Even if you have a high deductible but you still have insurance, all your prices under the deductible have already been negotiated. You may not know what it is going to cost, that it is going to be $500 for the gallbladder or whatever the surgery is going to cost you—you don't know those prices, but they have already been negotiated. If we tell you, if we mandate that they tell you and then they tell you, you aren't going to be able to go to another hospital and get a cheaper price because it has already been negotiated. The insurance company has already negotiated this with the hospitals.

So this is well-intended, but it is just not going to work, and it just adds one more government mandate and is not a good idea.

I would argue that the mandated transparency regulations will actually have limited effect even in the best-case scenario because over 95 percent of the healthcare market involves insurance or government middlemen already. Healthcare prices have continued to rise 5 to 10 percent annually because of the root cause of the problem: insurance and third-party payments.

We also don't seem to have enough leverage as patients to get a better price. There is something that we could do, and it is a bill that I have had out there for years and that I would be happy to get behind a unanimous consent effort, and this is something called association healthcare or health association. The way they would work is this: Instead of an accountant and three employees trying to get insurance for four people, you join a buying group—this would be like Amazon, Sam's Club, Costco—and then a large group would negotiate, not for individual policies but for a group policy.

It takes a change in our labor laws. We change the ERISA law to let you do this. Then you would be able to dial up Amazon, get on Amazon, and if Amazon had 40 million members that wanted to buy insurance, 1 person at Amazon would call up probably the CEO of UnitedHealthcare and negotiate a rate. So what we would do is grant you leverage. It doesn't cost anything, doesn't mandate anything, and lets you do what you want. It gets rid of aspects of our labor law that prevent this. It would let anybody join a buying group or co-op to buy their insurance.

Now, understandably, the insurance companies are opposed to this. We haven't been able to get it out of committee. And one of the reasons is the Democrats largely oppose this because they say: Well, we are kind of for it, but we have to mandate what the insurance is.

This has been the thing going all the way back to ObamaCare. When you mandate what is in insurance, you elevate the cost of it. So if we let the market take care of it, let people come together in co-ops to buy insurance, you could drive prices down.

This window dressing won't work because the prices are already fixed, and knowing what the prices are won't bring the prices down. Employers already do some of this negotiation for you. There are examples. Lowe's Home Improvement has negotiated a $325 MRI at facilities in the highest tier. There are websites that will help you out if you don't have insurance. The only people who really benefit by some of these price transparencies would be people without insurance, but there are some.

For example, there is a website you can go to where you can get an MRI on Sundays. If you live in a big city and you will drive an hour outside the big city and you want to get your MRI and you will spend an hour driving and do it on Sunday afternoon at 3 o'clock when the volume is really low, you can get a discount. There are websites that will direct you there.

But until Congress is serious about reducing the Federal Government's role in healthcare, reducing the subsidization, allowing people to join co-ops—that is when we will actually get the price down. But this bill actually won't do it. I think it adds mandates, and it ultimately actually might increase the price of healthcare as we add one more cost to the insurance companies and those who have to provide healthcare.

So, therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President, certainly I agree on many of the points my colleague made, and certainly I am in favor of expanding association healthcare plans. The goal of that is more competition, and that is all we are trying to create. My colleague says this won't work, but transparency works in every other industry. I think it is well documented that our bill would save $1,000 per month.

Here is the big fallacy in his argument. He is right that the insurance companies have negotiated these rates. So within one community, this insurance company has negotiated one rate with a surgery center, one rate with the hospital, one rate with an imaging center. So all I say is the patient deserves to see what that negotiated rate is, and then they can compare it. So it is like we agree, but he disagrees with the final step here: We want patients to know what that negotiated price is.

A real example: Getting a hip replaced at a surgical hospital might cost $15,000 or $20,000, but at the hospital down the street, it might be $150,000. The same way with an x ray. Going to the hospital, you know, the x ray—the MRI might be $3,000 there but $300 down at the imaging center.

So I agree that those prices have been negotiated, but I want to make sure it is in the hands of the consumers. Could you imagine driving down the street and gas stations—you didn't know how much the gas was going to be? Of course you wouldn't be able to make a good consumer choice.

So that is all we are asking, is full transparency in healthcare just like in every other industry.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:43 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. BANKS).

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 senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Angela Veronica Colmenero, of Texas, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Texas.

VOTE ON COLMENERO NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Colmenero nomination?

Mr. CRAMER. 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 senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. BARRASSO. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES), the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST), and the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS).

Further, if present and voting: the Senator from Iowa (Ms. ERNST) would have voted ''yea.''

The result was announced—yeas 50, nays 47, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 241 Ex.]

YEAS—50

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

NAYS—47

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

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

NOT VOTING—3

Daines	Ernst	Tillis

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.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume legislative session.

The Senator from New Hampshire.

CHINA

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, well, one issue that I hope will be at the top of the agenda when President Trump meets with Xi Jinping on Thursday is China's support for Iran.

Two months ago, Iranian ballistic missiles struck the housing area at the U.S. airbase in Jordan. That attack killed three American soldiers and wounded four more.

