming produces nearly half of the coal in the United States. Wyoming truly is America's energy breadbasket. In Wyoming, the royalties, the taxes from mining their coal pays for education for every child in the State.

Coal mining provides jobs for Wyoming workers. These are good-paying, high-tech jobs.

When powerplants know that they will stay open, when they have that commitment, as they do now from President Trump, our coal producers can plan, can invest, and can produce.

President Trump's actions are going to bring down costs for American families.

And it is not just Americans who want Wyoming coal. Our allies overseas, especially in Asia, want it.

Last week, President Trump made a historic announcement. He announced a \$75 million investment to support building the West Gateway Terminal Project in Oakland, CA. This facility will expand America's ability to export coal. It is also going to support good mining jobs.

Wyoming's Governor, Mark Gordon, joined President Trump in the Oval Office for the announcement. Governor Gordon told the President about his recent trips to Japan and Taiwan. Japan and Taiwan want American coal. They need it to keep their lights on, and they need it to power their own economies.

We have needed a new port and a facility like this on the west coast for a long, long time. One was supposed to be built 13 years ago, and the location was Oakland, CA.

What happened? Well, environmental extremists protested. They blocked the project. They sued. A decade of lawsuits followed.

This is no surprise to the Presiding Officer. You have seen these sorts of things.

The case went all the way to California's Supreme Court, and, finally, the court ruled with the people that want to develop the port. We need it. It is legal, now approved by the court.

So the new West Gateway Terminal has now been approved and is ready to move forward.

With support from President Trump and the Trump administration, Wyoming coal will soon reach hungry Asian markets. This is what unleashing American energy really looks like. Clean Wyoming coal is the best in the world, and now it is going to continue to help power the world.

Democrats talk like coal lives only in the past. They are wrong. Coal is the lifeblood of an affordable, prosperous future.

Demand for energy continues to grow. We need more energy, not less, and Wyoming coal is there to deliver. And I am grateful that President Trump is doing what he is doing.

Wyoming's energy workers and our coal communities now have the certainty that they need to do what they do best, and that is to power the country with coal—coal that is affordable, available, reliable—a secure source of energy for a long, long time to come.

With the President's historic announcement, last week, the President continues to put American workers, American families, and American energy dominance first.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

#### MEDICAID

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if you or a loved one is diagnosed with a life-altering medical condition, the last thing you want to face is a mountain of government paperwork in order to get your care.

But when Republicans in Congress passed their One Big Beautiful Bill, President Trump's budget—that is what they call it—last year, they placed themselves in the middle of whether or not you get treatment.

In that law, the Republicans created a requirement for all Medicaid recipients between the ages of 18 and 64 to either work 80 hours a month or verify they are too sick to do so in order to maintain Medicaid coverage.

At first glance, that might just sound like a reasonable requirement. The reality is, the plan drowns eligible patients in paperwork, requiring those who are poor and sick to navigate a maze of government redtape to see a doctor.

To qualify for Medicaid, you need to have low or no income or perhaps have a disability. Now the Republicans want to put a paperwork requirement on this to prove that you can't work 80 hours a month.

Last week, the Trump administration took a look at this and decided to

make a bad situation even worse. They announced the rules to implement these work requirements. The administration decided that documenting that you have a serious condition like cancer or Alzheimer's is not enough to avoid work requirements. Instead, they are further requiring patients to verify that these conditions actually impede your ability to work.

In case it is not obvious, a 64-year-old cancer patient, traveling 30 miles each direction every week to undergo chemotherapy, might not have the ability to show up to their shift, waiting tables. Under Republicans' work requirements, one misstep by a patient, provider, or State employee could mean the difference between having health coverage or not. Is this a burden?

What if we suggested that you file your income tax returns not only on April 15 but on October 15 as well—twice a year—to make sure we catch up with you? Is that a burden? Of course, it is.

Have Republicans in Congress really deemed you unworthy of getting cancer treatment because a signature was missing on one of the dozens of pages in the forms you had to submit to prove that you are unable to work?

In addition to creating this work requirement, Republicans in Congress also refused to extend the Affordable Care Act's enhanced premium tax credits in their Big Beautiful Bill—tax breaks for wealthy people but no benefits for those trying to pay their health insurance premiums.

Twenty-four million Americans rely on these tax credits to afford their health insurance, but they expired at the end of last year. Without them, insurance premiums have doubled or tripled for many families, the same families that are struggling to buy groceries, to pay their utility bills, to make sure that they have enough money for rent or mortgage. And how about the cost of gasoline while we are at it? We have decided these folks need to have an additional expense of health insurance premiums, according to my Republican colleagues.

Yesterday, the Chicago Tribune newspaper reported that more than 92,000 people living in my State have lost or dropped their health insurance this year due to the skyrocketing premiums and the Republican policy change eliminating tax benefits to help people pay for their health insurance.

Illinois is no outlier. Millions of Americans nationwide lost their insurance coverage because the Republican decision to change the policy priced them out of care. Listen to one of the stories.

Sharon Dunham, from Grand Rapids, MI, told the Wall Street Journal that she beat cancer twice and has multiple health challenges, but she had to drop her insurance altogether—drop her insurance altogether—this year when her monthly premiums increased by \$300.

With inflation, which the President embraced yesterday and said that he

dearly loves—add that to the health insurance premiums, she just couldn't hack it.