United States officials told the Wall Street Journal—and we can see this mockup of that article—that Iran got high-resolution satellite imagery of that base from Chinese entities before the attack. Unfortunately, this wasn't a surprise because senior Trump officials had warned for months that Chinese companies were giving Iran imagery that could be used to target American personnel.

In May, the administration sanctioned several Chinese companies over precisely that activity. Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff recently returned from the Middle East, where they saw the damage Iran's attacks have done to United States facilities.

It is not only satellite imagery that Iran relies on to carry out attacks against Americans. China also provides a critical economic lifeline to Iran. According to the Treasury Department, 90 percent of Iran's oil exports go to China. That is billions of dollars in revenue for the Iranian regime, and much of that oil is sold in defiance of United States sanctions, through shadow fleets, front companies, and Chinese refineries. That money supports Iran's military, its weapons programs, and its terrorist proxies.

China is also a source of the parts and materials that Iran needs to build its weapons. The United States Treasury Department has repeatedly sanctioned Chinese and Hong Kong companies for supplying components for Iran's ballistic missiles and attack drones. Those are the same types of weapons that Iran is using to attack American forces.

This cannot be treated as a side issue. When President Trump sits across from President Xi at the White House, he should use his leverage to do three things: first, to stop Chinese companies from giving Iran satellite imagery and targeting support; second, stop Chinese networks from supplying parts for Iran's missiles and drones; and third, stop the purchase and trade of sanctioned Iranian oil.

If we want to bring this war to an end, we need to cut off the outside support that allows Iran to keep fighting, and that starts with China. The administration should enforce our sanctions against the Chinese entities helping Iran, and if China doesn't stop, Congress should impose additional consequences.

I hope the President will also think about the weapon that Congress gave him when we passed the Russia sanctions bill because it allows us to tariff the Chinese companies that are purchasing Russian oil and gas. China is the No. 1 purchaser of Russian oil and gas, so they are the top funder of the war in Ukraine as well as being one of the top funders of the war in Iran. So I hope the President will take this opportunity to use the tools that we have given him and to point out to President Xi that China needs to start behaving differently.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

NEW MEXICO LAND GRANT-MERCEDES HISTORICAL OR TRADITIONAL USE COOPERATION AND COORDINATION ACT

Mr. LUJÁN. Mr. President, I rise today to ask my colleagues to support the passage of my New Mexico Land Grant-Mercedes Historical or Traditional Use Cooperation and Coordination Act.

Land grant communities in New Mexico have cared for our lands, sustained our communities, and preserved our traditions that are deeply rooted in our State's history and culture. But for too long these communities have faced unnecessary barriers when working with the Federal Government.

My legislation is simple. It strengthens cooperation and coordination between land grant-merced communities and the Federal Government. It provides much needed clarity on Federal processes and ensures that historical and traditional uses are considered in Federal planning. This is about making sure the people who have cared for these lands for generations have a voice in the decisions that affect our communities, our livelihoods, and our traditions.

This legislation has been years in the making and has earned bipartisan, bicameral support. It was among the last bills I passed as a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives in December of 2020. It then passed the Senate in December 2022. In December of last year, it was reported unanimously out of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. The U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have provided testimony in support of this legislation at recent committee hearings, and I am proud to have worked alongside New Mexico's land grant communities and the New Mexico Land Grant Council on this effort.

This legislation recognizes the important role that land grant-merced communities have played in New Mexico for hundreds of years and helps preserve the connection for generations to come.

I urge my colleagues to once again support this legislation so we can finally get this done.

Mr. President, notwithstanding rule XXII, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of Calendar No. 476, S. 1363.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the bill by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1363) to provide for greater cooperation and coordination between the Federal Government and the governing bodies and community users of land grant-mercedes in New Mexico relating to historical or traditional uses of certain land grant-mercedes on Federal public land, and for other purposes.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources with an amendment, as follows:

(The part of the bill intended to be stricken is in boldfaced brackets, and the part of the bill intended to be inserted is in italic.)

S. 1363

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''New Mexico Land Grant-Mercedes Historical or Traditional Use Cooperation and Coordination Act''.

SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) COMMUNITY USER.—The term ''community user'' means an heir (as defined under the laws of the State) of a qualified land grant-merced.

(2) FEDERAL LAND.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ''Federal land'' means any land **[**or interest in land owned by the United States**]** *under the jurisdiction of the Secretary concerned*.

(B) EXCLUSIONS.—The term ''Federal land'' does not include—

(i) land within the boundary of an Indian reservation;

(ii) land held in trust or in restricted status by the United States for the benefit of—

(I) an Indian Tribe; or

(II) an individual Indian; or

(iii) land held in fee by an Indian or Indian Tribe that is subject to restrictions on alienation by the United States.

(3) GOVERNING BODY.—The term ''governing body'' means the board of trustees authorized under State law with the control, care, and management of a qualified land grant-merced.

(4) HISTORICAL OR TRADITIONAL USE.—The term ''historical or traditional use'' means the following long-established and habitual uses conducted by a qualified land grant-merced on Federal land for noncommercial