Sharon plans to go without insurance until she turns 65. She prays that she will last long enough to reach the Medicare eligibility age. In the meantime, she is terrified that her cancer might return and knows that without health insurance, "I can't do anything if it shows up."

Think about that for a minute. A vote here on the Senate floor has put this lady in a situation where she is battling cancer without health insurance.

Countless other families are making similar heartbreaking decisions like Sharon. Without health insurance, they are just one accident or illness away from bankruptcy.

Republicans' Big Beautiful Bill doesn't stop just at that point. It also enacted the most severe cut to the SNAP program in history. From July 2025 to February 2026, more than 3½ million people have lost access to the program that actually puts groceries on their table.

One SNAP recipient, Presley Nassise, told the Public Broadcasting System that his benefits went from \$200 to zero after the Republican cuts, after which he could only afford 1½ meals a day.

Go to your local food bank and ask them what is going on. They are being deluged and swamped by people who are struggling to make ends meet, struggling to pay for groceries.

And folks with limited income need a helping hand. I have been there. I have seen those food banks. And thank goodness for the people who open them, the churches and the volunteers that keep them open.

It is no wonder that more Americans are going without the food that they need now in 2026 than during the peak of COVID-19.

As the Big Beautiful Bill's provisions take effect, Republicans can no longer hide behind the statement that they have only tried to target waste, fraud, and abuse.

Americans are waking up to the reality that Republicans abandoned working families so they could provide tax breaks for the wealthiest people in this country.

While Republicans are content to act like nothing is wrong, Democrats are continuing to fight to restore these programs.

It may not be popular in some circles to speak out for the poor and low-income people in this country, but I think we have an obligation to do so. If these people are trying to get by—struggling to get health insurance, to put food on their table, to be able to go to the kind of healthcare that keeps them alive—we have got to speak up for them.

I don't believe these are cheaters and chiselers and frauds. These are people who are trying to get by. And putting additional paperwork requirements on them—making it more and more dif-

ficult—making someone who has Alzheimer's file papers regularly with the government to prove they can't go to work, for goodness' sake, what has this Nation come to? We can do better than that.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Brock Dahl, of Maryland, to be Legal Adviser of the Department of State.

VOTE ON DAHL NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Dahl nomination?

Mr. CURTIS. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN), the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM), the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY), the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. HAGERTY) would have voted "yea."

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Colorado (Mr. BENNET) and the Senator from Delaware (Mr. COONS) are necessarily absent.

The result was announced—yeas 49, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 170 Ex.]

YEAS—49

Armstrong	Fischer	Murkowski
Banks	Grassley	Paul
Barrasso	Hawley	Ricketts
Boozman	Hoeven	Risch
Britt	Husted	Rounds
Budd	Hyde-Smith	Schmitt
Capito	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cassidy	Justice	Scott (SC)
Collins	Kennedy	Shaheen
Cornyn	Lankford	Sheehy
Cotton	Lee	Sullivan
Cramer	Lummis	Thune
Crapo	Marshall	Tuberville
Cruz	McConnell	Wicker
Curtis	McCormick	Young
Daines	Moody	
Ernst	Moreno	

NAYS—44

Alsobrooks	Duckworth	Hickenlooper
Baldwin	Durbin	Hirono
Blumenthal	Fetterman	Kaine
Blunt Rochester	Gallego	Kelly
Booker	Gillibrand	Kim
Cantwell	Hassan	King
Cortez Masto	Heinrich	Klobuchar

Luján	Reed	Van Hollen
Markey	Rosen	Warner
Merkley	Sanders	Warnock
Murphy	Schatz	Warren
Murray	Schiff	Welch
Ossoff	Schumer	Whitehouse
Padilla	Slotkin	Wyden
Peters	Smith	

NOT VOTING—7

Bennet	Graham	Tillis
Blackburn	Hagerty	
Coons	Moran	

The nomination was confirmed. The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MORENO). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Minnesota.

REMEMBERING MELISSA AND MARK HORTMAN

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I rise today with my colleague from Minnesota Senator SMITH on a somber anniversary week for our State and for our country.

One year ago, a horrific act of political violence took two Minnesotans from us who represented the best of our State, the best of us, Minnesota State Representative and our former Speaker of the House Melissa Hortman and her dear husband Mark Hortman.

This is them with their kids, with Colin and Sophie who have been true to their memories since that date, grieving through the entire time, but always holding up their parents' memories.

That same night, State Senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette were also shot. Despite taking nine bullets, as his wife Yvette took eight, John has courageously returned to the State senate with a tireless dedication to improving the lives of Minnesotans.

Melissa and Mark left behind a State in mourning, but their two incredible children Colin and Sophie rose through their grief and best captured their parents' legacy as they said:

The best way to honor our parents' memory is to do something, whether big or small, to make our community just a little better for someone else.

And that is exactly what Minnesotans have done. Thousands lined up to pay their respects to the Hortmans at the State capitol where Melissa was the first woman in Minnesota to lie in state. People planted trees to honor Melissa's efforts to strengthen urban and rural forests.

Donations poured in to Helping Paws the service dog nonprofit where the Hortmans volunteered and where their beloved Gilbert, who was also shot that night, was trained.

The organization established the Hortman Heroes Fund to train service dogs to help first responders and veterans with PTSD. Their dog Gilbert was actually going to be part of that program. And they trained their dog, but in the end, it was decided their dog was just too friendly to be part of the program in the end, and Melissa and Mark were happy to have him back. And he died with them that weekend.